



MONTGOMERY COUNTY ETHICS COMMISSION

Public Meeting, November 13, 2024

Hybrid meeting in person and via Zoom

Minutes

IN ATTENDANCE:

Commissioners:

Elizabeth Kellar, Chair
Rahul Goel, Vice-Chair
Susan Beard
Kenita Barrow
Eric Gallun

Staff Members:

Erin O'Connor, Staff Director/Chief Counsel
Hiwote Yohannes, Program Manager

Item 1. The meeting was called to order at 7:01 pm by the Chair.

Item 2. Ms. O'Connor introduced the Ethics Commission's newly hired Program Manager, Hiwote Yohannes

Item 3. The minutes from the October 9 meeting were approved as presented.

Item 4. Ms. O'Connor updated the Commission on staff efforts related to the upcoming lobbying registration and financial disclosure filing seasons, which will both begin within the next six weeks.

Item 5. Ms. O'Connor briefly updated the Commission on a new procedure at the Housing Opportunities Commission related to notifying Commission staff of comings and goings of financial disclosure filers at the HOC.

Item 6. Ms. O'Connor discussed the April 24, 2026, deadline for all County websites to make all public-facing digital documents accessible pursuant to Department of Justice requirements. In a two-person staff office, the accessibility mandate is a challenge. The Commission suggested ideas on how to meet the requirement without impacting the Commission staff's regular work.

Item 7. The County Executive and the County Council approved a term limit waiver to allow Rahul Goel, an Ethics Commission member, to apply for a third consecutive term on the Ethics Commission. Both the CE and the Council approved the waiver, and Mr. Goel will be confirmed on November 19.

Item 8. The Commission discussed the prospect of reverting meeting dates back to the second Tuesday of every month and unanimously agreed to this change. Ms. O'Connor will send the list of 2025 meeting dates to all Commissioners in the coming days. The Commission also determined to tentatively cancel the December 2024 public meeting.

Item 9. The Commission held officer elections and ultimately chose a continuation of 2024 leadership roles, selecting Beth Kellar as Chair and Rahul Goel as Vice Chair.

The open meeting adjourned at 7:32 pm to conduct administrative matters.

In the administrative meeting, the Commission approved most of the outside employment requests, while placing one on hold awaiting a waiver request.

The Commission approved three outside employment waiver requests and one public-private partnership waiver request submitted by a department.

The Commission discussed four new matters.

The administrative meeting adjourned at 8:37 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Erin O'Connor
Staff Director/Chief Counsel