

Baltimore City Ethics Board
635 City Hall
Baltimore, MD 21202
April 14, 2021

Minutes of the Meeting

The Ethics Board met on April 14, 2021 at 2:30 p.m. by Teams videoconference.

Call to Order: Chairman Stephan Fogleman called the Ethics Board meeting to order at 2:44 p.m. with a quorum present. Board Member Hengerer was absent.

Six Month Report Update: Director Hochstetler updated the Board on the Six Month Report, which staff published on the Board's website and Twitter, as well as sent to key stakeholders, including elected officials.

Board Discussion: Board members discussed the evaluation process for Board staff. Director Hochstetler agreed to solicit the Board's input during the City's regular employee evaluation cycle.

Statement Concerning March's Administrative Session and Potential

Administrative Session: Chair Fogleman read the following statement:

The Board may need to close some or all of this meeting to preserve the confidentiality mandated by the Ethics Code or as otherwise authorized by the State Open Meetings Act. Likewise, upon adjournment of the Open Session, the Board may reconvene for an Administrative Session to discuss non-public, administrative functions of the Board.

Per the Open Meetings Act, the Board discloses that it adjourned its virtual open meeting on March 10, 2021 to enter into an administrative session at approximately 3:04 pm. All Board members were present. Members discussed administrative matters including potential complaints and advisory opinions.

Approval of Written Minutes: The Board approved the March 10, 2021 minutes with a vote of 3-0.

Director's Update: Director Hochstetler updated the Board on the staff's recent work:

- Ethics Training
 - 1 Ethics Training session was held in March with 68 attendees.
 - 2 Ethics Training sessions have been scheduled for the coming months:
 - 4/26/2021 (84 people registered so far)
 - 6/29/2021 (4 people registered so far)

- Help Desk
 - 134 help desk requests were received and resolved by the Ethics Board Staff in March.
 - 11 help desk requests were from lobbyists.
 - 3 help desk requests were concerning gift solicitations.
 - 73 help desk requests were concerning financial disclosure statements.
 - 32 help desk requests were ethics inquiries.
 - 10 help desk requests were concerning the Ethics Training.
 - 5 help desk requests were administrative (question about deadlines, forms, etc).
 - 187 help desk requests received so far in April.

- Financial Disclosure Statements:
 - 3000+ required filers.
 - 949 filers have submitted financial disclosure statements ahead of the April 30 deadline.
 - The Board discussed the financial disclosure filing process. Vice chair Davis recommended that Board staff send to each HR liaison a list of required filers who have not yet submitted their forms. Board member Sampson recommended that the Board note any late or outstanding statements in the employee's personnel files. Chair Fogleman proposed that the Board waive late fees for 30 days, while the deadline would remain the same. Director Hochstetler proposed that the Board postpone the decision on late fees until the next Board meeting.

- Additional Ethics Requirements (Since January)
 - Since the last Ethics Board meeting, Board staff have received:
 - 5 Conflicts Affidavits
 - 8 Notices of Ethics Requirements

- Gift Solicitation Reports
 - 1 gift solicitation application submitted to the Ethics Board.
 - 2 gift solicitation campaigns filed final reports.
 - 2 gift solicitation campaigns filed interim reports.
 - 1 gift solicitation campaign will resubmit its final report, since its original submission was not cumulative.

- Lobbying
 - The Board received one lobbying activity late fee.
 - 2 lobbyists have not yet paid their late activity report fees.

- Bill Report: Director Hochstetler discussed the Board's Bill Report for Bill #21-0019. This Bill establishes the Baltimore City Office of LGBTQ Affairs and outlines the ethics requirements for the Office's employees and LGBTQ Commission members. These requirements are consistent with requirements for other City employees and commission members, so the Board does not have an unfavorable comment.

Trauma Informed Care Trainings Charitable/Governmental Solicitation

Application received from Councilmember Cohen's office: The Board approved the gift solicitation application with a vote of 3-0.

Destiny's Dream Scholarship Charitable/Governmental Solicitation Application

received from Councilmember Cohen's office: The Board approved the gift solicitation application with a vote of 3-0.

Board Discussion: Chair Fogleman and Vice Chair Davis requested that Board staff review fiscal sponsors for each gift solicitation application prior to presenting the application to the Board.

Move to Administrative Session: Board members voted 3-0 to move to an Administrative Session.

The public meeting adjourned at 3:14 pm.