

BOWIE CITY ETHICS COMMISSION

Minutes

July 28, 2015 - Open Meeting

A meeting of the Bowie City Ethics Commission was held on Tuesday July 28, 2015 in the City Manager's conference room. Commission members in attendance were Benjamin Woolery, Chair, Jim Holderbaum and Vince Canales (by phone). Jay Fagan was excused from the meeting. Also in attendance was Fred Sussman, Counsel for the Commission and John Fitzwater, Assistant City Manager, and liaison to the Commission.

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by Chairman Woolery.

The minutes for the June 16, 2015 minutes were reviewed. Mr. Canales moved approval as amended. This was seconded by Mr. Holderbaum and unanimously approved by the Commission.

The Commission discussed a proposed letter prepared by Mr. Sussman to candidates regarding their Financial Disclosure Statement (FDS), the importance of correcting deficiencies noted by the Commission pertaining to their FDS and the consequences of not correcting these deficiencies. After discussion, Mr. Holderbaum moved to accept the draft letter as presented. Mr. Canales seconded. The Commission unanimously approved this action.

As part of the discussion of this issue, there was also a discussion about inconsistencies with Section 2-71 D pertaining to the filing of FDSs for candidates to be elected officials. The Commission noted that these inconsistencies need to be corrected and agreed to coordinate with the Board of Elections after the November election to correct these issues.

Finally as part of this discussion, the Commission confirmed the process they would follow to get these letters out in an expeditious fashion. When a FDS is received from a candidate, the City Clerk will send a copy to Mr. Sussman, the staff liaison and the Commission. Mr. Sussman will review these FDS within 24 hours and provide a list of deficiencies (if any) and send to the staff liaison for distribution to the Commission. After the Commission concurs with this list, the letter approved above will be sent to the candidate.

The Commission discussed the City's Web Page regarding Filing for Office to determine if any language could be added to better communicate with candidates pertaining to filing FDSs. After discussion, the Commission concluded that it would not take any action at this time.

There being no further business to conduct in an open session the meeting adjourned into a closed session at 3:35 p.m. for administrative purposes.

Public Minutes of Closed Session

During the closed meeting, the following actions were taken:

The Commission reviewed Financial Disclosure Statements submitted by candidates for public office.

The Commission reviewed a letter on which they were carbon copied.

There being no further business to be conducted in closed session, Mr. Woolery adjourned the meeting at 3:50 p.m. back into open session.

Once the open meeting reopened, the Commission reviewed a proposed ordinance to Section 2-69 K of the City Code drafted by Mr. Sussman to establish certain time limits within which certain complaints alleging violations of the Bowie Public Ethics Ordinance must be filed with the Bowie Ethics Commission. Mr. Sussman indicated that he spoke with the City Attorney regarding this proposed amendment. Mr. Canales moved that the Commission endorse the draft ordinance, subject to one revision changing the word "should" to "could", and that Counsel to the Commission prepare a draft memo to the City Manager from the Commission to forward this ordinance to City Council for their consideration. The motion was seconded by Mr. Holderbaum and was approved unanimously by the Commission.

The Commission also agreed to move their September meeting from the 15th to the 16th so as not to conflict with the Jewish Holiday.

There being no further business to come before the Commission Mr. Holderbaum moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Canales seconded this motion. This motion was unanimously approved and the meeting adjourned at 3:55 p.m.

[The next meeting of the Ethics Commission will be held on Tuesday, August 18, 2015 at 3:00 in the City Manager's conference room.]

John L. Fitzwater
Staff Liaison to the Ethics Commission