

Erie County Ethics Board
Meeting Minutes
February 3, 2020 8 a.m. 16th Floor Budget Conference Room

MEMBERS: Chris Trapp, Vice-Chair
Rebecca Town, Secretary
Brian Downey
Ellen Kennedy

STAFF: Leslie Ortiz-Fogg, Counsel
Vianne Uthman, Administrative Staff
David Bojanowski, Administrative Staff

EXCUSED: Steven Schwartz, Chair (by phone)

OTHERS PRESENT: Ross Kostecky, Legislature Office (recording)

1. Meeting called to order by Vice-Chair Trapp at 8:10 a.m.
2. January 2020 meeting minutes reviewed and approved by motion of member Kennedy seconded by Town.
3. Website / Email Updates (Uthman /Town /Schwartz):
 - i. Request for opinions/actions:
 - i. Chair responded to prior complainant by suggesting he contact local labor attorney; Counsel responded with Board's recommendation for approval for the request for part-time outside employment based upon some assurances that it will not interfere with county employment and has the approval of the supervisor.
 - ii. A request for an opinion by a County Legislator who intends to share office space with others. As there was no partnership or business relationship outside of sharing space there does not appear to be a conflict of interest.
 - ii. Updates to website: Minutes & Agenda & 2020 meeting schedule posted.
 - iii. FOIL Requests: NONE
 - iv. Other communications: 1/16/20 Schwartz & Trapp briefed new Erie County Legislators regarding Ethics Laws and ethical issues and common problems. Legislators may request time-stamped receipt when submitting disclosures. Comments made to legislators regarding were clarified to reflect the board's position that all gifts disclosed will be reviewed on their own merits with no presumption of wrongdoing.
4. Old Business:
 - i. The claims filed by former Legislator Morton were dismissed with the court granting costs to the county. The plaintiff's attorney has requested that county waives the costs and the \$500 fine. The board will not waive the fine on motion of Downey, seconded by Kennedy. A second motion to leave waiver of costs to the discretion of the county attorney was approved, made by Town and seconded by Downey.
 - ii. Rebecca Town has been reappointment to Ethics Board by the County Executive and approved by the legislature and her appointment will extend until December 31, 2024.
 - iii. There was no update on the status of minor Political Parties filing requirements.
 - iv. Over 80% of county departments have submitted lists with names of those required to complete 2019 Disclosure Forms. These were due by February 15, 2020.

- v. Revisions to 2018 Financial Disclosure Form for 2019 were reviewed and approved and will be sent out following the March meeting. Motion by Town- seconded by Kennedy and approved.

5. New Business:

- i. Schedule for distribution of Financial Disclosure Forms for 2019 after March meeting with review of cover letter.
- ii. Annual Report being drafted for March, 2020 meeting by Chair.
- iii. Next meeting scheduled for Monday, March 9, 2020 at 8 a.m.

6. No Public Comments

7. Motion to adjourn at 8:40 by Kennedy seconded by Town.

DRAFT