

CITY OF STAMFORD
Board of Ethics
Stamford Government Center
(Meeting held virtually via zoom)
May 26, 2021

Public Hearing Minutes - Jacobson v. Figueroa

This Public Hearing was recorded and such recording is available to the public from the Board of Ethics and the City of Stamford. Such recording is intended to be the official record of the Hearing and not these minutes, and such recording is incorporated into these minutes by reference and made a part hereof. These minutes summarize the proceedings and are not intended as verbatim notes.

Present

Investigating Board Members Benjamin Folkinshteyn, Thomas Hynes, Kevin Quinn
Hearing Board Members Christine Dzujna, Allan Lang, Fred Springer
Alan Pickel, Esq. - Counsel for Respondent, Anabel Figueroa
Daniel Young, Esq. - Counsel for the Investigating Board
Stephen Conover, Esq. - Counsel to the Hearing Board

Others

Anabel Figueroa - Respondent
Jonathan Jacobson - Complainant
Kimberly Hawreluk - Human Resources Processing Technician

The Hearing was called to order by Hearing Board Chair Allan Lang at 6:07 p.m. He announced the purpose of the meeting to continue the Public Hearing that commenced on May 24, 2021.

Chair Lang asked the attorneys to introduce themselves and whom they represent.

On behalf of the Respondent, Attorney Pickel continued his cross-examination of Jonathan Jacobson, who testified that he never spoke to Myrna Sessa about the Board of Representatives' vote on her re-appointment to the Board of Ethics; that Ms. Figueroa is the only member of the Board of Representatives with whom he spoke about the vote on the re-appointment of Ms. Sessa; and that he had not previously filed a complaint with the Board of Ethics. At the conclusion of Attorney Pickel's cross-examination, Attorney Young had no questions for re-direct examination of Mr. Jacobson.

On behalf of the Investigating Board, Attorney Young called the Respondent Anabel Figueroa as a witness. After being sworn, Anabel Figueroa testified that she is generally familiar with the Code of Ethics, and aware of her obligation to comply with the Code. Ms. Figueroa expressed her dissatisfaction with the Board of Ethics based on her observations and her opinion that current members of the Board of Ethics should be replaced. She testified about the events surrounding the nomination of Myrna Sessa for re-appointment to the Board of Ethics, including discussions she had with Jonathan Jacobson when Ms. Figueroa explained her reasons for voting against Ms. Sessa's re-appointment. Ms. Figueroa testified that her votes against re-appointment of Ms. Sessa and of Monica Schlessinger Smyth to the Board of Ethics were not retaliation for their role on the Investigating Board in a previously filed complaint against her.

Exhibits 18, 19, 23 & 24 were admitted without objection, and Exhibits 17 & 22 were admitted over objection.

On behalf of the Respondent, Attorney Pickel cross-examined Ms. Figueroa about her experience with the Board of Ethics and her knowledge of Advisory Opinions issued by the Board of Ethics. Ms. Figueroa also testified about the events surrounding her vote on the re-appointment of Ms. Sessa to the Board of Ethics and discussions with Jonathan Jacobson.

Attorney Young re-examined Ms. Figueroa about Advisory Opinions issued and decisions made by the Board of Ethics.

As the Complainant, Jonathan Jacobson conducted cross-examination of Anabel Figueroa about their relationship as members of the Board of Representatives and their discussions of votes that were cast at meetings of the Board of Representatives. At the conclusion of the Complainant's examination, Attorneys Young and Pickel had no further questions for Anabel Figueroa.

Attorneys Young and Pickel stated that they intended to call additional witnesses.

The Hearing recessed at 9:02 p.m. and will be continued at the next session on June 3, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Allan Lang
Chair