

## MONTGOMERY COUNTY ETHICS COMMISSION

Public Meeting, December 13, 2022

Conducted via Zoom call

Minutes

IN ATTENDANCE:

Commissioners:

Susan Beard, Chair

Bruce Romer, Vice-Chair

Jennifer Collins

Rahul Goel

Mary Ann Keeffe

Staff Members: Robert W. Cobb, Chief Counsel

Erin Chu, Program Manager

The public portion of the meeting was recorded, and the recording can be found on the Commission's website.

Item 1. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by the Chair.

Item 2. The Commission approved the minutes from the October 11, 2022, with minor revisions.

Item 3. Ethics Education: Mr. Cobb informed the Commission that pursuant to the changes to the ethics law in 2021, the newly elected officials, excluding previously trained incumbents, must receive ethics training within 30 days of taking office. Mr. Cobb is going to conduct training for new Councilmembers and staff on December 15.

Mr. Cobb let the Commission know that the BCC training video has been deployed so that all incoming BCC members can access the video and be issued a certificate upon successful

completion of the training which can be loaded into a system that will notify their respective BCC liaison.

Mr. Cobb also informed the Commission that new employee one-hour online training has been instituted pursuant to a framework established by the Department of Technology Enterprise and Business Solutions (TEBS). Mr. Cobb indicated that with respect to new employees who are unable to take the once monthly live training, a substitute video has been generated and is being close captioned for accessibility. The intent is to have that video made available in the learning management system in the County enterprise resource system.

The Commission briefly discussed the issue of assuring compliance with training requirements. Ideally, a process will be established resulting in managers being notified of their respective employees' statuses regarding ethics training requirements.

Item 4. Mr. Cobb indicated that the County Council enacted the amendments to the ethics law in Bill 17-22 on November 1, 2022. The amendments will become effective on February 13, 2023.

Item 5. The Commission discussed the proposed budget for the Commission for FY24. There being no provision for adding a part-time employee, the Commission discussed whether it should seek additional funding. No motion was made towards seeking a change to the Commission's budget.

Item 6. New Business: The Commissioners identified no new business matters.

Item 7. Annual Election of Commissioner Chair and Vice Chair: Bruce Romer was elected Chair and Jennifer Collins was elected Vice-Chair for the year 2023.

Item 8. Pursuant to GP Art. 3-305, at 8:05 p.m. the Commission voted unanimously to close the meeting to the public to discuss legal advice and confidential matters.

- a. The Commission decided to issue an advisory opinion.
- b. The Commission approved two waiver requests.
- c. The Commission discussed a report of investigation and decided to close the matter that was the subject of the report.
- d. The Commission discussed allegations of a violation of the ethics law and deferred further consideration to a future meeting.
- e. The Commission approved the outside employment requests as presented.

The meeting reopened at 9:35.

Item 8. The meeting adjourned at 9:36.

Respectfully Submitted,

Robert W. Cobb

Chief Counsel