



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 AUGUST 15, 2024 REGULAR MEETING

The Citizen's Ethics Advisory Board ("Board") of the Office of State Ethics ("OSE") held a Meeting on Thursday, August 15, 2024.

Chair of the Board, Dena Castricone, called the meeting to order at 1:04 p.m.

The following Board members were present:

Dena Castricone, Chair (virtual)
N. Beth Cook, Vice-Chair
Mary Bigelow
Charles Chiusano

Thomas Jones
Cheryl Lipson (virtual)
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
Diane Buxo, Assistant General Counsel (virtual)
Carol Langevin, Associate Accounts Examiner
Malissa Hurry, Paralegal (Enforcement Division)
Melissa Hamilton, Paralegal (Legal Division) & Clerk
of the Citizen's Ethics Advisory Board

Other Attendees:

Melinda Decker, Office of Legal Counsel Director (the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection)

Brent Madho, Assistant Director of the Engineering and Enforcement Division of the Bureau of Materials Management and Compliance Assurance (the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection)

Wendy Martel, Compliance Specialist II -- the Pesticide Management Program (the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection) (virtual)

The following topics were addressed during the meeting:

1. The minutes of the July 18, 2024 regular meeting were presented to the Board for approval.

On the motion of Mr. Jones, seconded by Mr. Chiusano, with Ms. Bigelow abstaining and Ms. Lipson absent from the vote, the Board voted five (5) to zero (0) to approve the Minutes of the July 18, 2024 regular meeting.

2. Chair Castricone presented the chairperson's report, reminding the Board that Vice-Chair Cook has volunteered to serve as the September's Uniform Administrative Procedure Act ("UAPA") Hearing Officer, and then she sought a Hearing Officer for October's UAPA hearings. Mr. Chiusano volunteered, and Chair Castricone agreed to serve as a backup.

Additionally, Chair Castricone shared that the Nominating Committee met on August 12, 2024, and welcomed Mr. Chiusano to present the Committee's report. Based on the report, Chair Castricone recommended that the election of officers be postponed to the September 19, 2024 meeting, as it would allow board members more time to consider the matter.

During Mr. Chiusano's presentation, at 1:06 p.m., Board member Lipson joined the meeting.

On the motion of Ms. Lipson, seconded by Vice-Chair Cook, the Board voted seven (7) to zero (0) to postpone the election of Officers for the Chair and Vice-Chair positions of the Citizen's Ethics Advisory Board to the September 19, 2024 regular meeting.

3. Associate General Counsel Jennifer Montgomery presented Draft Advisory Opinion No. 2024-3, in response to the Petition submitted by Wendy Martel, an employee of the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection ("DEEP"), concerning her proposed outside employment teaching a structural pest control course, outside of her state position, to individuals who have not yet obtained a pesticide applicator occupational license from DEEP in order to prepare them for the licensure exams.

Before taking questions from the Board, Associate General Counsel Montgomery noted that DEEP's Office of Legal Counsel Director, Melinda Decker, and Assistant Director of the Engineering and Enforcement Division of the Bureau of Materials Management and Compliance Assurance Brent Madho, were in attendance to answer the Board's questions.

Following Board member Jones' question to, and answer from, Associate General Counsel Montgomery, Ms. Martel, the petitioner, commented on the Draft Advisory Opinion.

On the motion of Vice-Chair Cook, seconded by Mr. Jones, the Board voted seven (7) to zero (0) to approve Advisory Opinion 2024-3.

4. The Legal Division report was presented by General Counsel O'Dowd.
5. Ethics Enforcement Officer Mark Wasielewski presented the Enforcement Division's report, highlighting the following items:
 - One lobbyist matter remains docketed for the September 12, 2024 UAPA hearing date.
 - The second quarter ETH-2D late filing initiative has resulted, this far, in the collection of over \$1,800 in penalties.
6. Associate Accounts Examiner Carol Langevin presented a new template for the client lobbyist audit

reports and invited feedback from the Board. Members Jones and Schuyler provided input.

7. Deputy Ethics Enforcement Officer Marc Crayton presented the communicator lobbyist audits of *Rome Smith & Lutz* and *Gary Berner Government Relations, LLC*, both of which contained no findings.

On the motion of Mr. Chiusano, seconded by Ms. Bigelow, the Board voted seven (7) to zero (0) to approve the audit report for Rome Smith & Lutz.

On the motion of Ms. Lipson, seconded by Mr. Chiusano, the Board voted seven (7) to zero (0) to approve the audit report for Gary Berner Government Relations, LLC.

Subsequently, Deputy Ethics Enforcement Officer Crayton provided an update on the audit for client lobbyist *NTE Energy*.

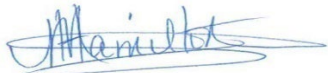
8. The Education and Communications report was provided in writing and presented by Director of Education and Communications Sarah Clark and included the 2025 and 2026 lobbyist filing calendars.
9. Executive Director Peter Lewandowski presented the Executive Director's report noting, among other things, the following:
 - The recently published state Auditor's report of the OSE for Fiscal Years 2022 and 2023, and OSE's action plan to remedy the audit's two findings.
 - The audit's second finding was the subject of an article by CT Insider Investigator, which prompted Executive Director Lewandowski to write to its author due to the article's lack of context and explanation of fiscal processes, and to question why the reporter did not contact OSE for comments, context or background.
 - Budget preparation for Fiscal Years 2026 and 2027 have begun. Methods to obtain additional funding, outside of the state's budgeting approval process, are being considered for upgrades to OSE's online systems.

10. Adjournment

On the motion of Mr. Jones, seconded by Ms. Lipson, the Board voted seven (7) to zero (0) to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,



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

September 19, 2024

Date approved.

(By the Citizen's Ethics Advisory Board)