

ETHICS BOARD MEETING

MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC SESSION

The Ethics Board ("Board") met on Wednesday, September 11, 2024, at 2:30 P.M. by conference call via Microsoft Teams.

Call to Order & Statement Concerning the Recording of the Public Session: Chairman Fogleman called the Board meeting to order at 2:32 P.M. with four board members present, forming a quorum. No members were absent.

Chair 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 August Board Meeting: Chair Fogleman read the following statement:

Per the Open Meetings Act, the Board discloses that it adjourned its virtual open meeting on August 14 to enter the Administrative Session at approximately 3:40 P.M. 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 about any commitments that would conflict with the Board meeting. No conflicts.

Approval of Written Minutes for the Public Sessions of the Board Meetings of June 12 and August 14, 2024: With a vote of 4-0, the public session minutes for the two Board meetings were approved.

Staff Update: Dir. Amberger informed the Board that a new Special Assistant, Ms. Anetra Moore, would be starting on Monday, September 16. Dir. Amberger also updated the Board that Bill 22-0275 was again before the City Council and that it had advanced to third-reader status. (Bill 22-0275 seeks to synchronize Baltimore City's Ethics Code with the State's Public Ethics Law.) Ethics Staff is also working on the Annual Report.

Officer Bond provided the following metrics for August on the Board staffs recent work:

- Help Desk
 - o 41 help desk requests were received and resolved by Board staff in August.
 - 2 help desk requests were from lobbyists.
 - 15 help desk requests were concerning gift solicitation waivers.
 - 9 help desk requests were concerning financial disclosure statements.
 - 12 help desk requests were ethics inquiries.

- 1 help desk requests were concerning the Ethics Training.
 - 1 help desk requests were administrative (question about deadlines, forms, etc).
 - 1 help desk requests were not within the Board's jurisdiction and were referred elsewhere.
- o FY25 requests: 98
- Ethics Training
 - o 15 people completed the Ethics Training in August.
 - o FY25 attendees: 68
- Complaints
 - o FY24 Complaints: 4
 - Open: 0
 - Dismissed: 4
- Secondary Employment Waivers
 - o Waiver Requests: 2
 - o FY25 Granted Waivers: 0
- Gift Solicitation Waivers
 - o O gift solicitation waiver applications were submitted to the Board for the September 11, 2024 Board meeting.
 - o O gift solicitation waivers expired since the last Board meeting.
 - o FY24 Active Waivers: 21
 - o FY25 Active Waivers: 2
- Financial Disclosure Statements
 - o Officer Bond informed the Board that staff would be sending out a final letter on September 15th, 2024, to a group of outstanding filers.¹
- Lobbying
 - o 146 Registered lobbyists
- Chair Fogleman noted that the numbers were lower than expected. Dir. Amberger stated that he interprets the lower numbers as reflecting that Ethics training and improved general information may have the perceived need to use the Help line to reduce questions.

Baltimore County Ethics Commission Commendation - Board Update: Dir. Amberger shared that pertinent parts of Advisory Opinion 24-001 (concerning the FEF Commissioners and their ability to

¹¹ Officer Bond noted a final letter being sent to outstanding filers on September 15, 2024. Letters did not go out to filers until 9/18/2024.

contribute to campaigns that they may have been donating to) were cited into Baltimore County's assessment on the same issue. Dir. Amberger passed on Baltimore County Ethics' commendation for the Board's work on the matter.

The Public Session adjourned at 2:42 P.M.