



## BROWARD OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 27, 2018

#### ***Ethics, Sunshine, and Procurement Misconduct and Gross Mismanagement in the Greater Fort Lauderdale Convention and Visitors Bureau***

Broward Inspector General John W. Scott announced today that the Broward Office of the Inspector General (OIG) has issued a [final report](#) finding that a Greater Fort Lauderdale Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) vice president steered CVB contracts worth a total of approximately \$255,570 to her boyfriend's company over a three-year period.

The investigation concluded that Christine Roberts committed ethics and procurement misconduct and gross mismanagement, capitalizing on her position as Vice President of the CVB's Convention Sales division to unilaterally select or orchestrate the selection of her boyfriend Marcus Michaud's event production company for seven of eight CVB events under her control that exceeded the normal purchasing card threshold between July 2012 and June 2015. She also engaged in a prohibited conflicting relationship with him when she gave him a \$13,000 loan, secured by property he owned, at the same time the CVB did business with him.

The OIG determined that Ms. Roberts was able to funnel work to her boyfriend because the CVB failed to follow county procurement protocols designed to disburse public money equitably and economically. Instead, the CVB used its own, unauthorized procedures. Consequently, the OIG found that two other members of CVB's management team, former President/CEO Nicki Grossman and former Vice President of Tourism Sales Fernando Harb, engaged in county procurement code misconduct in the improper procurements detailed in the report. In addition, Ms. Roberts and Ms. Grossman engaged in gross mismanagement for their failure to properly administer at least \$255,570 in public funds.

The OIG determined that the conditions and conduct detailed in its report have discontinued. A new President/CEO, who replaced the former one in mid-2016, has effected several changes within the CVB, including Ms. Roberts's resignation and the agency's overhaul of its financial administrative practices, including how it procures vendor services. And, on September 7, 2018, after the OIG issued its preliminary report to the county and implicated parties, Mr. Harb tendered his resignation effective October 1, 2018.

The OIG requested that the county provide a status report on changes in the CVB's procurement process on or by January 25, 2019.