



Sent via email to tpalladeno@madeirabeachfl.gov

September 29, 2016

Honorable Travis Palladeno
Mayor, City of Madeira Beach
300 Municipal Drive
Madeira Beach, FL 33708

Re: ICMA Executive Board Decision

Dear Mayor Palladeno:

The Executive Board of the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) voted on September 23, 2016 to publicly censure Shane Crawford and to permanently expel him from membership in ICMA for conduct that violates the ICMA Code of Ethics. The decision of the Executive Board, which is final, was based on a recommendation from the ICMA Committee on Professional Conduct (CPC) which conducted a formal review after a complaint was filed with ICMA.

The underlying facts of this case are not in dispute as Mr. Crawford has acknowledged that he is and has been involved in a personal relationship with a city staff member – his executive assistant – since August of last year. Consistent with past decisions, the Executive Board concluded that it is highly inappropriate for a city manager to have a personal relationship with a subordinate employee. Such a relationship exposes the organization to liability; creates the potential for conflicts of interest in fact and/or appearance stemming from personnel decisions made with regard to the employee; and can strain the professional relationships between the city manager and employees and between employees. This conduct violates the integrity standard outlined in Tenet 3 of the ICMA Code of Ethics.

With regard to Mr. Crawford's case, information was made available indicating that he recommended position advancements and salary increases for the employee that were ultimately approved by the city commission. Since Mr. Crawford and the employee reside together and share a bank account, the Executive Board found that Mr. Crawford reaped a financial benefit from his actions. This constitutes a violation of Tenet 12 which states that members shall not leverage their position for personal gain or benefit.

According to Mr. Crawford, he sought legal advice before entering into the relationship and also disclosed it to all members of the city commission. Those are important first steps in a process to determine whether one's behavior is appropriate.

Unfortunately, Mr. Crawford failed to take the next step which was to determine whether his conduct would meet the ethical standards of his professional association. As a member of ICMA, he had an affirmative obligation to follow the tenets of the ICMA Code of Ethics. Rather than relying on his own

Mayor Palladeno
September 29, 2016
Page 2 of 2

interpretation of the Code or that of an attorney, Mr. Crawford should have contacted ICMA for advice. Had he done so, he would have been advised that having a personal relationship with a staff member violates the ICMA Code of Ethics and that merely disclosing the personal relationship does not cure the conflict. In addition, he would have been informed that ICMA has been consistent in this conclusion in reviewing similar ethics cases. Those findings are both available on our website and noted in our member communications.

The ICMA Code of Ethics provides a tangible benefit to communities because it requires ICMA members to conduct themselves according to the highest ethical standards to maintain public confidence in their profession, their local government, and in their performance of the public trust. Adherence to the Code sets a standard that exceeds the requirements of the law and internal organizational practices. Professional local government managers who are members of ICMA have a proven track record of excellence in leadership and management in their communities. Beyond their valuable technical skills, ICMA members distinguish themselves as professionals by their adherence to the highest standards of integrity in their personal and professional conduct.

Each ICMA member agrees to abide by the Code and its enforcement when becoming an ICMA member. Any member who appears to have violated the Code is investigated in a peer-review process by the Committee on Professional Conduct and violators are subject to an array of sanctions including private and public censure; membership suspension; and/or membership bar or expulsion.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions pertaining to this matter and ICMA's ethics enforcement process.

Sincerely,



Martha Perego
Director of Ethics and Member Services
(202) 962-3668
mperego@icma.org

Inclusion: ICMA Code of Ethics

cc: Madeira Beach Vice Mayor Ghovaee and Commissioners Lister, Hodges, and Poe (email)
Members, ICMA Committee on Professional Conduct