

MINUTES OF THE ETHICS HEARING BOARD

City of Pittsburgh Ethics Hearing Board (“Board”)
Video Meeting via Zoom and Livestreamed on Ethics Hearing Board’s YouTube
July 27, 2021

Board Members Present:

Samantha Bushman
Maryann Herman
Alex Matthews
Orlando Portela-Valentín
Jennifer Richnafsky

Board Members Absent:

Pat Bigley
Lynn Davenport
Rhoda Neft
Brazitte Poole

Staff, Advisors and Others Present:

Leanne Davis, Executive Manager

- Call to Order
 - This meeting was called to order at 4:34 p.m. by Board Chair, Alex Matthews, who noted the delayed start time was due to an executive session related to personnel matters.
- Public Comment:
 - There was none.
- Minutes:
 - After a review of the February 2, 2021 meeting minutes, prepared by the outside counsel who attended the meeting, Jennifer Richnafsky moved to adopt the minutes. Samantha Bushman seconded the motion, whereupon the Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes, with no members opposing or abstaining.
 - Thereafter, the Chair called for a review of the June 22, 2021 minutes. Orlando Portela-Valentín noted a spelling correction. With the correction noted, Orlando Portela-Valentín moved to accept the minutes as amended. Samantha Bushman seconded the motion, whereupon the Board voted to approve the minutes as amended, with no opposition and Samantha Bushman abstaining due to her absence on the date of the meeting.

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- Fall Campaign Finance Filing Dates:
 - The County's deadline for filing nomination petitions is 8/2,
 - EHB filing dates:
 - 1st would be a week later, on 8/9;
 - 2nd would be 30 days later, which is 9/8 (due to August having 31 days); and
 - 3rd would be the final filing date, the same date as the County filing, which is Friday, 10/22.
- The Board discussed research memoranda to request of outside counsel, specifically regarding highly nuanced areas on a variety of topics. Orlando Portela-Valentín inquired as to the Board's budget, and the Executive Manager answered that the funds for such a project were available. There were no other comments or questions. The Executive Manager solicited feedback as to the preferred format, if such research would be provided as general guidance to the public.
- Personnel Updates:
 - In following-up on a matter discussed in executive session, the Chair summarized the intention to update the Executive Manager's title. Samantha Bushman moved to recognize that Leanne Davis has effectively performed the role of Executive Director to date, and moved to appoint her to serve hereafter as the Board's Executive Director. Jennifer Richnafsky seconded the motion. The Chair then called for any discussion. There being none, he called for a vote. The Board unanimously voted to approve the motion, with no abstentions or opposition. The Motion carried.
- Legislative Updates:
 - The Board considered proposed revisions to select definitional and substantive sections of Chapter 197 of the Code, specifically concerning conflicts of interest.
 - A few proposed options were discussed, such as whether to eliminate the definition for "Influence," and to instead create more clarity by incorporating the types of qualifying conduct into the substantive provision itself.
 - Further, it was also discussed that it would be beneficial to also include the qualifying exceptions set out in the State law into the substantive provision on conflicts of interest.
 - The Executive Director will present a revised draft for the Board's consideration at the next meeting. There was discussion that the next meeting date should be August 24, 2021.
- Adjournment: At 5:13 p.m. Samantha Bushman made a motion to conclude the meeting, seconded by Orlando Portela-Valentín. All were in favor, none abstained, none opposed. The Motion carried.

Minutes prepared by Leanne Davis