

**ETHICS BOARD MEETING
MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC SESSION**

The Ethics Board ("Board") met on Wednesday, October 9, 2024 at 2:32pm by conference call via Microsoft Teams.

Call to Order & Statement Concerning the Recording of the Public Session: Chair Stephan Fogleman called the meeting to order at 2:32pm with three Board members present, forming the required quorum. Member Sampson was absent.

Chair Stephan Fogleman read the following statement:

All participants in the Public Session of the Board meeting acknowledge and consent to the video and audio recording of the Public Session and the publication of the recording on the Board's website and social media accounts.

Statement Concerning the Administrative Session of the September 2024 Board Meeting: Chair Fogleman read the following statement:

Per the Open Meetings Act, the Board discloses that it adjourned its virtual open meeting on September 11, 2024, to enter the Administrative Session at approximately 2:42pm. Four Board members were present. None were absent. Members discussed administrative matters including complaints.

The Board may need to close some or all of this meeting to preserve the confidentiality mandated by the Ethics Code or as otherwise authorized by the State Open Meetings Act. Likewise, upon adjournment of the Open Session, the Board may reconvene for an Administrative Session to discuss non-public, administrative functions of the Board.

Review of Schedules and Agenda: Chair Fogleman inquired if the Board had any time constraints. Board member Newman expressed that she would need to exit the meeting by 4pm.

Approval of Written Minutes for the Administrative Session of the September 11th Board Meeting: With the vote of 3-0 the Board moved to approve the written minutes.

Charitable/Governmental Gift Solicitation Waiver Application - Baltimore Main Streets - Mayor's Office of Small and Minority Business Advocacy & Development - Pending BOE Approval: City Officials Brooke Bomberger, Ginny Lawhorn, and Khadeeja Muhammad joined the meeting. Bomberger stated that Baltimore Main Streets will celebrate its 25th anniversary in 2025 and plans to host a series of events to celebrate the 9 main streets through a lunchtime vendor event. With this event, SMBA&D would like to raise money for their main 9 streets corridors. The goal is \$25,000 for each organization to further efforts in revitalization.

Board member Newman inquired if businesses would have to pay for a vendor spot. Bomberger stated that there will be no fees for these businesses and that this was aimed at bringing business to them. A gift card for an as yet unspecified amount would be issued to people who RSVP to the event. Vendors would then invoice SMBA&D for those charges incurred on the gift cards.

Board member Newman asked if there would be opportunities for other businesses to participate. Lawhorn explained that there are 9 Baltimore Main Street program partners. Each main street will select retail and hospitality partners to join. The event will take place downtown so that it doesn't create any type of territorial barriers or allocation of attention to one main street over another. The Board moved to approve the waiver application with a vote of 3-0.

Charitable/Governmental Gift Solicitation Waiver Application - Local Progress Impact Labs - Office of Councilman Kristerfer Burnett - Pending BOE Approval: Councilman Burnett joined the public session and explained that Local Progress Lab is a part of a national think tank that works with local officials. Councilman Burnett serves as the chair of the Board of Directors for the organization and conducts training of municipal officials through their progressive governance academy. He hopes to bring the training to Baltimore.

Chairman Fogleman asked if all members of this program were elected officials. Councilman Burnett confirmed and explained that the program also is open to staff such as policy directors and chief of staffs. The targeted audience here is the incoming council. Board member McCauley asked if Councilman Burnett would be fundraising for this organization and if it was politically affiliated. Councilman Burnett stated that The Local Impact Lab is nonpartisan and does not engage in political activism or back any campaigns.

Chairman Fogleman asked about the organizations IRS status. Councilman Burnett affirmed 501(c)(3) and 501(c)(4) status. Board member McCauley asked who is donating money to this organization. Burnett answered that the contributors and donors tend to be philanthropic organizations all over the country. Board member McCauley asked if Burnett was a paid employee, contractor, or consultant. Councilman Burnett stated that he is a paid contractor as listed in his financial disclosures. He does not get paid for the fundraising. This is a 6-month program, and the funds raised would pay for both staffing and logistics, office space and print materials.

The Board voted to approve the application, contingent on the Councilman providing additional information.

(Note: Councilman Burnett provided Ethics staff with all requested information but rescinded/withdrew the application in early November.)

Staff Update: Officer Bond provided the following metrics for September on the Board staffs recent work:

- Help Desk
 - o 63 help desk requests were received and resolved by Board staff in September.
 - 2 help desk requests were from lobbyists.
 - 1 help desk requests were concerning gift solicitation waivers.
 - 14 help desk requests were concerning financial disclosure statements.

- 16 help desk requests were ethics inquiries.
- 17 help desk requests were concerning the Ethics Training.
- 10 help desk requests were administrative (question about deadlines, forms, etc).
- 1 help desk request was not within the Board's jurisdiction and referred elsewhere.
- o FY25 requests: 168
- Ethics Training
 - o 37 people completed the Ethics Training in September.
 - o FY25 attendees: 105
- Complaints
 - o FY25 Complaints:
 - Open: 0
 - Dismissed: 4
- Secondary Employment Waivers
 - o Waiver Requests: 1
 - o FY25 Granted Waivers: 0
- Gift Solicitation Waivers
 - o 2 gift solicitation waiver applications were submitted to the Board for the October 9th Board meeting.
 - o 2 gift solicitation waivers expired since the last Board meeting.
 - o FY25 Active Waivers: 2
 - o FY25 Expired/Rescinded Waivers: 0
- Financial Disclosure Statements
 - o Ethics staff last month sent a correspondence from the IG over to the outstanding filers who are more than 60 days late. 86 outstanding filers.
 - o Director Amberger suggested that all outstanding filers gets referred to the law department
- Lobbying
 - o 151 registered lobbyist

The Public Session adjourned at 3:38pm.