

**OFFICIAL MINUTES  
OF THE  
PALM BEACH COUNTY INSPECTOR GENERAL COMMITTEE  
PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA**

**JUNE 2, 2022**

**THURSDAY  
2:00 p.m.**

**COMMISSION CHAMBERS  
WEISMAN GOVERNMENTAL CENTER**

**MEMBERS:**

Peter L. Cruise  
Michael S. Kridel  
Carol E.A. DeGraffenreidt  
Carey Haughwout  
David Aronberg, State Attorney  
Michael H. Kugler, Vice Chair  
Rodney G. Romano, Chair

**INSPECTOR GENERAL STAFF PRESENT:**

John A. Carey, County Inspector General

**CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT & COMPTROLLER'S OFFICE STAFF PRESENT:**

Danielle Freeman, Deputy Clerk

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The chair called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

**II. ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Peter Cruise, Carey Haughwout, Michael Kridel, Michael Kugler, and Rodney Romano

**Absent:** Dave Aronberg and Carol DeGraffenreidt

**III. INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS**

There were no introductory comments.

**IV. APPROVAL OF INSPECTOR GENERAL (IG) COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

**a. Meeting: November 18, 2021**

**MOTION to approve the November 18, 2021 minutes. Motion by Vice Chair Kugler, seconded by Peter Cruise, and carried 5-0. Dave Aronberg and Carol DeGraffenreidt absent.**

**V. SIX-MONTH STATUS REPORT**

**a. Presentation by Inspector General Carey**

John Carey, IG, provided a brief synopsis of the mission of the IG office. He welcomed Commissioner Kridel back to the commission and thanked Christie Kelley for her efforts regarding the scheduling of the IG meetings.

Mr. Carey introduced new IG investigators Kendra Lester and Jimmy Collen. He also recognized the following staff accomplishments:

- Stuart Robinson, Director of Investigations OIG, was now a Certified Inspector General.
- Tiffany Thomas, Contract Oversight Specialist, was now the Assistant Treasurer for the Southeast Florida Chapter of the National Institute of Governmental Purchasing (NIGP).
- Hillary Bojan, Director of Audit, was the Vice President of the Institute of Internal Auditors.
- Christopher Dyckman, Investigator III OIG, was the Vice President of the Association of Fraud Examiners.
- Kalinthia Dillard, General Counsel OIG, was a charter member for the Palm Beach County Sheree Davis Cunningham Black Women Lawyer Association, and she recently graduated from Leadership Florida.

Mr. Carey recognized Barbara Bellafiore, Executive Assistant I OIG, and Jeff Whaley, Systems Administrator II OIG, for their hard work and contributions to the OIG team.

Mr. Carey and staff provided the following updates:

- The counties and municipalities had received over 750 million dollars in federal and state funds to assist with Covid-19 relief. The relief funds have been used for rental assistance, small business grants, and food vouchers, and the OIG's role was to make sure the funds were appropriately disbursed.

Mr. Robinson gave the following update on pandemic oversight:

- The OIG had access to various programs that distribute funding to the less fortunate.

- The OIG utilized maximum resources to ensure that anyone engaging in fraudulent behavior against taxpayers would be held accountable.
- The intake manager had processed 162 correspondences related to the pandemic, but some of them did not require full investigations due to jurisdiction issues.
- To date there had been 10 completed investigations, 25 open preliminary inquiries, and 16 open full investigations.
- The pandemic-related investigations were divided into two categories:

1.

Business grants allowed small business with a pandemic-based need to receive up to \$25,000.

Multiple investigations were conducted, and several companies tried to obtain more funding than they were allowed by sending deceptive applications.

There were disclosure requirements that were not met regarding disclosing additional funding sources. As a result, \$60,000 was recovered from the companies that failed to meet the disclosure requirements, and \$200,000 had been identified that should not have been issued to companies.

2.

Rental assistance-associated applications allowed landlords to receive funding for their properties. Investigations were conducted where people posed as landlords to retrieve funding and produced falsified information. The OIG continued to actively work with law enforcement agencies to remedy the situation.

Mr. Robinson responded to questions from the commission.

Mr. Carey provided a slide presentation and a summary on investigative findings, management inquiries, complaints, and evaluations.

Mr. Robinson delivered a slide presentation and provided background on the findings from the Altima Lighting Company, a contracted vendor for the County.

Lengthy discussion ensued regarding the findings from the Altima Lighting case, and Mr. Robinson responded to questions from the commission.

Mr. Carey presented a slideshow on contract oversight and responded to questions regarding the procurement processes and the results of various complaints the OIG had received.

Anthony Montero, Director of Contract Oversight (OIG), provided a PowerPoint presentation on the findings from the Palm Beach County Capital Improvement project.

Discussion ensued regarding the protest process and how complaints were handled.

Mr. Carey provided the following updates:

- Reviews were conducted that monitored the funds from the American Rescue Plan Act and the tracking of the budget expenditures.
- Countywide surveys were being conducted to compare how cities and counties compensated employees during Covid-19 and to ensure that cities stayed within compliance distributing those funds.
- The audit team was recognized for their efforts on the various audits that were conducted.
- There had been cases in which there were no findings during an audit.

A slideshow was provided by Mr. Carey regarding statewide trainings provided by the OIG and various outreaches that were held for the public.

Mr. Carey stated that the plan was to fill outstanding positions, which had proven to be challenging. The OIG would continue their efforts working with law enforcement agencies.

Hillary Bojan, Director of Audit (OIG), provided a summary of the audit risk assessment process via slideshow presentation and then responded to questions.

Mr. Carey gave an overall summary of potential costs and how to save taxpayer dollars, and he responded to a question from Commissioner Kridel.

b. Discussion

Commissioner Romano thanked the OIG for their efforts and implementation of best practices. He added that the goal of the OIG was to ensure taxpayers were not being defrauded.

c. Public Comment

There were no public comments.

VI. New Business

There were no new business items discussed.

VII. Adjournment

**MOTION to adjourn. Motion by Carey Haughwout, seconded by Vice Chair Kugler, and carried 5-0. Dave Aronberg and Carol DeGraffenreidt absent.**

**At 3:24 p.m., the chair declared the meeting adjourned.**

APPROVED:



Chair/Vice Chair