



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 20, 2022 REGULAR MEETING

The Citizen's Ethics Advisory Board ("Board") of the Office of State Ethics ("OSE") held a Regular Meeting on Thursday, January 20, 2022, by Teleconference.

Chair of the Board, Dena Castricone, called the meeting to order at 1:08 p.m.

The following Board members were present:

Dena Castricone, Chair
Nichelle Mullins, Vice Chair
Mary Bigelow
Charles Chiusano

Karen Christiana
Jason Farrell
Kevin Johnston
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 & Clerk of Board

The following topics were addressed during the meeting:

1. The minutes of the December 16, 2021 Regular Meeting were presented to the Board for approval.

On the motion of Ms. Bigelow, seconded by Mr. Farrell, the Board voted five (5) to zero (0), with Ms. Schuyler abstaining, to approve the minutes of the December 16, 2021 Regular Meeting. (Mr. Chiusano and Mr. Johnston did not participate in the vote because they joined the meeting later.)

Mr. Johnston joined the meeting at 1:09 p.m., immediately after the vote on the December 16, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes.

2. Chair Castricone presented the Chairperson's report reminding the Board that Mr. Farrell will serve as the February 10, 2022 Uniform Administrative Procedure Act ("UAPA") Hearing Officer, and requested a volunteer Hearing Officer for the March 10, 2022 UAPA hearing. Mr. Farrell volunteered again. On a recommendation during the Legislative Proposal discussion at the October 21, 2021 Regular Board meeting, Chair Castricone discussed the reactivation of the previously formed Municipal Ethics Sub-Committee, and extended an invitation for new members. Ms. Bigelow provided a summary of what the subcommittee does and its goal. Mr. Chiusano concurred with Ms. Bigelow's overview of the subcommittee's role, and also extended an invitation for new members and ideas.

Mr. Chiusano joined the meeting at 1:11 p.m., during the Chairperson's report.

3. Director of Education & Communications Nancy Nicolescu conducted the Board's most recent in-depth presentation on specific Code topics. Due to anticipated retirements of public officials and state employees, Ms. Nicolescu discussed the post-state employment, i.e., "Revolving Door," restrictions.

Chair Castricone thanked Ms. Nicolescu for the presentation and commented on how the presentation provided perspective and additional background on the Legal Division's monthly summaries on the topic.

4. General Counsel Brian O'Dowd presented the Legal Division report.
5. Director of Education & Communications Nancy Nicolescu presented the Training and Media reports. Ms. Nicolescu informed the Board that in addition to the trainings listed on the paper report contained in the January Board package, two more trainings were added this month.
6. Ethics Enforcement Officer Mark Wasielewski presented the Enforcement Division Report, highlighting that the Division is in its filing initiative period of all lobbyists' reports that were due on January 10, 2022 ("ETH-2C", "ETH-2D" and "ETH-2A"). Mr. Wasielewski also informed the Board that a probable cause hearing is scheduled for March 31, 2022, and he will keep the Board abreast of the details when they become available.
7. Executive Director Peter Lewandowski opened the Executive Director's report with personnel matters. He shared the resignation of Director of Education & Communications Nancy Nicolescu, and expressed sincere thanks and appreciation for her contributions, dedication, commitment, and hard work over the last ten years at OSE. Speaking on behalf of the entire office, Mr. Lewandowski noted that Ms. Nicolescu will be missed, and that the office wishes her all the best in her future endeavors and the new challenge that awaits her. Because of Ms. Nicolescu's commitment to excellence, Mr. Lewandowski shared that Ms. Nicolescu has spent the last few weeks preparing transitional documents and tasks that will have to be maintained, leaving the office in very good shape as it enters the transition period and seeks her successor. Separately, the hiring of another Legal Investigator was announced. The position was approved

by the Department of Administrative Services and the Office of Policy and Management and will be advertised to the public in the upcoming week for three weeks. Mr. Lewandowski anticipates commencing interviews at the end of February. He mentioned that the current Legal Investigator, Michael Morrissey, will be part of the 2022 retirement wave, so to prepare for a seamless transition, the office is making efforts to have the new Legal Investigator train with Mr. Morrissey prior to his retirement.

Concerning telework, the outstanding issue regarding “what, if any, limit should be imposed on telework” was decided by an Arbitrator at the end of December 2021, in favor of the unions. The ruling finds that an agency’s determination that an employee must be in the office at least one day per week or 20% of their time is not appealable. No adjustments are required for OSE’s staff telework schedules based on the Arbitrator’s decision. The staff remains accommodating with telework and cooperative whenever the agency’s operational needs require on-site presence.

OSE is in the process of updating its desktop and laptop computers. The office was fortunate to receive \$27,000 from the Capitol Equipment Fund to update its Information Technology equipment.

Regarding legislative matters, the Board-approved Legislative Proposals will be submitted to the Government Administration and Elections Committee during the upcoming week, and Mr. Lewandowski is in the process of scheduling meetings with legislators to discuss the Proposals. The legislative session will begin on Wednesday, February 9, 2022, and adjourn on May 4, 2022.

Lastly, Mr. Lewandowski thanked the OSE staff for its responsiveness to the regulated community, and in particular, the employees involved in providing assistance to lobbyists during the recent filing period. He noted that the filing initiatives are still ongoing, but the rush has slowed after the financial disclosure report deadline of January 10, 2022.

8. Chair Castricone presented a Resolution, thanking Ms. Nicolescu for her service to OSE.

On the motion of Mr. Chiusano, seconded by Mr. Johnston, the Board voted eight (8) to zero (0) to adopt the Resolution.

Ms. Nicolescu expressed gratitude to the Board for the Resolution, the Board’s guidance and support during her ten-year tenure, and the beautiful floral arrangement she received a day prior to the meeting.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 1:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Melissa Hamilton", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

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

February 17, 2022

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