



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 MAY 16, 2024 REGULAR MEETING

The Citizen's Ethics Advisory Board ("Board") of the Office of State Ethics ("OSE") held a Regular Meeting on Thursday, May 16, 2024.

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
N. Beth Cook, Vice-Chair
Mary Bigelow
Charles Chiusano

Jason Farrell (virtual)
Thomas Jones
Cheryl Lipson
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
Sarah Clark, Director of Education & Communications
Marianne Sadowski, Deputy General Counsel (virtual)
Marc Crayton, Deputy Ethics Enforcement Officer

Jennifer Montgomery, Associate General Counsel (virtual)
Diane Buxo, Assistant General Counsel (virtual)
Adrian Baron, Assistant Ethics Enforcement Officer
Carol Langevin, Associate Accounts Examiner
Melissa Hamilton, Paralegal & Clerk of the Citizen's Ethics Advisory Board
Malissa Hurry, Paralegal

The following topics were addressed during the meeting:

1. The minutes of the April 18, 2024 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 April 18, 2024 regular meeting.

2. Chair Castricone presented the chairperson's report and shared congratulatory remarks of the work of the OSE with respect to the Statement of Financial Interests ("SFI") filing season. Specifically, she was impressed with the result of 99.99% of 2024 SFI filings completed on time and noted that it was a testament to the agency's education and outreach, collaboration with ethics liaisons, and counseling.

Further, Vice-Chair Cook volunteered to serve as the hearing officer for the Uniform Administrative Procedure Act ("UAPA") hearings on July 11, 2024, and the Board was reminded of Mr. Jones' upcoming service as the UAPA hearing officer on June 13, 2024.

3. Associate Vice President & Chief Compliance Officer of the University of Connecticut, Kimberly Fearney, presented the University of Connecticut Policies to Regulate Student State Employment pursuant to General Statutes § 1-90a.

On the motion of Vice-Chair Cook, seconded by Ms. Bigelow, the Board voted eight (8) to zero (0) to approve the University of Connecticut Policies to Regulate Student State Employment.

4. General Counsel O'Dowd presented the Legal Division report.
5. Ethics Enforcement Officer Wasielewski presented the Enforcement Division's report, highlighting the status of the UAPA calendar of lobbyist and SFI initiatives. Currently, there are eleven (11) lobbyist matters on the docket for the June 13th hearing. In addition, Mr. Wasielewski indicated that six (6) individuals who failed to timely file 2023 SFIs would receive notices of hearing for the July 11 hearing date, and that one (1) lobbyist matter had already been noticed for that hearing date following the granting of a continuance.
6. Associate Accounts Examiner Carol Langevin presented the client lobbyist audit report for *CT Alliance of YMCAs*, which contained several findings. CT Alliance of YMCAs amended its reports to correct the discrepancies found as a result of the audit, and while Ms. Langevin did not recommend corrective action, she recommended that the client lobbyist implement an updated tracking system for its expenditures. Ms. Langevin reported that the client lobbyist has confirmed the implementation of the updated tracking system and its utilization in 2024.

On the motion of Ms. Lipson, seconded by Mr. Chiusano, the Board voted eight (8) to zero (0) to approve the audit report for CT Alliance of YMCAs.

7. Concerning the communicator lobbyist audit of *Przybysz + Associates Government Affairs, LLC*, Mr. Crayton reported no findings.

On the motion of Mr. Chiusano, seconded by Vice-Chair Cook, the Board voted eight (8) to zero (0) to approve the audit report for Przybysz + Associates Government Affairs, LLC.

8. Director of Education and Communications Sarah Clark presented the Education and Communications report, highlighting the following:
 - (a) Concerning SFIs, 100% of timely filers included all three (3) watch-dog agencies (OSE, Freedom of Information Commission and State Elections Enforcement Commission) and the General Assembly. Ms. Clark credited the improved results of this year's timely filings to utilizing more targeted outgoing communications to ethics liaisons and filers.
 - (b) An uptick in media requests, particularly requests for SFIs as early as May 2, 2024.


- (c) The continued requests for trainings lending to a very bright and busy outlook for May and June.
9. Executive Director Lewandowski presented the Executive Director's report, noting the following:
- (a) This year's SFI season was the most successful since OSE's inception, which was made possible by technological upgrades and the dedication and hard work of the staff.
 - (b) The OSE will be reviewing and updating its internal ethics policy, which was last revised in November 2011. The Board will be consulted when the initiative begins for its review of its own Board policies, of which there are four, last modified in 2018. Once proposed revisions are made to the internal ethics policy, they will be presented to the Board for review, contribution, and approval.
 - (c) Concerning the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget, the legislature decided not to adjust it, but rather to focus on targeted stabilization of the budget in the areas of education, healthcare, and social services. This decision means that OSE's request for \$40,000 to update its SFI system was not approved/not included in the stabilization bill, but it will be pursued by the agency in the next biennium budget.
10. Mr. Lewandowski delivered the final legislative update, noting that he is satisfied with the outcome, and highlighted the following:
- (a) OSE's priority bill, **H.B. No. 5407**, *An Act Defining "Dependent Child" for Purposes of the State Code of Ethics for Public Officials and Concerning the Exercise of Jurisdiction Over Nonresidents by the Office of State Ethics*, was passed in both the House and Senate, and is ready for the Governor's signature.
 - (b) A proposal to revise section 1-84(d) of the Code was defeated. The proposed bill, **S.B. No. 426**, included a provision to exclude certain agencies from the list of eleven (11) regulatory agencies, and after OSE's vocal opposition, the bill was amended to exclude the problematic provision.
 - (c) OSE made strides in the Senate concerning its legislative proposals. Out of its five (5) proposals, four (4) proposals were advanced in the Senate.
 - (d) The House's action on OSE's bills, particularly two (2) bills, **S.B. No. 260** and **S.B. No. 261**. Fruitful conversations on these bills were held with the Speaker and his staff.
 - (e) The discussion of OSE's statutory responsibility to engage in advocacy to uphold the integrity and accountability of state government.

11. Adjournment

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

The meeting was adjourned at 1:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,



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

June 20, 2024

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