

MINUTES OF THE ETHICS HEARING BOARD

City of Pittsburgh Ethics Hearing Board (“Board” or “EHB”)
Video Meeting via Zoom and Livestreamed on Pittsburgh City Channel YouTube
August 2, 2022

Board Members Present:

Patrick Bigley
Maryann Herman
Alex Matthews
Brazitte Poole
Orlando Portela-Valentín
Jennifer Richnafsky
David Quinn

Board Members Absent:

Rhoda Neft
Samantha Bushman (excused, term completed, awaiting replacement)

Staff, Advisors and Others Present:

Leanne Davis, Executive Director

- I. Call to Order
 - a. This meeting was called to order at 4:24 p.m.

- II. Public Comment:
 - a. There was none.

- III. Campaign Finance:
 - a. The Board discussed the upcoming election to fill City Council District 5 due to the departure of Corey O’Connor, who is now serving as our County Controller. There will not be a primary election to fill this seat, and the new public official will be elected at the November 8 election.
 - b. The Board discussed a number of factors regarding the current reporting deadlines, including low staffing levels, and alignment with the County’s deadline to file nomination petitions. The timing of EHB’s reporting and the timing of other required filings with the County and the City Controller was also noted, and it was highlighted that EHB’s reports are meaningful as they occur much earlier than the other comparable required disclosures. News coverage of EHB campaign finance reports was noted to be most prominent at the time of the first required filing.
 - c. With the above enumerated factors in mind, the Board decided to administratively excuse all but the first filing, and to adjust the timing of this September report to be required one week after nomination petitions are due with the County. There was no opposition to the Executive Director’s suggestion to move the deadline to one week and one day after the nomination petition deadline, so that staff has an additional opportunity to remind candidates of the obligation.

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- d. It was also noted that a failure to comply with the option to file one report on or before September 27 would be considered as a waiver to elect this option, and instead the candidate would then be held accountable for the full three reports required by the Code.
- e. After a number of options were discussed, the Board ultimately decided for the reporting period to occur from August 1 to September 19, a duration of 50 days.

IV. Legislation:

- a. The Executive Director briefly discussed proposed legislation amendments and initial feedback from related department directors.
- b. At this point, the proposal remains a rough idea related to the extension of protections to support public engagement, and to protect the objective, impartial services and functions of government. It was discussed that the Legislative Committee may consider narrowing the scope of this topic.

V. Adjournment to Executive Session

- a. There being no new business, the meeting was adjourned into executive session to discuss changes to pending requests for advisory opinions.

Minutes prepared by Leanne Davis.