



# STATE OF CONNECTICUT

## OFFICE OF STATE ETHICS

**CITIZEN'S ETHICS ADVISORY BOARD  
OFFICE OF STATE ETHICS  
165 Capitol Avenue, Suite 1200, Hartford, CT 06106**

### **MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 19, 2023 REGULAR MEETING**

The Citizen's Ethics Advisory Board ("Board") of the Office of State Ethics ("OSE") held a Regular Meeting on Thursday, January 19, 2023.

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 (virtual)  
Nichelle Mullins, Vice-Chair (virtual)  
Mary Bigelow

Charles Chiusano  
Karen Christiana (virtual)  
Cheryl Lipson

#### **The following staff members of the OSE were present:**

Peter Lewandowski, Executive Director  
Brian O'Dowd, General Counsel (virtual)  
Mark Wasielewski, Ethics Enforcement Officer  
Marianne Sadowski, Deputy General Counsel (virtual)  
Marc Crayton, Deputy Ethics Enforcement Officer (virtual)

Diane Buxo, Assistant General Counsel (virtual)  
Jennifer Montgomery, Assistant Ethics Enforcement Officer (virtual)  
Carol Langevin, Associate Accounts Examiner (virtual)  
Melissa Hamilton, Paralegal and Clerk of the Board

#### **The following topics were addressed during the meeting:**

1. The minutes of the December 15, 2022 Regular meeting were presented to the Board for approval.

**On the motion of Mr. Chiusano, seconded by Ms. Bigelow, the Board voted five (5) to zero (0), with Ms. Lipson abstaining, to approve the Minutes of the December 15, 2022 Regular meeting.**

2. Chair Castricone opened the chairperson's report with a reminder that Mr. Chiusano will serve as the February 9, 2023 Uniform Administrative Procedure Act ("UAPA") Hearing Officer,

and with a request for a volunteer to serve as the March 9, 2023 UAPA Hearing Officer. Ms. Lipson volunteered to do so. The Chair then provided an update regarding the Executive Director's annual evaluation process, including the Executive Director's goals and objectives for 2023, and the steps and timelines for the completion of the 2022 evaluation.

**On the motion of Ms. Christiana, seconded by Mr. Chiusano, the Board voted six (6) to zero (0) to approve the Executive Director's Goals and Objectives for 2023.**

3. General Counsel O'Dowd presented the Legal Division report, noting that the "comment period" as it relates to the re-filing of the proposed amendments to the OSE Regulations has ended, and the agency received no comments. The Attorney General's review is the next step.
4. Ethics Enforcement Officer Mark Wasielewski presented the Enforcement Division report, highlighting that the Division is in its peak season due to its enforcement of lobbyist reports, including annual reports. Thus far, the Division has noticed 12 hearings with the potential for more due to grace periods. Mr. Wasielewski acknowledged the Division's paralegal, Malissa Hurry, for administering the Division's lobbyist initiatives while also performing background checks and assisting with front-end coverage of answering lobbyists' reporting and registration filing questions.

Mr. Wasielewski further expressed appreciation to Deputy Enforcement Officer Marc Crayton and other members of the Division for their collaborative efforts in training new staff and maintaining the Division during his absence.

5. Executive Director Peter Lewandowski opened the education report by introducing the newly hired Director of Education and Communications, Sarah Clark. Ms. Clark will start with the agency on January 27, 2023. Mr. Lewandowski informed the Board that Ms. Clark has a wealth of experience and a wide range of skills that are necessary to the operations of the OSE, and that her recent employment included Chief of Staff to the mayor of Stratford, Press Secretary to Senate Republicans, including a brief stint in the gubernatorial campaign, and prior state service at the State Elections Enforcement Commission, where she designed and led trainings on election laws.

On behalf of the Board, Chair Castricone welcomed Ms. Clark.

Concerning the training schedule, Mr. Lewandowski noted a change to the previously issued schedule to include two additional trainings for the Board of the Metropolitan District Commission and members of the General Assembly.

Mr. Lewandowski acknowledged and thanked Assistant General Counsel Diane Buxo for preparing this month's media report.

6. Executive Director Lewandowski presented the Legislative Report, noting the updated list of Government Administration and Elections Committee membership and the new House co-chair. Mr. Lewandowski has already met with and introduced himself to the new co-chairs of

the Committee and plans to meet with and introduce himself to all new members of the Committee. He intends to meet with the co-chairs and ranking members soon to discuss OSE's legislative proposals, which are scheduled to be submitted to the legislature within the last week of January.

7. Executive Director Lewandowski presented his Executive Director's report, highlighting the following items:
  - Concerning personnel matters:
    - With the hiring of the Director of Education and Communications, OSE's staff count is now fifteen. The OSE is authorized to have sixteen staff positions. Considering the increase in demand for education, compliance, and advice, the office will seek a staff attorney within the Legal Division as its sixteenth position. The staff attorney will serve in a hybrid role by issuing legal opinions and providing support in ethics training and other education initiatives.
  - Budget Matters:
    - The OSE's budget request for fiscal year 2024-2025 was previously submitted and includes not only a funding request for OSE's sixteenth position, but also a funding request for information technology ("IT") initiatives and office furnishings for the expansion of staff. Mr. Lewandowski plans to engage the Appropriations Committee's co-chairs and ranking members and members of the subcommittee that has cognizance over OSE's budget matters.
  - Lobbyists' Reporting and Registrations:
    - Lobbyists had until January 10, 2023, to submit financial reports for 2022.
    - On January 1, 2023, the lobbyist biennial registration was commenced. As of this morning, OSE has received and processed 1,271 registrations (623 of which are ETH-1As filed by communicator lobbyists and 648 of which are ETH-1Bs filed by client lobbyists), and lobbyist registration fees in the amount of \$855,000. The registration fees are deposited in the general fund.
    - Mr. Lewandowski thanked IT Analyst III Ann Morgan and IT Analyst II Alaaedin Ali for resolving technological setbacks the lobbying system experienced over the New Year holiday weekend. Mr. Lewandowski also thanked Fiscal Administrative Officer Henry Herschkorn and paralegals Malissa Hurry and Melissa Hamilton for front-end coverage, and the Legal Division for responding to legal questions submitted by the lobbying community.
  - Statement of Financial Interests ("SFI") Updates:

- Ms. Morgan is spearheading IT updates to the agency's online SFI system in advance of the busy SFI season set to commence in the first week of March and run until May 1.

In response to a question from Ms. Lipson of whether there are more or less lobbyist registrations this year than the prior year, Mr. Lewandowski stated based on the statistics he received this morning, that the registrations appear to be in alignment with prior years' registrations; however, he will not have a good picture until February. He further shared that the current state of the economy and closures and restructuring of businesses do not appear to impact lobbyist registrations.

**On the motion of Mr. Chiusano, seconded by Ms. Bigelow, the Board voted seven (6) to zero (0) to adjourn the meeting.**

The meeting was adjourned at 1:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,



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

February 16, 2023

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