



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 NOVEMBER 19, 2020 REGULAR MEETING

The Citizen's Ethics Advisory Board ("Board") of the Office of State Ethics ("OSE") held a Regular Meeting on Thursday, November 19, 2020, by videoconference.

Chair of the Board, Dena Castricone, called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m.

The following Board members were present:

Dena Castricone, Chair
Mary Bigelow
Charles Chiusano
Karen Christiana

Jason Farrell, Vice-Chair
Cheryl Lipson
Nichelle Mullins
Laura Schuyler

The following staff members of the OSE were present:

Peter Lewandowski, Executive Director
Brian O'Dowd, General Counsel
Mark Wasielewski, Ethics Enforcement Officer
Nancy Nicoleescu, Director of Education & Communications
Marianne Sadowski, Deputy General Counsel
Marc Crayton, Deputy Ethics Enforcement Officer
Diane Buxo, Assistant General Counsel

Jennifer Montgomery, Assistant Ethics Enforcement Officer
Michael Morrissey, Legal Investigator
Alaaeldin Ali, Information Technology Analyst II
Melissa Hamilton, Paralegal & Clerk of the Board
Malissa Hurry, Paralegal

The following topics were addressed during the meeting:

1. Laura Schuyler, an appointee of Governor Ned Lamont, was sworn in by the Board's Chair, Dena Castricone.
2. The minutes of the October 22, 2020 regular meeting were presented to the Board for approval.

On the motion of Ms. Lipson, seconded by Mr. Chiusano, the Board voted eight (8) to zero (0) to approve the minutes of the October 22, 2020 Regular Meeting.

3. Chair Castricone explained the process of the random selection of client lobbyists for audit pursuant to General Statutes § 1-96a (b), and she designated Information Technology Analyst Ali to share his computer screen and perform the random selection of the client lobbyists for audit. Chair Castricone added that immediately following the selection of the client lobbyists, the names of the lobbyists will be posted on the OSE's webpage; that all selected client lobbyists will receive notification from OSE; and that a PowerPoint presentation or information session will be available for all client lobbyists selected for audit outlining guidelines and expectations.

Deputy Ethics Enforcement Officer Marc Crayton explained some of his responsibilities at the OSE and his interface with the client lobbyist audit drawing process. He thanked the Information Technology Division for establishing the electronic random selection of client lobbyists for audit, which has proved to be extremely helpful during these challenging times and necessary to conduct business remotely. He also thanked Director of Education & Communications Nancy Nicolescu for disclosing to the public the means to access the public audit drawing of client lobbyists which General Statutes § 1-96a and § 1-92-56 of the OSE mandate. Mr. Crayton shared that the client lobbyists that are subject to the 2021 audit drawing are registrants between January 1, 2018, and December 31, 2020; and that fifteen (15) client lobbyists will be selected for the 2021 audit drawing, with the first ten (10) lobbyists being subject to the audit and the next five (5) lobbyists serving as alternates in the event any of the first ten (10) selected lobbyists were audited in the prior two audit periods.

The following client lobbyists were chosen randomly for audit. (The audits will be conducted in the order that the lobbyists were selected).

- 1) **PAC Group, LLC**
- 2) **SPI/APBA**
- 3) **SI Group Client Services**
- 4) **CT Camping Assoc.**
- 5) **Warner Theatre, Inc.**
- 6) **NORTHEAST PHARMACY SERVICE CORPORATION**
- 7) **National Waste & Recycling Association**
- 8) **Anthem, Inc. and Its Affiliates dba Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield of Connecticut**
- 9) **CT Vineyard & Winery Association**
- 10) **The Village for Families & Children, Inc.**

Lobbyist that were chosen randomly to serve as alternates:

- 1) **Community Health Center Association**
- 2) **Amer. Institute for Foreign Study**
- 3) **McDonald's Corporation**
- 4) **Bristol-Myers Squibb Company**
- 5) **Consumer Data Industry Association**

4. Chair Castricone presented the Chairperson report, noting that no Hearing Officer is required for a December Uniform Administrative Procedure Act (“UAPA”) hearing because no such hearing is held in December. Jason Farrell volunteered to serve as January’s UAPA Hearing Officer. Chair Castricone reminded the board members of the upcoming COGEL conference and the opportunity to attend the conference virtually and on-demand (at a date and time that is convenient to the attendee). Chair Castricone also sought the interest of members to attend some of the on-demand sessions as a group. Finally, Chair Castricone presented the proposed 2021 schedule for the regular meetings and the UAPA hearings to the Board for review and adoption.

On the motion of Mr. Chiusano, seconded by Ms. Lipson, the Board voted eight (8) to zero (0) to approve the 2021 regular Board meeting and UAPA hearing schedule.

5. General Counsel Brian O’Dowd presented the Legal Division report.
6. Director of Education & Communications Nancy Nicolescu presented the Training and Media reports. Ms. Nicolescu shared the addition of a training with the City of Waterbury scheduled for this evening. Further, Ms. Nicolescu discussed the schedule of the upcoming COGEL conference.

Chair Castricone thanked Ms. Nicolescu for assisting her earlier during the client lobbyists drawing and all the training that she has conducted on behalf of the agency.

7. Ethics Enforcement Officer Mark Wasielewski presented the Enforcement Division report, highlighting that the Division is busy handling an uptick in allegations, complaints, and referrals from other state agencies and resulting investigations. Further, Mr. Wasielewski noted that the Division: 1) continues to diligently work on the Audit Subcommittee’s proposals; 2) has recently conducted the annual client lobbyists audit drawing; 3) has begun preparing for the upcoming biennial registration period, which included gathering and distributing information via various methods of communications and the lobbyists’ registration certification form, regarding the audit process, potential penalties, and preservation of documents; and 4) is taking the opportunity now, to communicate with the lobbyist community regarding the year-end filing of the communicator lobbyists financial report, ETH-2A, and the responsibilities of the business organizations and its individual lobbyist members to effectuate the accurate and timely filing of reports. Finally, Mr. Wasielewski informed the Board that in considering the agency’s upcoming relocation, the Division has been making document disposal requests.

Chair Castricone thanked Mr. Wasielewski and Mr. Crayton for all their work on the education efforts pertaining to lobbyists.

8. Deputy Ethics Enforcement Officer Crayton presented the lobbyist audit report for CT Association for the Performing Arts, requesting approval of the audit and its finding. Mr. Crayton noted that the audit consisted of one finding, a couple of late quarterly reports in 2018 and 2019. No corrective actions were recommended by the Division as the late filings fell within the grace period that the Division typically provides to lobbyists without prior Enforcement actions. However, CT Association for the Performing Arts responded with its own corrective action to ensure future timely filings.

On the motion of Ms. Chiusano, seconded by Mr. Farrell, the Board voted eight (8) to zero (0) to approve the audit report for CT Association for the Performing Arts.

9. Executive Director Lewandowski presented his report to the Board, welcoming Board member Laura Schuyler on behalf of the OSE's staff.

Mr. Lewandowski updated the Board that his meeting with the Boston Consulting Group (a management consulting firm retained by the Lamont Administration to identify efficiencies across governmental services due to the impending retirement wave to occur in 2022) went well. Mr. Lewandowski indicated that during the meeting he focused on conveying: 1) the importance of the watch-dog agencies' independence; 2) the challenges experienced by the watch-dog agencies during consolidation under the Malloy Administration; 3) the importance of constitutional issues to be considered when OSE provides services; 4) OSE's commitment to incorporating efficiencies within its operations as reflected by the Memorandum of Understanding with Freedom of Information Commission and State Elections Enforcement Commission; and 5) OSE's progression to making its operations more accessible to the public. Further, the impact of pending state retirements as it relates to OSE was discussed with Mr. Lewandowski reiterating that the staff is relatively young; therefore, the agency did not anticipate any wave of retirements and due to the small size of the OSE, all its positions are critical to its operation. Mr. Lewandowski informed the Board that a report from Boston Consulting Group is anticipated in February.

In terms of OSE's relocation, Mr. Lewandowski relayed that the completion of the construction of the office will be delayed until March due to supply chain problems. However, he does not expect a move until May of 2021 due to some critical operational deadlines occurring at the time of the anticipated construction completion. OSE has already commenced preparation for the move by conducting document disposal pursuant to retention policies. Mr. Lewandowski thanked Mr. Wasielewski and Assistant General Counsel Diane Buxo for their work on the document disposal of the files located in the basement. (Mr. Lewandowski informed the Board that the goal of the agency is to move as little paper as possible to the new location).

Mr. Lewandowski provided an update on the legislative proposals, noting that, as usual and as a courtesy, he met with the staff of the Governor and Office of Policy and Management to discuss the proposals. He was met with no objections since all, except for two proposals, were the same submitted this past legislative session. The proposals will be submitted to the Government Administration and Elections Committee as soon as new members of the committee are appointed, which is likely to occur sometime in December.

Finally, Mr. Lewandowski informed the Board that on the training and education fronts, he and Ms. Nicolescu:

- were guest speakers at a University of Connecticut School of Law class on November 2, 2020;
- presented to the town of Granby's Board of Selectmen on November 9, 2020, regarding municipal ethics and how to create a practical Code of Ethics for a Municipality; and

- in early December, will be presenting trainings to the newly elected members of the General Assembly.

Chair Castricone thanked Mr. Lewandowski and Ms. Nicolescu for their work through trainings and advocacy, and for emphasizing the agency's goal and priority of education and promotion of transparency.

On the motion of Mr. Chiusano, seconded by Ms. Lipson, the Board voted eight (8) to zero (0) to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Melissa Hamilton".

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

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