

MILWAUKEE COUNTY ETHICS BOARD

**Tuesday, April 28, 2009
3:00 P.M.
Courthouse, Room 203-R**

Present: David Carr, Chairman
Rebecca Blemberg, Vice Chair
Paul Hinkfuss
Henry Hamilton
Christian Flores

Also present: Robert Andrews, Deputy Corporation Counsel

1.0 Roll Call

Roll call was taken. All were present, except for Paul Hinkfuss, who was temporarily excused, and there was a quorum. The County Clerk had sworn the two new members, Henry Hamilton and Christian Flores, into office. Mr. Hinkfuss took his seat at 3:15 p.m.

2.0 Approval of the Minutes for the Meeting of February 16, 2009

Rebecca Blemberg moved, Henry Hamilton seconded, and the Board, by vote (4-0), approved the minutes for the meeting of February 16, 2009 as written.

3.0 Report of the Chairman

3.1 Request for a Confidential Advisory

This matter was temporarily postponed to later in the meeting, pending the arrival of Mr. Hinkfuss. At the conclusion of the agenda, Mr. Hinkfuss moved, Mr. Flores seconded and the Board voted (5-0), pursuant to Section 19.85(1) (f), Wis. Stats, to meet in closed session to discuss Item 3.1, a request for a confidential advisory. Upon reconvening in open session, Chairman Carr stated he would prepare a letter of response on behalf of the Board.

3.2.A Reports on Lobbyists

The Board reviewed two reports from County Clerk Czarnezki: a report dated April 3, 2009, for the first quarter of 2009 on Lobbyist Registrations; and a report dated February 26, 2009 on Lobbying Expenditure Reports by Lobbying Principals. These reports were received and placed on file by the Board.

3.2.B Status of Lobbyist Sanctions

The Board was informed that Deputy Corporation Counsel Andrews, in pursuing a sanction of John Bowles, Midwest General Construction in circuit court, found out that the company was no longer in business. No further action could be taken on the matter.

The Board was informed, with regard to their directive to send a letter to Richard Riley of the Allied Transit Union for failure to file his lobbyist expenditure report timely, that he had finally filed his expenditure report. No further action needed to be taken on the matter.

The Board was informed that the County Clerk had sent notices to Doug Weas of Weas Development and Robert Gibson of Service Employees International Union that their lobbyist principal expense reports had not been filed timely. Subsequent to the late notices being sent, both parties filed the required reports. No further action needed to be taken.

3.2 Status Report on the County Executive's Appointments/Reappointments

Chairman Carr extended a warm welcome to the two new appointees who had been nominated by the County Executive and approved by the County Board of Supervisors in the March legislative cycle of the County Board. Henry Hamilton III was the candidate from the NAACP who was to replace Dan Hanley, whose term expired February 28, 2008. Christian Flores was the candidate from the Public Policy Forum who was to replace Brother Bob Smith, whose term expired February 28, 2009.

Chairman Carr extended thanks to Brother Bob Smith for his years of service and contribution to the public good.

4.0 Report from the Executive Director

Mr. Hinkfuss arrived and took his seat.

4.1 2008 Annual Report

The Executive Director stated that the 2008 Annual Report had been prepared and reviewed by the Board Chairman for distribution to the County Board and the County Executive by April 1, 2009, as required by County ordinance. A copy of the 2008 Annual Report was provided to the Board for their information and referral.

4.2 Progress Report on Ethics Board Website with Tutorial

4.2.A Update Report

The Executive Director reported that a working draft of the website materials was completed in April of 2009 and was now being reviewed by the Ethics Board members and by Corporation Counsel's Office. Corporation Counsel's Office requested that more time be taken to review the tutorial questions for the three test groups: the employees, the appointed officials, and the elected officials. The legal review was not anticipated as part of the original website timeline, but would assure that the questions asked are universally agreed upon as correct and consistent with legal advisories provided by both the Ethics Board and by the Office of Corporation Counsel. Once the reviews are completed, IMSD will take steps to integrate the text into the County's Internet system. The website will include a video vignette from the County Executive on the importance of understanding and following the ethics code. As a result of the feature enhancements and additional reviews of the tutorials, the deadline for making the website available for access by County employees has been moved to August of 2009.

Mr. Flores asked if there would be a focus group and press releases. He was told by the Executive Director that the format had been tested with a few persons at different levels, and that more could be done. A press release would be prepared at the time of the website's completion.

The Board was provided with a copy of a memorandum which had been sent to all department directors and elected officials on how to access the existing county intranet site and about the creation of a new ethics website.

4.2.B Discussion on Tutorial Questions

The Executive Director asked that a formal subcommittee be created to review the website tutorial questions. The Board concurred. The Website Subcommittee consisted of David Carr, Rebecca Blemberg, and Christian Flores, with the Executive Director and Deputy Corporation Counsel Andrews in attendance. Attorney Andrews noted, since there were three members of the Ethics Board meeting, that it was an official meeting that would require posting meeting notice. The Subcommittee members agreed to meet on Monday, May 11, 2009 at 3:00 p.m. in Room 203-P of the Courthouse.

4.3 Progress Report on Ethics Board Staffing Reorganization

The Board was informed that a fund transfer request was submitted to the Committee on Finance for the March 2009 legislative cycle of the County Board to transfer funds for the RFP. The Finance Committee Chair asked that details on the goals and objectives on how the money was to be spent be provided before the money was released. A status report on the ethics education program including the goals and objectives contained in the draft RFP was sent to the Committees on Finance and Judiciary. A copy of the report was distributed to Ethics Board Members. It was pointed out that a request would be made to take \$5,000 out of the \$175,000 in the 2009 allocated contingent fund to be set aside for the County Clerk to establish an online system to allow lobbyists to register and to file their expenditure reports.

5.0 Adjournment

Chairman Carr reminded the Board that a meeting schedule had been set for the year. The next meeting was Thursday, September 17, 2009.

Mr. Hinkfuss moved, Mr. Hamilton seconded and the Board voted (5-0) to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan C. Shields

Susan C. Shields, Executive Director