

Baltimore City Ethics Board
626 City Hall
Baltimore, MD 21202
November 14, 2013

Minutes of the Public Session

The Ethics Board met on November 14, 2013 in the Conference Room of the Office of Department of Legislative Reference, 626 City Hall, Baltimore, Maryland.

Call to Order: Chairwoman Linda Pierson called to order the meeting of the Baltimore City Ethics Board at 9:40 a.m. with a quorum present. Present were Board members Linda Pierson, Dawna Cobb, Alicia Wilson and Jennifer Burdick. Also present was Thaddeus Watulak, Deputy Director of the Ethics Board, Yvonne Wenger from the *Baltimore Sun* and Kim Truehart, member of the public.

A. Approval of the minutes: Minutes for October 2013, as amended, were approved by a vote of 4-0. Mr. Flynn arrived after the vote on the minutes.

B. Chair's Report: There is no report.

C. Director's Status Updates

1. **On-Line Financial Disclosure Project:** The Mayor's Office of Information Technology ("MOIT") has started to develop the on-line financial disclosure process. The Board will invite the MOIT representative coordinating this project to its December meeting to discuss its status and design.

2. **Open Meetings Act Training:** Mr. Watulak has taken the on-line course and will send the course link to Ms. Pierson, Ms. Burdick and Ms. Cobb.

3. **Ethics training cycle:** About 60, mostly newly hired employees, will be trained during this cycle. Mr. Watulak hopes that the back-log of those new hires who need to be trained has been reduced. He believes that it is possible that there are still employees who may not have come forward for training. To better understand how to address this situation, the Board will invite a representative from Human Resources to its January meeting.

4. **Lobbyist Registration Fees-**The bill is at third reader.

D. Solicitation Requests –Councilman Kraft's request for the Southeast Schools Fund. This program continued to operate after its approval expired. Mr. Watulak met with the Councilman Kraft's Chief of Staff and explained that a new approval is required every year. Mr. Watulak believes that this oversight was inadvertent and the result of a change in personnel at the Chief of Staff level. A motion to approve the request passed by a vote of 5-0. A letter will be sent to Councilman Kraft reminding him of the annual requirement for such requests.

E. BoE Lobbying: The issue before the Board is whether lawyers or other representatives who appear on behalf of others before the Board of Estimates are engaging in lobbying. This question has arisen in the context of the Board's role in approving City contracts. Mr. Aisenstark is still checking with other counties and the State to see how they handle this issue. The Board decided to wait for the results of Mr. Aisenstark's research before meeting the City Solicitor, the City official who has raised this issue with the Board.

At 10:50 a.m., the Board unanimously moved to go into closed session to discuss a complaint and a potential complaint.

The Board returned to open session at 11:15 a.m. and voted 5-0 to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 11:15.

The Board's next meeting is December 6 at 9:30 a.m.