

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY OFFICE OF ETHICS AND ACCOUNTABILITY
BOARD OF ETHICS**

Board Meeting Minutes

May 17, 2019

Present: Cassandra Burckhalter, Board Chair
Curtis Eugene, Board Member
Covette Rooney, Board Member (teleconference)

Robin Barnes-Shell, Esq., Executive Director
Roslyn Walker, Compliance Officer
LaShanda Whaley, Legal Counsel
Lamont Judd, Investigator
Jasmine Carter, Compliance Analyst
Chelinda Bullock, Administrative Aide

Next meeting: June 14, 2019 at 5:0 pm
9201 Basil Court, Suite 155
Largo, Maryland 20774

OPEN SESSION

I. OPENING OF MEETING

The Board Chair, Cassandra Burckhalter, opened the meeting at approximately 5:04 pm and welcomed all in attendance. There was a quorum present with three (3) Board Members. The meeting was held at the Office of Ethics and Accountability (OEA) located at 9201 Basil Court, Suite 155, Largo, Maryland.

II. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

The Board Member Sharon Theodoore-Lewis was not in attendance at the present meeting, so the Board deferred adopting the March 8, 2019 and April 12, 2019 Meeting Minutes. The three (3) Board of Ethics (Board) Members in attendance on January 11, 2019, approved the Meeting Minutes with corrections by a vote of 3-0.

III. BOARD CHAIR REPORT

The Board Chair repeated her concerns regarding the information required to be reported on the Financial Disclosure Statement (FDS) form.

IV. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

The Executive Director informed the Board of OEA's collection efforts for Financial Disclosure Statements (FDS) for calendar year 2018. One (1) County board member requested a waiver of late fees for submitting FDS late. The request was denied by OEA and the designated filer has requested an appeal to the Board.

The Executive Director provided the Board information regarding OEA's training efforts that included conducting two (2) New Employees Orientation Program trainings and one (1) monthly Ethics Training (PGCEthics). In addition, thirty-nine (39) lobbyists have registered for calendar 2019. All outstanding lobbyists Annual Reports for 2018 were received and two (2) lobbyists owed fines for failing to file timely.

The Board was provided the ethics advice table for April, which summarized the informal ethics advice, information requests and legal advice provided by the Office of Ethics and Accountability.

The Board was updated on the status of legislative amendments required pursuant to State Ethics Law changes.

V. Reading of Written Statement for Closing Meeting Under the Open Meeting Act

At 5:17 pm, a motion was made by Board Chair Cassandra Burckhalter and seconded by Board Member Curtis Eugene to close the open portion of the meeting to comply with a specific constitutional, statutory or judicially imposed requirement that prevents public disclosure about a particular proceeding or matter and to consult with legal counsel. The statement was read by the Board Chair Cassandra Burckhalter. The motion was approved by a vote of 3-0. The reason for closing the meeting, and the topics discussed with legal counsel involved among other matters, investigations in accordance with the State Government Article, §10-508(a). Those in attendance were as follows:

Cassandra Burckhalter, Board Chair
Curtis Eugene, Board Member
Covette Rooney, Board Member (teleconference)

Robin Barnes-Shell, Esq., Executive Director
Roslyn Walker, Compliance Officer
LaShanda Whaley, Legal Counsel
Lamont Judd, Investigator
Jasmine Carter, Compliance Analyst
Chelinda Bullock, Administrative Aide

CLOSED SESSION

Investigation 18-0415e

The Board was provided an update of the actions taken by the agency to address the identified conflicts of interest. The Board voted 3-0 to decline holding a hearing on the matter and to accept the corrective actions taken by the agency as appropriate to address the ethical concerns.

Investigation 19-0157e

The Board was provided a report on an investigation involving allegations of Misuse of Prestige of Office, Disclosure of Confidential Information and Conflicts of Interest by two County employees using their position to share information. The Board voted 3-0 that there is a reasonable basis to believe a violation of the Prince George's County Code of Ethics has occurred. The Board will reserve taking further action for thirty days (30) to allow the affected agencies to respond to the identified ethics violations.

Investigation 19-0147e

The Board was provided a report on an investigation involving an allegation of Misuse of County Resources by a County employee involving a County vehicle. The Board voted 3-0 that there are insufficient facts upon which to base a determination of a violation and dismissed the complaint.

Investigation 19-0239e

The Board was provided a report on an investigation involving an allegation of Misuse of Prestige of Office by a County employee using their position to provide information to a consulting firm. The Board voted 3-0 that there are insufficient facts upon which to base a determination of a violation and dismissed the complaint.

Investigation 19-0072e

The Board was updated regarding an investigation involving allegations of Fraud, Waste, Abuse and Illegal Acts by County employees approving staff augmentation services. The matter is outside of the jurisdiction of the Board.

Investigation 19-0084e

The Board was updated regarding an investigation involving allegations of Use of County Resources by County employees using County time to work on businesses. The Board is awaiting a response from the agency regarding the actions taken to address the ethical concerns.

Financial Disclosure Statement Waiver Request

The Board was provided an appeal of a waiver request from a member serving on a County board. The request is to waive late fees for submitting a FDS late. The Board voted 3-0 to deny the waiver.

The Board was provided updates on pending cases.

At the conclusion of all business, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting. The motion was approved 3-0. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:04 pm.