

# MINUTES OF THE ETHICS HEARING BOARD

City of Pittsburgh Ethics Hearing Board (“Board”)  
Video Meeting via Zoom and Livestreamed on YouTube  
October 29, 2020

## Board Members Present:

Pat Bigley  
Samantha Bushman  
Sean Coleman  
Maryann Herman  
Alex Matthews  
Brazitte Poole  
Jennifer Richnafsky

## Staff, Advisors and Others Present:

Leanne Davis, Executive Manager

- Call to Order:
  - This supplementary monthly meeting was called to order at 4:19 p.m. by Board Chair, Alex Matthews.
- Public Comment:
  - The Executive Manager reviewed email and the YouTube livestream page for any public comments. There was none.
- Campaign Finance Legislation:
  - The Executive Manager discussed the status of the proposed legislative additions to Chapter 198, approved by the Board at its last meeting on October 8, 2020. Over the course of further review, a number of revisions were suggested which were mainly non-substantive in nature. For example, some revisions were stylistic in nature, opting for “is” instead of “shall be,” while others served to increase clarity, such as specifying a particular referenced subsection. The Board members had no comments or questions as to these changes.
  - The next set of revisions suggested by the Executive Manager involved a substantive change to allow for more inclusive coverage. The Executive Manager discussed an example of a targeted political mailer sent this election season wherein the recipient’s voting record was threatened to be disclosed to neighbors. Staff’s research of the mailer revealed it was paid for by a partisan group and likely only sent to recipients identified as aligned with that group. It was discussed that this form of targeted political spending could affect whether certain candidates or ballot-issues were successful, despite the omission of a named candidate or ballot-issue.
  - The Board then discussed the best verbiage to convey the goal of requiring disclosures for individuals or groups who pay for such targeted political advertisements.
  - Sean Coleman, Jennifer Richnafsky, and others suggested revisions, with the final language to inclusively describe expenditures “made to encourage or defeat an election outcome.”

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- After concluding there were no other suggested revisions or items for discussion, Alex Matthews called for any further discussion and vote to approve the proposed legislation as amended. Sean Coleman so moved; Jennifer Richnafsky seconded the motion. It was approved unanimously, with no objections or abstentions.
  
- New Business:
  - There was no new business.
  
- Public Comment:
  - The Executive Manager conducted a second check for public comment. There was none.
  
- Adjournment:
  - At approximately 4:39 p.m., after confirming there was no new public comment or new business, the Board adjourned.

### Next meeting dates:

All meetings will be held via video conference and livestreamed until further notice, with a link to the livestream posted on <http://www.pittsburghpa.gov/ehb/ehb-meetings>, which also provides a full list of 2020 scheduled meetings.

Minutes prepared by Leanne Davis.