

CITY OF STAMFORD
Board of Ethics
Stamford Government Center
(Meeting held virtually via Zoom)
June 17, 2020

Minutes

Present

Allan Lang, Chair

Thomas Hynes, Vice-Chair

Myrna Sessa, Member

Monica Smyth, Member

Christine Dzujna, Member

Fred Springer, Alternate

Kevin Quinn, Alternate

Stephen Conover, Counsel

The meeting was called to order by Chair Lang at 7:02 p.m.

Mr. Lang noted that this was the Board's first virtual meeting (necessitated by the COVID pandemic), and that it would be a public meeting just as all other meetings have been.

1. Mr. Hynes moved to accept the minutes of the February 19, 2020, Meeting of the Board of Ethics ("BOE"), seconded by Ms. Smyth. Five voted in favor, two abstained and the motion passed.
2. Mr. Lang addressed item #5 from the January 2020 meeting, which sought to clarify how, when, and where oral advisory opinions should be posted. He consulted with the City Clerk who recommended that oral advisory opinions be written and posted on the BOE website. Mr. Lang proposed that we continue to embed oral opinions in the recorded BOE meeting minutes as has been our practice, and that we add a notation on our website directing the public to the opinion in the relevant minutes. Standard language can be used to note these instances: "Oral advisory opinion included in meeting minutes of x date."

Mr. Lang noted that item #6 from the January 2020 meeting concerned the invitation from the Legislative and Rules Committee for Mr. Conover to attend one of their meetings and answer questions about the BOE. Mr. Conover chose not to attend as he felt he did not have the authority to answer the Committee's questions.

3. Mr. Lang noted that the Annual Report was prepared, shared with the BOE members for their review and input, and is ready to be submitted to the Mayor and Board of Representatives. Messrs. Conover and Springer suggested that the BOE first incorporate into the Report our suggested revisions to Code of Ethics.

4. Mr. Lang reported that Representative McMullen advised him in May that a special committee of the Board of Representatives had been assigned to revise the Code of Ethics. He asked for a list of suggested edits from the BOE and acknowledged the necessity of our input.

Mr. Conover accumulated the thoughts and comments made over the last 5 years by the BOE about the Code and let those inform his edits. He also reviewed the Code edits the Board of Representatives sent to Mr. Lang in November 2019, and attempted to address any ambiguities. The Board of Representative edits focused on three main areas of the Code:

- who gets notice and when of the filing of an ethics complaint
- a new definition of Conflicts of Interest
- what happens and who is permitted to have a stipulated agreement

Mr. Conover walked the members through his various Code edits and further revisions were agreed upon as needed.

Ms. Sessa moved to accept the revisions and Ms. Dzujna seconded, one member (experiencing meeting connectivity problems) abstained and all others were in favor. Mr. Conover will incorporate the edits agreed upon and obtain final approval from the Board via email before they are included in the Annual Report. Once the Report has been submitted, Mr. Lang will inform Representative McMullen that the Annual Report includes the BOE's suggested edits.

5. At 8:48 p.m. a motion to modify the agenda was made by Mr. Hynes to go into Executive Session. Seconded by Ms. Smyth, unanimously passed.
6. The Board came out of Executive Session at 8:53 p.m. At 8:53 p.m. adjournment was moved by Ms. Smyth, second by Ms. Dzujna, unanimously passed.

Respectfully submitted.

Christine Dzujna, secretary