

Baltimore City Ethics Board
626 City Hall
Baltimore, Maryland 21202
Wednesday, February 9, 2011

Minutes of the Public Session

The Ethics Board met on February 9, 2011 in the Conference Room of the Office of Department of Legislative Reference, 626 City Hall, Baltimore, Maryland.

- A. Call to Order: Chairwoman Linda Pierson called to order the meeting of the Baltimore City Ethics Board at 10:15 a.m. on February 9, 2011 with a quorum present. Present ere Board members Linda Pierson, Jennifer Burdick, Dawna Cobb and Guy Flynn. Also present were Director Avery Aisenstark and Deputy Director Thaddeus Watulak.
- B. The December and January minutes were approved.
- C. Chair's report: Ms. Pierson communicated via e-mail with Baltimore Sun reporter Julie Scharper about the R.S. issue following the December 14, 2010 letter sent to the complainant.
- D. Director's Report:
 - Mr. Aisenstark has been asked by the Employee Retirement System (ERS) director to provide and he is arranging ethics training for ERS Board members.
 - There is a bill pending in the General Assembly to add the City Police and Health Departments to the jurisdiction of the local ethics board.
 - The Mayor's Office has not responded to Mr. Aisenstark's request for a list of boards and commissions are subject to the ethics. Ms. Pierson will send a letter to the Mayor asking for this information.
- E. Status report from Inspector General: There was no report.
- F. Pending Applications for Solicitations-Bremerhaven Sister Cities. The chair, Ms. Fessenden was advised by Mr. Watulak that she is considered an official of the Mayor's office. The request for an exemption was approved with the usual conditions by a unanimous vote.
- G. By letter requesting an Ethics Board Opinion regarding Capitals pre-season hockey game at the First Mariner Arena. Mr. Aisenstark will ask Mr. Driscoll about the gift of hockey equipment from the Capitals and will seek confirmation that Parks and Recreation accepted the gift. The Board agreed that BY's involvement in bringing the pre-season game to Baltimore did not raise a prestige of office issue. The Board's response to BY letter will advise BY to inform the Board should there be any future activities around this arrangement, i.e. donation of tickets.
- H. Director's Update: State law requires local elective officials to be subject to ethics and disclosure laws equivalent to State law. Mr. Aisenstark reviewed the amendments to the regulations that he and Mr. Watulak drafted. The Board considered these and minor changes were noted. The Board must certify to the State Ethics Commission by October 1, 2011 that the changes that need to be made. Mr. Aisenstark will notify the Mayor of this requirement.

1. Other business: Councilman Branch contacted Mr. Aisenstark to ask about introducing a bill to allow council members to represent constituents at the Environmental Control Board (ECB). Non-lawyers are not allowed to represent parties before the ECB and to do so would this be an unauthorized practice of law. The ECB already told the councilman it would not be appropriate for him to do this. The Board agreed that this would also violate the prestige of office principle.
- J. The next meeting is scheduled for March 10, 2011.
- K. The meeting was adjourned at 11:55 a.m.

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Prepared by Dawna Cobb

February 8, 2011