



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO
PRESS RELEASE

Ethics Commission

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, October 13, 2011

CONTACT:

Stacey Fulhorst
San Diego Ethics Commission
(619) 533-3476

**ETHICS COMMISSION ANNOUNCES SETTLEMENT
WITH CITY COUNCILMEMBER MARTI EMERALD
CONCERNING VIOLATION OF ETHICS LAWS**

Stacey Fulhorst, Executive Director of the City of San Diego Ethics Commission, announced today the Commission's approval of a stipulated settlement agreement with Marti Emerald, the City Councilmember who represents City Council District 7. Councilmember Emerald has agreed to pay a \$500 fine in connection with the use of City resources for the preparation and dissemination of a News Release that included information regarding campaign-related activities.

Ms. Fulhorst explained that Councilmember Emerald had received numerous inquiries regarding the impact the redistricting process would have on the representation of her constituents. In response, her staff prepared and issued a News Release that explained the results of the redistricting process, advised current residents of District 7 that her office would continue to serve them in the interim, and announced her plans to run for office in the newly-created Council District 9. Because a portion of the News Release concerned her campaign for future elective office, Councilmember Emerald used City resources for a campaign-related activity in violation of the City's Ethics Ordinance.

Commission Chair, Clyde Fuller, related that the Commission thought the amount of the fine was appropriate given the factors in mitigation. Specifically, he pointed out that the majority

of the News Release was not related to campaign activities, and that there was no effort to conceal the use of City resources. According to Commissioner Fuller, “The evidence indicated that Councilmember Emerald thought the News Release was related to official City business, and not to campaign activities.”

Ethics Commission fines are paid to the City of San Diego’s General Fund. The stipulated settlements approved by the Commission resolve all factual and legal issues without the necessity of holding an administrative hearing.

#####