




## BROWARD OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

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### MEMORANDUM

To: Honorable Joy Cooper, Mayor, City of Hallandale Beach,  
and Members, Hallandale City Commission

From: John W. Scott, Inspector General 

Date: March 15, 2017

Subject: **OIG Status Report Re: *Dr. Deborah Brown Charged with Felony Grand Theft, Ref. OIG 11-020***

The purpose of this memorandum is to report on the Broward Office of the Inspector General (OIG)'s follow-up review of public records regarding the participation of Deborah Brown in pretrial intervention (PTI) for the felony charge of Grand Theft in the Third Degree and, in particular, whether she paid restitution to the city of Hallandale Beach or its CRA as a special condition of her PTI.

In April 2013 the OIG reported gross mismanagement of public funds by the city of Hallandale Beach and its CRA. During the course of our investigation, among other findings, we found probable cause to believe that Dr. Brown engaged in criminal conduct by misappropriating \$5,000 in Hallandale Beach CRA funds intended for a specific program of the Palms Center for the Arts (PCA). As we reported, instead of using those funds for that program, Dr. Brown, who then served as PCA president, diverted the \$5,000 to her personal use. Acting upon our referral, in May 2014, the Broward State Attorney's Office (SAO) charged Dr. Brown with Grand Theft in the Third Degree, and in September 2015, she and the SAO entered into an agreement whereby she commenced participation in the PTI program, which was administered by the Florida Department of Corrections (DC).

In March 2017 the OIG reviewed 48 pages produced from DC's "probation/parole record" in its case number I4713, which included copies of the following:

- Case history from intake to termination;
- The deferred prosecution agreement signed by Dr. Brown and an Assistant State Attorney;
- Dr. Brown's sworn statement of admission;
- Correspondence from DC to the City of Hallandale Beach, State Attorney's Office, Broward Sheriff's Office, Clerk of the Court, and the assigned Circuit Judge regarding referral to, acceptance in, and successful termination from the PTI program;
- Checklists, worksheets, and data entry forms;

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John W. Scott, *Inspector General*

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- Personal history and financial affidavit;
- SAO's charging document; and
- Offender financial obligation agreement verification.

From these records, we observed the following:

06/23/15	Dr. Brown completes pretrial interview worksheet, listing among five personal references "Mayor Joy Cooper, 400 S Federal Hwy, Hallandale Beach, FL 954.457.1325"
06/24/15	Dr. Brown executes a sworn statement admitting to theft of PCA grant and that "[s]he intends to repay the full \$5,000.00 to the City of Hallandale Beach"
06/24/15	Dr. Brown signs deferred prosecution agreement (condition number 11 is to pay \$5,000, plus a 4% surcharge, in equal monthly installments within the first eight months of PTI)
07/02/15	DC sends letter to "City of Hallandale Beach, FL (Attn: Mayor Joy Cooper), 400 S. Federal Hwy, Hallandale Beach, FL 33009" seeking the victim's consent to Dr. Brown's PTI ( <b>Exhibit 1</b> )
08/12/15	Exhibit 1 is date stamped by DC; there is a check mark indicating "consent"; "N/A" is handwritten next to "Restitution Due; and "Renee Miller" <sup>1</sup> handwritten above "print name"
08/28/15	Note on Exhibit 1 in supervising officer's handwriting: "8/28/15 per phone conversation not seeking restitution"
09/09/15	Assistant State Attorney signs deferred prosecution agreement with condition number 11
09/09/15	PTI commences
09/22/15	Dr. Brown is instructed on PTI conditions; restitution is not listed
03/15/16	SAO does not grant early termination of PTI
03/15/16	Dr. Brown permitted to report by mail until termination date
09/08/16	PTI successfully terminated

Thus, we have concluded that the State Attorney's Office properly conveyed the PTI condition of \$5,000 in restitution; however, the pretrial intervention supervisor did not require Dr. Brown to pay any restitution, as the supervisor relied on the representation of the former city manager, the city mayor, or both that the city was discharging Dr. Brown's \$5,000 debt to the city.

Attachment

cc: Roger Carlton, City Manager, City of Hallandale Beach

<sup>1</sup> Renee Miller was Hallandale Beach's City Manager in 2015.

**OIG 11-020**

# **EXHIBIT 1**



DEPARTMENT of  
CORRECTIONS

Governor  
**RICK SCOTT**

Secretary  
**JULIE L. JONES**

*Changing Lives to Ensure a Safer Florida*

501 South Calhoun Street, Tallahassee, FL 32399-2500

<http://www.dc.state.fl.us>

**PRETRIAL INTERVENTION PROGRAM**

July 2, 2015

City of Hallandale Beach, FL (Attn: Mayor Joy Cooper)  
400 S. Federal Hwy  
Hallandale Beach, FL 33009

RE: Deborah R. Brown  
Docket #: 14-006686CF10A  
Charge (s): I. Grand Theft  
Division: Judge Bober

**RECEIVED**  
AUG 12 2015  
DEPT. OF CORRECTIONS  
CIRCUIT 17-4

Dear Sir/Madam:

This correspondence is in reference to the above mentioned individual's arrest for the offense(s) of I. Grand Theft. This office, in collaboration with the State Attorney's Office, has a diversionary program for the intensive supervision and counseling of certain selected first time offenders of felony offenses. The object of the program is to offer to these individuals an opportunity for rehabilitation without the stigma of a criminal record. If the defendant is accepted into the program, the prosecution of the case is deferred for a period of one (1) year in order to permit program participation. Furthermore, the individual is required to meet certain obligations such as victim restitution (if applicable), community service, educational/self-improvement classes, etc. If these conditions are not met, prosecution will be initiated.

It will be determined through an investigation if this individual is eligible for participation in our program, in that, he/she must have no prior felony arrest history. The law, however, requires that the victim MUST consent. It would be appreciated if you would indicate your wishes below. Also, please provide the amount of restitution (IF ANY) owed to you as a result of this offense.

Please return this letter to our office immediately, so that we may notify the Court in a timely manner.

Sincerely,

*Babette Davis*  
Babette Davis  
Correctional Probation Senior Officer  
Pretrial Intervention Program

8/28/15 Per phone conversation not  
seeking restitution

CONSENT: \_\_\_\_\_  
DO NOT CONSENT: \_\_\_\_\_  
RESTITUTION DUE: N/A  
ATTACH ITEMIZED LIST

Note:

PRINT NAME

STREET ADDRESS

CITY  
BD/mag

STATE

ZIP CODE

PHONE

Please send any correspondence to below address.

17-4 Cypress  
Probation and Parole Services  
5610 NW 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Fort Lauderdale Florida 33309  
(954)267-4948 \* Fax (954)267-4967

Trust ★ Respect ★ Accountability ★ Integrity ★ Leadership