

ORANGE COUNTY BOARD OF ETHICS

MINUTES

September 21, 2023

The meeting was held at the Board of Ethics' office located at 40 Matthews Street, Suite 101, Goshen, NY 10924.

Chair Johnson called the meeting to order at 3:15 p.m.

Agenda Item I – Roll Call: Roll call was taken by Secretary LaVelle and a quorum was present:

Present:

Paul K. Johnson, Chair
Melissa Bonacic
Gordon L. Dean
Marcus Horrego

Late:

Judge Jeffrey Berry

Also in attendance:

Christine Taylor, Towne Law
Board Counsel – via Zoom

Absent:

Daniel B. Clarino – notification made by email

Agenda Item II – Approve Minutes from August 17, 2023, Meeting: After the Board reviewed the minutes, Mr. Dean moved to approve them, which was seconded by Ms. Bonacic. All in favor. Carried.

Agenda Item III – Approve Counsel Invoice for July 2023: Chair Johnson reviewed Counsel's August 2023 invoice in the amount of \$763.75. A review of the invoice revealed there is no back balance owed to Towne Law. Mr. Dean made a motion to pay the August invoice as submitted. This motion was seconded by Ms. Bonacic. All in favor. Carried.

Agenda Item IV – Chair Review of Employee Training Request: Chair Johnson shared with the Board the email received from the Commissioner of Human Services, Langdon Chapman. Chair Johnson reviewed the memo drafted by Ms. Taylor, for distribution to employees, regarding the issue of \$75 gift/meal. Also reviewed was the revised FAQ that was on the Board of Ethics website. The revised FAQ was approved to be posted on the Board of Ethics' website. The memo drafted by Ms. Taylor was also approved. Secretary LaVelle will send this memo along with a reference to the FAQ to all Department Heads and Deputies so they can distribute it to those employees who report to them.

Agenda Item V – Financial Disclosure Forms:

a. **Statistical Review:** Secretary LaVelle reviewed the progress made regarding the collection of the 2022 Annual Statement of Financial Disclosure Forms. It is expected that there will be 416 Disclosure Form filers this year. 406 forms have been received so far and of this number, 404 have been reviewed and approved by the Board, and 2 are still under Board review. There are 10 individuals who have not yet filed their forms and are delinquent.

At 3:30 p.m., Mr. Horrego moved to enter Executive Session. The motion was seconded by Ms. Bonacic. All in favor. Carried.

b. Question 10 of Disclosure Form: Discussion regarding this question took place as one individual answered this question by revealing very sensitive information about their credit card usage and the need to do this was questioned by a Board member. No action required on this item.

c. Review of Delinquent Filers – Notification to DA: Secretary LaVelle shared the list of delinquent filers with the Board. Secretary LaVelle explained that if their Disclosure Forms are not received by the end of the month, they will be referred to the DA, consistent with the OCEDL. Ms. Bonacic will contact several of the people on the list that are known to her and urge them to file.

At 3:42 p.m., Judge Berry entered the meeting.

Agenda Item VI - Review of DL-05-23: This disclosure letter, along with all submitted supporting documentation, was reviewed by the Board.

Agenda Item VII – Review of RFO-12-23: This request for opinion, along with all submitted supporting documentation, was received by the Board.

At 3:49 p.m., Ms. Bonacic moved to exit Executive Session. This motion was seconded by Mr. Dean. All in favor. Carried.

Agenda Item VIII – Response to Executive Session: A motion was made by Chair Johnson for Secretary LaVelle to draft letters to the individuals involved with the above referenced DL-05-23 and RFO-12-23, all in accordance with the discussion held in Executive Session. This motion was seconded by Judge Berry. All in favor. Carried.

Agenda Item IX – Follow Up on Any Old Business: Chair Johnson discussed Board of Ethics Member's attendance to the monthly meeting via Zoom. Members can Zoom in but cannot cast a vote. Chair Johnson also discussed a change in Secretary LaVelle's schedule. Since Secretary LaVelle meets with Chair Johnson on Wednesdays (her usual day off), she will be allowed to leave on Thursdays at 1:45pm.

Agenda Item X – Any Other Business That May Come Before the Board: No new business before the Board.

Agenda Item XI – Schedule Next Meeting: The next meeting is scheduled for October 19, 2023.

At 3:56 p.m., Ms. Bonacic moved that the meeting be adjourned, which was seconded by Mr. Horrego. All in favor. Carried.