



# 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 MARCH 21, 2024 REGULAR MEETING**

The Citizen's Ethics Advisory Board ("Board") of the Office of State Ethics ("OSE") held a Regular Meeting on Thursday, March 21, 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  
N. Beth Cook, Vice-Chair  
Mary Bigelow  
Charles Chiusano

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

**Other Attendees:**

Polly C. Moran, Representative of Pro-Choice Connecticut, Inc. (virtual)

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

1. The minutes of the February 15, 2024 regular meeting were presented to the Board for approval.

**On the motion of Vice-Chair Cook, seconded by Mr. Chiusano, with Mr. Farrell and Ms. Bigelow abstaining, and Ms. Schuyler absent, the Board voted five (5) to zero (0) to approve the Minutes of the February 15, 2024 regular meeting.**

2. Chair Castricone presented the chairperson's report. Upon request, Vice-Chair Cook volunteered to serve as the Hearing Officer for the May 9, 2024 Uniform Administrative Procedure Act ("UAPA") hearings. The Board was reminded that Board member Lipson is the designated hearing officer for the upcoming April 11, 2024 UAPA hearings, and that the Chair is the alternate hearing officer.

Ms. Schuyler joined the meeting.

3. The UCONN Faculty Consulting Oversight Committee report was presented by board member Chiusano, who provided an overview of the committee and its prior years' activities.
4. General Counsel O'Dowd presented the Legal Division report.
5. Ethics Enforcement Officer Wasielewski presented the Enforcement Division report.
6. Before discussing counteroffers in UAPA matters, the designated hearing officer, Board member Lipson, and alternate hearing officer, Chair Castricone, of the April 11, 2024 UAPA hearings, along with their counsels, Deputy General Counsel Marianne Sadowski and Associate General Counsel Jennifer Montgomery, excused themselves from the meeting.

***Docket No. 2024-08UL, In the Matter of Pro-Choice Connecticut, Inc.***, was presented by Assistant Ethics Enforcement Officer Adrian Baron, and Polly C. Maron appeared on behalf of the subject of the matter. (NOTE: Ms. Maron lost audio capabilities during a portion of her video presentation to the Board; therefore, instant messaging was used during the period of silence in the recording to provide telephonic access information for rejoining the meeting via telephone.)

The Board unanimously recommended to the Enforcement Division a fifty percent reduction of the Division's original offer to settle.

7. Mr. Crayton presented the client lobbyist audit report for AFSCME Council 4, which contained one finding: the late filing of its 2020 combined third and fourth quarter ETH-2D by four days.

**On the motion of Mr. Jones, seconded by Ms. Bigelow, the Board voted eight (8) to zero (0) to approve the audit report for AFSCME Council 4**

8. Concerning the audits of Depino, Nunez, & Biggs, LLC, and Connsensus, Mr. Crayton reported no findings for each communicator lobbyist's audit.

**On the motion of Vice-Chair Cook, seconded by Ms. Schuyler, with Mr. Chiusano abstaining, the Board voted seven (7) to zero (0) to approve the audit report for Depino, Nunez, & Biggs, LLC.**

**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 Connensus.**

9. Sarah Clark, Director of Education and Communications, presented the Education and Communications report, highlighting the following:
  - (a) March is National Ethics Awareness Month. To mark the occasion, an email and infographic were prepared and submitted to the Governor for approval to distribute to state employees. By the close of the meeting, the Governor's Office informed OSE that the Ethics Awareness month communication was approved as submitted and will be distributed to all state employees tomorrow morning.
  - (b) Statements of Financial Interest ("SFI") are due in 41 days on May 1, 2024. An updated document explaining the standards and guidelines for designation and filing has been posted to the OSE website and shared with Liaisons via the monthly newsletter.
  - (c) Ethics Newsletters to Lobbyists and Ethics Liaisons were distributed and very well received.
  - (d) This month's trainings included the Office of the State Comptroller, the Office of Treasurer, and the Town of Newington.
10. The Executive Director report was presented by Executive Director Lewandowski, and the following updates were provided:
  - (a) The remediation and construction at OSE are officially completed.
  - (b) The audit of the OSE by the State Auditors is ongoing and its completion is anticipated by the year's end.
  - (c) Concerning the budget, members of the Appropriations Subcommittee (which handles watchdog agencies' budgets) have informed OSE that the recommended adjustments to the Fiscal Year 2024/2025 budget have been recommended to the full Appropriations Committee.
  - (d) To date, there are 2,839 SFI filers (the highest number since 2015).
11. Mr. Lewandowski presented a legislative update on OSE's legislative proposals and other bills relevant to the Code of Ethics and OSE.

**On the motion of Mr. Chiusano, seconded by Vice-Chair Cook, the Board voted eight (8) to zero (0) to enter an Executive Session to discuss the evaluation of the Executive Director pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes § 1-200 (6) (A).**

At 2:02 p.m., the Board entered executive session.

The following Board members were present for the Executive Session:

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

Jason Farrell (virtual)  
Thomas Jones  
Cheryl Lipson (virtual)  
Laura Schuyler

No staff members of the OSE were present for the Executive Session.

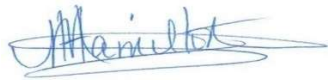
The Board exited Executive Session at 2:19 p.m.

13. Adjournment

**On the motion of Mr. Jones, seconded by Mr. Chiusano, with Ms. Lipson and Mr. Farrell absent, the Board voted six (6) to zero (0) to adjourn the meeting.**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,



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

**April 18, 2024**

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