

Baltimore City Ethics Board  
626 City Hall  
Baltimore, MD 21202  
April 10, 2015

## **Minutes of the Public Session**

The Ethics Board met on April 10, 2015 in the Conference Room of the Department of Legislative Reference, 626 City Hall, Baltimore, Maryland.

**Call to Order** - Chairperson, Lu Pierson, called to order the meeting of the Baltimore City Ethics Board at 9:35 a.m. without a quorum present. Present were Board members Lu Pierson and Dawna Cobb. Also present was Thaddeus Watulak, Deputy Director of the Ethics Board.

**A. Approval of Minutes from March**-The Board approved the February 2015 minutes as amended by a vote of 3-0.<sup>1</sup>

**B. Chair's Report:** Mr. Flynn and Mr. Pierson will be sworn in before the next Board meeting.

### **C. Director's Status Updates**

1. Ongoing investigations- There is no report.
  2. Outside counsel-Mr. Aisenstark has identified potential candidates and has spoken to both of them. They are doing conflicts checks.
  3. Member term expiration-Alicia Wilson's term has expired. Ms. Pierson will speak to Ms. Wilson about extending her term.
- 2. Legislation Introduced**-The four bills referenced in earlier minutes --15-0498-15-501 -- were introduced on March 23, 2015.

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. Flynn arrived at 10:00 a.m.

## **D. Preparing for 2015 Financial Disclosure Season**

1. Candidate filings- A proposed change to the Ethics Board regulations provides that Candidates for City Office are exempt from the paper processing fee filing a disclosure form with the City because they are required to file it with the City Board of Elections. The Board of Elections forwards the form to the Ethics Board.
2. Reminder e-blast-This went out on April 1, 2015. There were some minor glitches with the Department of Housing and Community Development arising out of an issue with the server. The Mayor's Office of Information Technology is resolving this issue.
3. Questions from the Inspector General (IG)-The IG posed questions to the Ethics Board regarding the \$10 processing fee associated with filing a paper copy of the disclosure form. The Board reviewed the IG's confidential memorandum and Mr. Aisenstark's response dated March 23, 2015.
4. About 500 electronic filings have been filed to date.

**E. Gift Regulation-**The Board voted 3-0 to amend its regulation to permit City officials to accept invitations from State officials to attend a charitable, cultural or sporting event provided the ticket is free or is offered by or on behalf of the State of Maryland.

**6. Discussion of Proper "Interest" in Business Entities for Disclosure-** Currently the financial disclosure form asks for filers to disclose any business entity that one has an "economic interest." The Board discussed whether this asks for more information than is necessary and if so, possible ways to address the issue. The Board voted 3-0 to exclude mutual fund information from the definition of "economic interest" in conformance with State law.

The Board voted 3-0 to ask the State Ethics Board whether using "financial interest" is acceptable.

## **7. Solicitation Requests**

1. BDC-ETC- This request was for two years; the Board approved this request for one year by a vote of 3-0.

2. Mayor's Office of Health, Human Services, Education & Youth-Say Yes to Education-The Board approved this request by a vote of 3-0.

**F.** The next Board meeting will be May 8 at 9:30 a.m.

**G.** A motion to adjourn was made and approved at 11:25 a.m.