



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 JANUARY 21, 2021 REGULAR MEETING

The Citizen's Ethics Advisory Board ("Board") of the Office of State Ethics ("OSE") held a Regular Meeting on Thursday, January 21, 2021, by teleconference.

Chair of the Board, Dena Castricone, called the meeting to order at 1:06 p.m.

The following Board members were present:

Dena Castricone, Chair
Mary Bigelow
Charles F. 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 Nicolescu, 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
Melissa Hamilton, Paralegal Specialist & Clerk of the Board

The following topics were addressed during the meeting:

1. The minutes of the December 17, 2020 Regular Meeting were presented to the Board for approval.

On the motion of Mr. Chiusano, seconded by Ms. Lipson, the Board voted eight (8) to zero (0) to approve the minutes of the December 17, 2020 Regular Meeting.

2. Chair Castricone presented the Chairperson's report, noting the Clerk of the Board's exceptional work with the Board's monthly meeting minutes. The Board was reminded that Board member

Lipson will serve as the UAPA Hearing Officer on February 25, 2021. Board member Chiusano volunteered to serve as the Hearing Officer for the UAPA hearing(s) scheduled for March 25, 2021.

3. General Counsel O'Dowd presented the Legal Division report, remarking on yet another busy month for the Division with work productivity resembling productivity levels prior to the pandemic. Mr. O'Dowd ascribed the increase in requests from lobbyists to the commencement of the lobbyist registration and reporting period.

Chair Castricone thanked General Counsel O'Dowd and the Legal Division for their diligent work of summarizing the monthly informal advisory opinions for the Board's review.

4. Director of Education & Communications Nancy Nicolescu presented the Training and Media reports.
5. Ethics Enforcement Officer Wasielewski presented the Enforcement Division Report, highlighting an uptick in confidential matters and noting that the Audit Process Review Subcommittee initiatives have been fully implemented. The initiatives culminated with Deputy Ethics Enforcement Officer Crayton developing a presentation to educate audit selectees on the audit process. Mr. Wasielewski thanked Mr. Crayton, Ms. Nicolescu and other staff members for their contributions to the implementation of the Audit Process Review Subcommittee initiatives.

Chair Castricone informed the Enforcement Division and the staff members who played a role in the implementation of the Audit Process Review Subcommittee initiatives, that as a member of the subcommittee, she is very impressed with the initiatives that were developed and implemented as they are aligned with the subcommittee's mission to educate and train lobbyists about audits and their enforcement. Chair Castricone looks forward to an update on Mr. Crayton's training sessions.

6. Executive Director Lewandowski presented a legislative update to the Board. He noted that due to the General Assembly conducting its operations remotely, the legislative leadership has requested that state agencies and anyone who is interested in presenting bills, limit the number of bills to essential ones. Accordingly, it was determined that the best way for OSE to proceed is to present the Municipal Ethics bill and Revisions to the Codes of Ethics bill.

The bills that were approved by the Board in October of 2020 were submitted to the Government Administration and Elections ("GAE") Committee in early January and Mr. Lewandowski anticipates having conversations with the GAE Committee soon.

7. Mr. Lewandowski discussed the "Ban on Contingency Fee Lobbying" legislative proposal that was submitted to the Board for consideration. The proposal is being submitted on behalf of the Enforcement Division to clarify that subsection (b) of General Statutes § 1-97 applies to both client and communicator lobbyists.

Ms. Lipson asked and was advised that the language of the Municipal Ethics bill that was submitted last legislative session is the same language in the Municipal Ethics proposal submitted to the GAE Committee for the current legislative session. Additionally, Ms. Lipson asked and was advised that amendments to already submitted Revisions to the Codes of Ethics proposal can be made at any time

during the session, but it is the OSE's goal to submit any amendments to proposals before the proposals are voted out of the GAE Committee.

On the motion of Ms. Bigelow, seconded by Vice-Chair Farrell, the Board voted eight (8) to zero (0) to approve the Legislative Proposal concerning the "Ban on Contingency Fee Lobbying."

8. Mr. Lewandowski presented his Executive Director's report, highlighting that due to the pandemic and the resulting restrictions, some of OSE's processes for the new lobbying biennial had to be changed. He acknowledged staff member Ann Morgan for fielding a multitude of lobbyists' calls and requests relating to 2020 year-end financial report filing and the new lobbyist registration biennium. Mr. Lewandowski also acknowledged staff members Melissa Hamilton, Malissa Hurry, Diane Buxo and Nancy Nicolescu for assisting Ms. Morgan with this task.

The State Auditor's Audit Report for fiscal years 2017, 2018 and 2019 was discussed. Attention was directed to the three recommendations specified in the report, one of which has been repeated in previous reports: the requirement to promptly file a yearly report to the Governor. The other two recommendations include the deposit of checks received by the agency within 24-hours unless a waiver from the Treasurer's office is in place to extend the deposit deadline, and the performance of an annual physical inventory. Board member Mullins inquired as to the steps the OSE instituted to ensure future compliance and Mr. Lewandowski replied that yearly report to the Governor has already resumed; that he will obtain a waiver extending the check deposit deadline in Enforcement matters awaiting the conclusion and execution of the necessary paperwork; and that the annual inventory, which was not complied with in only 2019 due to administrative changes, including in the executive leadership role, has resumed.

An update on the Fiscal Administrative Officer vacancy was provided: the screening period has concluded, and five to eight candidates will be interviewed next week.

Mr. Lewandowski has a meeting scheduled with the Department of Administrative Services next week to discuss tentative dates for the relocation of the OSE to 165 Capitol Avenue, the State Office Building.

Finally, concerning the budget, state agencies are awaiting the release of the Governor's two-year budget, which should occur in early February. Chair Castricone asked and Mr. Lewandowski responded that the reinstatement of the Legal Investigator position was included in the OSE's budget that was submitted to the Office of Policy and Management.

On the motion of Mr. Chiusano, seconded by Ms. Christiana, the Board voted eight (8) to zero (0) to enter into an Executive Session to discuss strategy and negotiations with respect to pending claims or pending litigation, pursuant to General Statutes §§ 1-200 (6) (B) and 1-210 (b) (4).

The following Board members were present for the Executive Session:

Dena Castricone, Chair
Mary Bigelow
Charles F. Chiusano

Karen Christiana
Jason Farrell, Vice-Chair
Cheryl Lipson

Nichelle Mullins

Laura Schuyler

The following staff members were present for the Executive Session:

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

Marc Crayton, Deputy Ethics Enforcement
Officer
Diane Buxo, Assistant General Counsel
Jennifer Montgomery, Assistant Ethics
Enforcement Officer
Melissa Hamilton, Paralegal Specialist &
Clerk of the Board

On the motion of Vice-Chair Farrell, seconded by Ms. Lipson, the Board voted eight (8) to zero (0) to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:46 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)