

Erie County Ethics Board

May 2015 Meeting Minutes

May 4, 2015

8:00 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Steven Schwartz, Chair
Chris Trapp, Vice-Chair
Kim Bowers, Secretary
Rebecca Town

STAFF PRESENT: Tami Burns-DiCioccio, Administrative Staff

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Anna Falicov
Jeremy Toth, Ex-Officio

1. Meeting called to order at 8:10 a.m.
2. Review and approval of March 2015 minutes:
 - Motion made by Chris Trapp and seconded by Rebecca Town to approve the March minutes as written. All present voted in favor and the motion passed.
3. Website / Email Updates (Bowers/ Burns-DiCioccio):
 - Website has been updated with all of 2014 meeting minutes as well as new section for 2015 meeting minutes and scheduled dates. Also has been updated with the 2014 Ethics Disclosure Form.
 - FOIL Requests Notification: “As a part of its responsibilities, the Board of Ethics requires all Elected Officials, candidates for Elected Office, Appointees and County employees who serve in a policy making capacity to annually fill out an Annual Statement of Financial Disclosure. The Board reviews those statements to identify any potential conflicts of interest and addresses related concerns. If you would like to request a copy of an individual’s form and related correspondence, please submit a request pursuant to New York’s Freedom of Information law by clicking on the “Contact Us” link and send via email.”
 - i. Tami will post the FOIL Requests Notification on the County’s website, to be found under the Ethics Board link.
 - FOIL Requests: 3/17/15 Matt Spina (Buffalo News) for Sheriff Howard’s 2014 Disclosure (Schwartz) – Response was that we would forward once received.
 - Email: Requests for last year’s Financial Disclosures from two people; “PLEASE KEEP A COPY FOR YOUR RECORDS” wording will add to next year’s forms.
4. Communications: Anonymous 3/28/15 mail regarding Legislator Betty Jean Grant (Schwartz)
 - The board felt that with the lack of information or clarity of the issue, we would do nothing with this complaint. It impossible to determine if it’s within our purview to investigate or make a final decision.
5. Old Business:
 - Review & Revise responses to follow-up requests for information on financial disclosures
 - i. Review follow up letters for wording based on concerns received about the letters; provide more detail within the letter to clarify when no response is required. Anna Falicov prepared for the May meeting but based on her absence, it was decided to table the review until the June meeting.

- Annual Report to Legislature on March 19, 2015:
 - Follow-up communication between Arthur Musarra and Chris Trapp.
 - Ongoing discussion taking place with changes in legislation regarding funding the operations of the Board: filing fees, investigation, travel to meeting expenses, etc – to be approx. \$2500 annually.
 - Code of Ethics (drafted by Davis): review and compare to our current Code
 - i. Will be deferred to future meeting as time permits.
6. New Business:
- Posting of Disclosure Statements on the County's website
 - i. Discussion took place in regards to posting of Disclosure Statements on the County's website; communication will continue at next meeting.
 - Review of Financial Disclosures for 2014 submitted to date.
 - i. Will continue at June meeting and special session if necessary until all submitted disclosures are reviewed.
7. Next meeting will be June 1, 2015.
8. Motion to adjourn was made by Kim Bowers and seconded by Chris Trapp. All present voted in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 9:30 a.m.
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