



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

OFFICE OF STATE ETHICS

CITIZEN'S ETHICS ADVISORY BOARD OFFICE OF STATE ETHICS 18-20 Trinity Street, Hartford, CT 06106

MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 20, 2020 REGULAR MEETING

The Citizen's Ethics Advisory Board ("Board") of the Office of State Ethics ("OSE") held a Regular Meeting on Thursday, August 20, 2020, by teleconference.

Vice-Chair of the Board, Jason Farrell, called the meeting to order at 1:06 p.m.

The following Board members were present:

Dena Castricone, Chair
Mary Bigelow
Karen Christiana

N. Beth Cook
Jason Farrell, Vice-Chair
Nichelle Mullins

The following staff members of the OSE were present:

Peter Lewandowski, Executive Director
Brian O'Dowd, General Counsel
Mark Wasielewski, Ethics Enforcement Officer
Nancy Nicolescu, Director of Education &
Communications
Marianne Sadowski, Deputy General Counsel

Diane Buxo, Assistant General Counsel
Jennifer Montgomery, Assistant Ethics
Enforcement Officer
Alex Mercier, Legal Intern
Melissa Hamilton, Paralegal & Clerk of the
Board

The following topics were addressed during the meeting:

1. The minutes of the July 23, 2020 regular meeting were presented to the Board for approval.

On the motion of Chair Castricone, seconded by Ms. Bigelow, the Board voted six (6) to zero (0) to approve the minutes of the July 23, 2020 Regular Meeting.

2. Vice-Chair Farrell presented the Chairperson's report, informing the Board that he will be resigning from his position at the University of Hartford and will be pursuing a consulting business venture.

3. Vice-Chair Farrell announced the need to create a Nominating Committee to facilitate the process of establishing the leadership of the Citizen's Ethics Advisory Board. Mr. Farrell stated that the Committee will require two volunteers from the Board who are not considering a Chair or Vice-Chair position. Board member Bigelow volunteered to serve on the Committee and the Board selected Board member Chiusano as the second volunteer.

On the motion of Chair Castricone, seconded by Ms. Cook, the Board voted six (6) to zero (0) to approve Board members Bigelow and Chiusano to serve on the Nominating Committee.

4. General Counsel O'Dowd presented the Legal Division report, noting that last month was relatively standard in terms of the number of requests the Division has been receiving.
5. Director of Education & Communications Nancy Nicolescu presented the Media report and reported that there were no in-person trainings conducted in August. Ms. Nicolescu's announcement to the Board that in-person trainings remain low raised the question by Vice-Chair Farrell of whether such missed opportunities may impact adversely as it relates to ethics. Ms. Nicolescu reassured Vice-Chair Farrell and the other Board members that while in-person trainings by OSE are at a low, online and virtual trainings continue to be held as well as trainings by agency's ethics liaisons. Ms. Nicolescu indicated that one in-person training by OSE is scheduled for next month.

In conjunction with the Education & Communications report was an invitation to the University of Hartford Presidents' College, which Ms. Nicolescu and Executive Director Lewandowski plan to co-teach on October 8th and 15th.

Ms. Nicolescu discussed the revised Citizen's Ethics Advisory Board's Board Member Overview and its enclosures.

6. Ethics Enforcement Officer Mark Wasielewski presented the Enforcement Division report, highlighting four items the Division has worked on during the past month.

First, the Division is fully engaged in enforcement initiatives of lobbyist filings for the first and second quarters: Seventy-seven matters were initially noticed for hearing; however, the Division currently has thirty matters proceeding, which will likely decrease as parties have expressed interest in settlement.

Second, three Statements of Financial Interests matters are open and noticed for hearing. Mr. Wasielewski noted that if multiple pending Enforcement matters proceed to hearing, all may not be heard in a single day. He suggested that any remaining matters be heard in the following month(s).

Third, the Division settled a matter against Jo-Ann Williams for \$3,500. The matter involves Ms. Williams's hiring and supervising her sister in a part-time adjunct/mentorship position. Mr. Wasielewski highlighted that the school referred Ms. Williams's actions to the Division pursuant to General Statutes § 1-101pp, once it became aware of them.

Finally, Mr. Wasielewski discussed the one-page attachment to the Ethics Enforcement Division report, titled "Documents Lobbyists Must Maintain for Audit." Mr. Wasielewski stated that the

document is the first work product of the Audit Process Review Subcommittee and thanked Marc Crayton, Nancy Nicolescu, Peter Lewandowski and Brian O'Dowd for their contributions to the establishment of the document. Chair Dena Castricone congratulated Mr. Wasielewski and the team on the great work. She commented that the document is exactly what the committee had in mind in terms of educational materials relating to documentation. Board member Cook concurred with Chair Castricone. Mr. Wasielewski added that the document will be posted to the OSE's website and presented to the lobbyist community.

7. Executive Director Peter Lewandowski presented his report to the Board, first thanking the staff for their work and commitment in facilitating the agency's operation during the pandemic and their continuing to provide responsive service to the regulated community and the public.

Concerning personnel matters, Mr. Lewandowski informed the Board that the Department of Administrative Services and the Office of Policy and Management ("OPM") have approved the hiring of a Fiscal Assistant, a position that was recently vacated; and that an offer was extended and accepted for the Human Resources position. Ms. Charla Vincent will commence her role as the three watch-dog agencies' Human Resources Manager on August 28, 2020. Ms. Vincent's office will be situated at the Freedom of Information Commission ("FOIC").

In the next couple of months and in preparation of OSE's relocation, the staff will be applying record retention protocols to OSE's paper records currently stored at 18-20 Trinity Street. The Information Technology ("IT") staff will also commence preparation of OSE's and FOIC's IT systems for the transition.

OSE's fiscal budget for fiscal years 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 are currently being established. The budget is to be submitted to OPM in September as a pass-through budget; however, it is ultimately the decision of the Legislature and its Appropriations Committee.

Vice-Chair Farrell's and Board member Cook's appointments are coming to an end in September. Both members have expressed their interest in reappointment and accordingly, the requests have been submitted to the Governor's office for consideration.

Legislative Proposals will be presented to the Board for consideration at the October meeting. The plan is to resubmit the Proposals that were submitted during this past Legislative session; however, new ideas may be submitted for the Board's consideration. New ideas are to be directed to Executive Director Lewandowski or General Counsel O'Dowd.

Finally, Executive Director Lewandowski stated that he has been in his role for one year and subject to an evaluation by the Board. Staff are welcome to partake in his evaluation by submitting feedback to Chair Castricone by September 1, 2020. It is anticipated that the Board will perform Mr. Lewandowski's evaluation at the September or October meeting.

Vice-Chair Farrell reminded the Board that he will serve as the hearing officer for the September 24, 2020 UAPA matters.

On the motion of Chair Castricone, seconded by Vice-Chair Farrell, the Board voted six (6) to zero (0) to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Melissa Hamilton
Clerk of the Citizen's Ethics Advisory Board
Office of State Ethics

Date approved
(By the Citizen's Ethics Advisory Board)