

BOWIE CITY ETHICS COMMISSION

Minutes

November 17 , 2015 - Open Meeting

A meeting of the Bowie City Ethics Commission was held on Tuesday November 17, 2015 in the City Manager's conference room at Bowie City Hall. Commission members in attendance were Benjamin Woolery, Chair, Vince Canales, Jay Fagan, Karl Stehmer, and Daniel Thomas. Also in attendance was Fred Sussman, Counsel for the Commission and John Fitzwater, Assistant City Manager, and liaison to the Commission. Commission members Jim Holderbaum and Alan Kolski were excused.

The meeting was called to order at 3:05 p.m. by Chairman Woolery.

The Commission reviewed the minutes of the October 20, 2015 meetings. Mr. Stehmer moved approval and Mr. Canales seconded. All voted in favor.

The Commission continued the review of forms which will be used by the Commission for 2016.

The revised letter to those who are required to file Financial Disclosure Statements (FDS) was re-reviewed. This letter reflected the changes requested by the Commission at its October 20, 2015 meeting. Mr. Canales moved approval of the revised letter. Mr. Stehmer seconded. All voted in favor.

The revised Financial Disclosure Statement for Certain Employees and Appointed Members of Boards and Commissions was re-reviewed. This form reflected the changes requested by the Commission at its October 20, 2015 meeting. Mr. Fagan moved approval of the revised form. Mr. Thomas seconded. All voted in favor.

The revised Definitions, which accompany the disbursement of Financial Disclosure Statements was re-reviewed. These definitions reflected the changes requested by the Commission at its October 20, 2015 meeting. Mr. Canales moved approval of the revised form. Mr. Stehmer seconded. All voted in favor.

The revised Financial Disclosure Statement for Elected Officials and Candidates for Elective Office was re-reviewed. This form reflected the changes requested by the Commission at its October 20, 2015 meeting. On Schedule E of this form the Commission added language that "candidates should ensure that they have reviewed the list of businesses doing business with the City on the City's web site." It was also suggested that a link be provided on the form to this list of businesses. Staff was going to check whether we can put the list of businesses on the web site and would report back to the Commission. On Schedule G, the Commission deleted the language "complete schedule G" and substituted the language, "answer the following questions." Finally, the Commission reviewed the language from the Riverdale Park Schedule A and substituted this with one amendment in place of the current language in Schedule

A. The amendment pertained to removing the language “including interests in time shares.” Mr. Thomas moved approval of the revised form as amended. Mr. Canales seconded. All voted in favor.

The Lobbyist Registration Form was reviewed by the Commission. In the asterisk at the end of the document, the Commission added the language “and encouraged” after the language, “This information is requested”. Mr. Canales moved approval of this form as amended. Mr. Fagan seconded. All voted in favor.

Mr. Fitzwater indicated that prior to the Ethics Commission this afternoon, he and Mr. Sussman met with the City Manager, Planning Director, Economic Director and Senior Planner to discuss when a Lobbyist Registration Form should be filed by a lobbyist. The Commission had previously requested that staff be given a better understanding as to when these forms were required and should be filed. As a result of the meeting, Mr. Fitzwater will work with Mr. Sussman to draft a document to better communicate with lobbyists when they need to file. When completed, this document will be brought to the Commission for review and approval.

The Lobbyist Activity Report was reviewed by the Commission. The Commission amended this form to add the language from the asterisk at the end of the Lobbyist Registration Form to this form as well. Mr. Canales moved approval of the form as amended. Mr. Stehmer seconded. All voted in favor.

The General Information About Lobbying document was reviewed. The Commission had no changes to this document. Mr. Stehmer moved approval. Mr. Fagan seconded. All voted in favor.

Mr. Woolery asked Mr. Sussman about the rights of Commission members to testify before the General Assembly of Maryland. Mr. Sussman indicated that, in his opinion, if a member decides to speak that they should not be compromising their role as a member of the Ethics Commission and that they should speak as an individual and not as a member of the Ethics Commission.

The Commission reviewed the Lobbyist Registration Form submitted by Daniel Lynch. The Commission determined that the address and phone number for Chick-fil-A needed to be provided and that since the employer/client of the lobbyist was checked as not being exempt from filing a lobbyist registration, that Chick-fil-A would also need to file a Lobbyist Registration Form. Mr. Canales moved to require this action be communicated to Mr. Lynch. Mr. Stehmer seconded. All voted in favor.

The Commission considered whether they would meet on December 15, 2015 or whether they would cancel this meeting and have the next meeting of the Commission occur on January 19, 2016. There is no business to come before the Commission that cannot be deferred until January 19, 2016. Mr. Stehmer moved to cancel the December 15, 2015 meeting absent any pressing business. Mr. Canales seconded. All voted in favor.

There being no further business to come before the Commission Mr. Canales moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Stehmer seconded. All voted in favor. The meeting adjourned at 4:20 p.m.

[The next meeting of the Ethics Commission will be held on Tuesday January 19, 2016 at 3:00 p.m. in the City Manager 's conference room.]

John L. Fitzwater
Staff Liaison to the Ethics Commission