



Miami-Dade Commission on Ethics & Public Trust
Investigative Report

Investigator:	Sylvia Batista	Case No. C20-14-0
Complainant:	Arthur H. Sorey III	Respondent: Derrick Corker
Date Opened:	03/02/20	Subject: City of North Miami Parks
Date Submitted:	06/23/20	Director doing business with the City

Allegation(s):

On February 27, 2020, the COE received a Complaint from Arthur H. Sorey, III, Interim City Manager of the City of North Miami, against Derrick Corker (Corker). Corker is the Director of the City of North Miami Parks Department, and privately owns ELJEFE7NINE, LLC, which sells team uniforms.

The Complaint is based on an Administrative Review Case which generated an Investigative Summary of a complaint filed by representatives of the North Miami Youth Football and Cheer Program (NMYFCP), Lawrence Jones and Donna Bibbins. The information involves financial improprieties allegedly committed by Corker with respect to the purchase of new team and cheerleader uniforms for the NMYFCP.

Subsequent to receiving three (3) bids for the uniforms, Quick Prints, LLC, was awarded the contract to create and provide the uniforms. The bid from Quick Prints, LLC was provided by Corker. The investigation found that there was some comingling of Quick Prints, LLC and ELJEFE7NINE, LLC products on their respective webpages.¹ The Complaint also alleged that Corker sold “Spirit Packs” to the team which revealed the “79” logo on them. The “79” logo is indicative of Corker’s business, ELJEFE7NINE.

Relevant Law:

City of North Miami Code, Conflict of Interest, Sec. 2-316(c), *Prohibition of transacting business with the City;*

Sec. 2-11.1 (k)(2) *Prohibition on outside employment –*

All full-time County or Municipal employees engaged in any outside employment for any person, firm, corporation or entity other than Miami-Dade County, or the respective municipality, or any of their

¹ City of North Miami staff reviewed the site and did not find any current comingling of Corker’s company with Quick Prints, LLC.

agencies or instrumentalities, shall file, under oath, an annual report indicating the source of the outside employment, the nature of the work being done pursuant to same and any amount or types of money or other consideration received by the employee from said outside employment. Said employee's reports shall be filed with the Municipal Clerk and the Supervisor of Elections no later than 12:00 noon on July 1st of each year, including the July 1st following the last year that person held such employment.

Review:

- 02/26/20 – Memorandum from Joseph Roglieri, Jr., Personnel Director to Arthur Sorrey summarizing the results of the investigation involving the complaint filed by the NMYFCP against Corker;
- Review of State of Florida Division of Corporation details regarding ELJEFE7NINE, LLC, a corporation formed on June of 2017 by Corker;
- Quotes from various vendors for the new uniforms for the team and cheerleaders;
- ELJEFE7NINE, LLC Bank Statements for years 2018 and 2019;
- 2019 Statement of Financial Interest (Form 1) in which Corker lists ELJEFE7NINE, LLC and Handling Risky Business, a grants company, as secondary sources of income; and
- 2019 Outside Employment Statement for ELJEFE7NINE, LLC and Handling Risky Business

Interviews:

06/01/20 – Khalid Salahuddin, Recreation Supervisor, North Miami Parks and Recreation -

Khalid Salahuddin (Salahuddin) is the Recreation Supervisor in the City's parks department. Salahuddin handled the bidding process of the uniforms for the team and cheerleaders. Salahuddin explained that he was involved in the process, and makes recommendations, but does not make the final decision.

Salahuddin explained that he solicited bids from vendors who sell uniforms. Currently there are many companies that make team uniforms. He did not solicit bids for the Spirit Packs. He doesn't know anything about that.

Salahuddin said that he received input from the North Miami Youth Football Program (NMYFCP) who had requested to participate in the process. NMYFCP recommended some companies. Salahuddin said that they received a total of four (4) bids. Either Corker or the City Manager picked Quick Pick, but NMYFCP didn't like them. The Quick Pick uniforms for the team were okay, and they won the bid, but the cheerleading uniforms were of poor quality and they had to send them back. They ended up buying the cheer uniforms from another company. The quality of the girl's uniforms just was not there.

Salahuddin said that the football uniforms delivered by Quick Picks, LLC did not have the ELJEFE7NINE logo used by the clothing company owned by Corker. The ELJEFE7NINE logo was

seen only on the renderings from Quick Prints, LLC, but not on the uniforms purchased by the City.

Salahuddin said he received input as to the bids from Corker, NMYFCP and the City Manager who at the time was Larry Spring. Salahuddin said that Corker and the City Manager recommended that the City buy the uniforms from Quick Prints, LLC. NMYFCP did not like the Quick Pick, LLC uniforms.

Salahuddin does not know anything about the Spirit Packs and why they were purchased directly from Corker. Corker is still on paid leave.

06/03/20 - Rashad Smith, City of North Miami Park Aide –

Rashad Smith (Smith) worked at the City's Parks Department as a part-time aide. He was recently laid-off due to coronavirus cut-backs. He worked in this same capacity for 4 or 5 years. Smith said he knew Corker personally prior to working for the City. His duties and responsibilities at the Parks Department involved athletics, team sports, athletic events and special events. It was not his responsibility to purchase equipment or uniforms for the teams.

Smith said that he purchased ten Spirit Packs (SP) from Corker for a total of \$400. SP contain socks, tee shirts, shorts and a gym bag in the team colors, with the "79" logo on them. Smith advised that he was never asked by anyone in the Parks Department, including Corker, to get prices for SP for the team. Smith advised that the SP were not part of the request for bids for the team and cheer uniforms.

Smith explained that Corker did not try to sell him the SP. Smith said that it was entirely his own idea to purchase the SP for his son and teammates in the football program. It was something he did personally by himself as a parent. His purchase has nothing to do with the NMYFCP. He did not consult with the City before making the purchase. He said he just thought, "my friend sells these, so I called my friend."

06/04/20 – Derrick Corker, City of North Miami Parks Director –

(to be summarized by Michael Murawski)

06/15/20 – William Exemar, CEO of Quick Prints, LLC –

(to be summarized by Michael Murawski)

06/17/20 – Larry Spring, former City Manager –

Larry Spring (Spring) was the City Manager from March 2016 to January 31, 2020.

Spring stated that he first heard about the issue regarding Corker from Lawrence Jones and Donna Bibbins of the NMYFCP. They made a complaint to the district councilman, Vice Mayor Alix Desulme, and provided the documents that supported their position that Corker had committed financial improprieties with respect to the purchase of the uniforms. Once he received that information, he immediately turned it over to the Police Chief who then forwarded it to Internal Affairs. Spring said that he called for an investigation.

Internal Affairs conducted their investigation and gave him a briefing which concluded that there had

been no criminal activity committed by Corker. Spring said that he sat with Corker and explained the police department's determination. Corker understood that Ms. Bibbins and Mr. Jones made a verbal complaint to the City Council which led to the ethics case being opened.

Spring said that he is generally aware of the uniform purchases from Quick Print. He is aware that Corker has a business which provides team uniforms which uses the logo, ELJEFE7NINE. After they inspected the uniforms received from Quick Print, they found that the cheerleader uniforms were of poor quality and returned the product. They ended up ordering the cheer uniforms from someone else. Spring said that he is not specifically aware of any previous purchases by the City from Quick Print.

Spring said that he saw no reason to be suspicious of the purchase order to Quick Print. He had no reason to think anything negative or wrong was going on. The need to purchase new uniforms began when Councilman Galvin expressed concern over the name of the City's football team, the Redskins. Galvin went to the NMYFCP and requested a change of name. The City received a directive to give the Parks Department a lump sum to replace the uniforms due to the change of name. Spring said that he was not involved in the selection from the bids received in the procurement process.

Spring explained that the relationship between the City and the NMYFCP had been deteriorating over time. The program was moved to another park in the City. Spring said he intervened to make it better, and they decided to stay. After he left, the City made the decision to terminate the relationship with the program. It was working until a letter was sent to the NMYFCP by the City advising that they were terminating their agreement.

Spring said that the decision to terminate him was approved by City Council on January 14, 2020, and he later found out that a letter was sent by the City terminating the NMYFCP on January 15, 2020. He was no longer manager at that point.

Conclusion:

This report was submitted to the Commission Advocate, Mr. Murawski, for a probable cause determination.