



Memorandum



Miami-Dade County Office of the Inspector General
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To: The Honorable Carlos A. Gimenez, Mayor, Miami-Dade County
The Honorable Rebeca Sosa, Chairwoman
and Members, Board of County Commissioners, Miami-Dade County

From: Patra Liu, Interim Inspector General

Date: September 6, 2013

Subject: Second of Four Defendants Sentenced in the Miami-Dade County Short Sales
Scam; IG10-54

Johnny Bou Nassar (Nassar), who was arrested in February 2012 with three other co-defendants, pled guilty today for his part in a real estate scam that snared 15 victims and defrauded them of over \$2.4 million. Nassar pled guilty to 13 felony charges that included Racketeering, Grand Theft, and Uttering a Forged Instrument. Nassar was sentenced to two years of community control followed by 15 years of probation. His sentence stipulates cooperation with prosecutors in the continuing prosecution of the two remaining co-defendants. The first of the four defendants, Zoraida Abreu, pled guilty in May 2013 and was similarly sentenced to 15 years of probation. She too is bound to cooperate in the continuing prosecution of the remaining co-defendants. Nassar, like Abreu, will also be responsible for making restitution payments and paying the costs of the investigation.

In a joint investigation with the Miami-Dade Police Department (MDPD) and the State Attorney's Office, the Office of the Inspector General uncovered a scheme that used a Florida corporation – called Miami-Dade County Short Sales, Inc. – to lure victims into believing that they were getting rock bottom prices on real estate. In one scheme, the victims were falsely led to believe that the defendants were in collusion with a County employee who could facilitate the pre-sale of a delinquent property prior to the scheduled public auction to satisfy the tax certificate holders. It was false that a County employee was involved in the tax deed scheme. In another scheme, the defendants lured buyers into believing that they were purchasing lucrative short sale properties. Neither the defendants nor their company had the legal authority to sell any of the properties they purported to broker. For both schemes, victim losses ranged from \$6,000 to over \$500,000. Total losses exceeded \$2.4 million.

The success of this investigation was possible due to the collaboration of the MDPD and the assistance of the Miami-Dade County Clerk of the Courts and the Miami-Dade County Tax Collector's Office.

cc: Hon. Harvey Ruvin, Clerk of the Courts, Miami-Dade County
Mr. Ed Marquez, Deputy Mayor/Finance Director, Miami-Dade County
Mr. J.D. Patterson, Director, Miami-Dade Police Department
Mr. Fernando Casamayor, Miami-Dade County Tax Collector
Ms. Cathy Jackson, Director, Audit and Management Services
Mr. Charles Anderson, Commission Auditor