



STATE OF CALIFORNIA
FAIR POLITICAL PRACTICES COMMISSION
1102 Q Street • Suite 3050 • Sacramento, CA 95811

August 7, 2024

John Cruikshank

Via email: john.cruikshank@rpvca.gov

Re: FPPC Complaint No. COM-08062024-02501; John Cruikshank, City of Rancho Palos Verdes, City Council

Dear John Cruikshank:

The Enforcement Division of the Fair Political Practices Commission has received a sworn complaint against you. It appears the complainant is alleging you have violated the Political Reform Act's¹ conflict of interest provisions. The information filed in the complaint is below and any attachments filed are enclosed.

The person filing the Complaint is:
Kendra Carney Mehr

The violations alleged are:

Conflict of Interest

General Rule (87100)

Manner of Disqualification/Leave the Room Requirement (87105)

87306.5 - Conflict of Interest Code; Local

The Mayor is an engineering consultant in his personal employment. One of his clients purchased an empty lot in the City. Prior to this client's purchase, the Mayor engaged in communication with City planning staff from his work email address and encouraged the City to modify the zoning of the property to maximize the density allowed. City staff had previously told the prior owner of the parcel that they would not allow this type of development on this particular parcel because it contradicts the surrounding zoning. At least one of these emails was released in response to a Public Records Act request. When several members of the surrounding community confronted the Mayor about this business relationship at a City Council meeting where the Council was considering an agenda item to rezone the parcel to the highest density permitted in the City, the Mayor made candid statements on the record about his business relationship with the developer and the fact that he had previously returned most of a campaign contribution provided by the developer. However, it appears to be the Mayor's position that he did not have a conflict so long as he did not receive compensation for his work on a project within his own City. The Mayor admits the developer is

¹ The Political Reform Act is contained in Government Code sections 81000 through 91014, and all statutory references are to this code. The regulations of the Fair Political Practices Commission are contained in Sections 18104 through 18998 of Title 2 of the California Code of Regulations, and all regulatory references are to this source.

a client and suggests he has worked on several projects for this developer outside of the City.

At this time, we have not made any determination about the allegation(s) made in the complaint. Within 14 days, the complainant will be notified of our intent to:

- investigate the allegations of the complaint;
- refer the complaint to another governmental agency;
- take no action on the complaint because, on the basis of the information provided, the Commission does not appear to have jurisdiction to investigate; or
- take no action on the complaint because the allegations of the complaint do not warrant the Commission's further action.

A copy of that letter will be forwarded to you. If you have any comments on the allegation(s), your comments must be submitted in writing directed to Vanessa Greer at the address shown above or by email to vgreer@fppc.ca.gov. Please include the complaint number referenced above in your response.

Sincerely,

James M. Lindsay

James M. Lindsay, Chief
Enforcement Division

JML: vg