

Erie County Ethics Board  
Meeting Minutes

November 7, 2022 8:30 a.m:

**Budget Conference Room (16<sup>th</sup> Floor) – Rath Building**

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Members:                   \_\_\_ Chris Trapp, Chair  
                                  \_\_\_ Brian Downey, Vice Chair  
                                  \_\_\_ Heather Gresham  
                                  \_\_\_ Ellen Kennedy  
                                  \_\_\_ Taunya Abaya

Staff:                       \_\_\_ Aaron Rubin, Counsel  
                                  \_\_\_ Kayla Witherspoon

Excused:                   \_\_\_

Others Present:

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1. Meeting called to order at 8:45 a.m.
2. September meeting Minutes for review, corrections and approval – motion to accept September meeting minutes by Gresham, seconded by Abaya. Passed.
3. Website / Email Updates (Witherspoon/Chair):
  - a. Request for opinions/actions: There were no new requests on the website for opinions or actions.
    1. Ray E re DA and Judiciary – The Board has not received any response regarding this request.
  - b. Updates to website: Minutes, agenda
  - c. FOIL Requests: NONE
  - d. Other communications:
    1. COOG re Exec Session – Received a communication from the Committee on Open Government (COOG) explaining that our board could go into executive session to review financial disclosures if we so wish.
4. Old Business:
  - a. Chief Ethics Officer Update – There are no updates regarding the proposal for a Chief Ethics Officer; Rubin will follow up with the EC Legislature and the County Executive’s office for updates
  - b. Rules and Regulations amendments to 4.11 and 10.8 – decision to approve the minor changes to the Rules and Regulations 4.11 and 10.8 that were discussed during previous meeting. Motioned by Downey, seconded by Abaya. Passed unanimously.
5. New Business:
  - a. Review of Law 2 (2018) and Board of Ethics Rules and Regulations – The Board will proceed as normal; all amendments have been accepted.
  - b. Selection of New Officers at January meeting – The positions of Board Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary will be selected during January 2023 meeting. Meeting dates for distribution and completion of annual financial disclosure forms will be established and the form will be reviewed for any changes.
  - c. Content of minutes – Request for more detailed information within the annual report
  - d. Dates for annual financial disclosure forms – review changes to the financial disclosure forms at December 2022 meeting; tentative date for edits and review letters to Department Heads at February 2023 meeting;
  - e. Prepare for annual report – suggested additions: language on addressing instances of nepotism, advisory opinions, CFO recommendations, Legislative opinion needed on accepting electronic signatures

- f. Nepotism – The Board will continue to request changes to the Board of Ethics Rules and Regulation in order to address the issue of nepotism in county government
- g. Report on Moldova delegation -- Trapp reported on meeting with the delegation from Moldova. The group consisted of federal government leaders with an interest in anti-corruption measures. Trapp shared our financial disclosure forms with the group
- h. Deputy County Comptroller for audits and Evans Town Supervisor – compatibility of positions: question regarding the positions of Deputy County Comptroller for audits and the Evans Town Supervisor, if they were held by the same person. Board will contact the County Comptroller regarding this issue.
- i. Town of West Seneca – Town Clerk head of Town Democratic Party -- question of whether there is any conflict if the head of the West Seneca Democratic Party is also the Town Clerk - was referred to the West Seneca Ethics Board.

6. Public Comments --There were no public comments.

7. Motion to adjourn –Abaya moved, Downey seconded the meeting be adjourned. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 9:20 a.m.

8. Next meeting December 5, 2022 at 8:30 a.m., 16<sup>th</sup> floor ECH