

Erie County Ethics Board  
Meeting Agenda

October 2, 2023 8:30 a.m.:

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

---

Members:

\_Chris Trapp, Chair  
\_Brian Downey, Vice Chair  
\_Heather Gresham  
\_Ellen Kennedy  
\_Taunya Abaya, Secretary

Staff:

\_Aaron Rubin, Counsel  
\_Barb Piazza, Chief Ethics Officer

Others Present: **Chrissy Casilio, Paul Bologna, Peter Reese, Chris (from Channel 4 News)**

---

1. Meeting call to order. **8:31 AM**
2. September meeting Minutes for review, corrections, and a approval - **Ellen moved 2nd - Heather - all approved**
3. Website / Email Updates (Piazza/Chair):
  - a. Request for opinions/actions:
    1. April Baskin issue with Peace Prints, Erie County Corrections Specialist Advisory Board:  
**The Code's only reference to advisory boards is in section 3g , wherein it specifically excludes advisory boards from the requirement of filing an annual financial disclosure statement. Barb and Aaron will respond in writing to the hypothetical issue:  
Whether an advisory board member who has an interest in a nonprofit's contract with the county agency she advises is prohibited from contracting with the agency, and or is required under Article 18. to disclose her interest and recuse herself from any involvement with the contract.**
    2. Disclosure of job title - **not our prevue**
  - b. Updates to website: Minutes, agenda
    1. secure email - **Aaron - 1 email for anything coming in but to send out we would each need our own 2-factor system Chris and Aaron will talk about the 1 email.**
  - c. FOIL Requests - **None**
  - d. Other communications:
    1. discussion with County Attorney Toth - **about email (information about council prior to a Board discussion) sent from DA office.**
4. Old Business:
  - a. Chief Ethics Officer discussion -
    1. **Training: working with commissioner of personnel - new employee info meetings every 2 weeks  
-Long-Term Plan - ideas for departmental training - opportunities at department meetings to ensure no conflicts  
-Protocols should be in place - what is the protocol? Make sure of transparency -  
-Heather will meet with Barb after the meeting to create and how to implement the trainings. Barb will formulate a plan for the training to provide to the board.**
  - b. Status of annual financial disclosure forms - **complete**
  - c. Changes to annual financial disclosure forms, if any  
**-Motion to eliminate the names of children in the Annual Statement of Financial Disclosure for the County of Erie Part A section 2; and add the word TRUST to Part B Section 6 letter e. . Ellen made the motion, 2nd by Heather - Approved**
  - d. Town of Cheektowaga training: **updates pending**
5. New Business:
  - a. Travel request from ECSO -
    1. **Board okayed the travel**
    2. **Question about terms of communication used for questions for the board and timely responses to the questioner - in each response let the questioner know when the board meets next.**

- b. Baskin Special Meeting Request – **Thursday morning November 9, 2023 at 8:40 am**
- c. Lewis complaint
  - Board Agreed that the information was too broad and scattered to act upon.**
  - **no specific post office address - Barb will find out what our official address and put it on the address**
- d. Casilio complaint against Poloncarz
  - The Board discussed the appropriateness of the County Executive to ask the District Attorney a legal opinion. It is an actual duty of the County Executive to do just that. The discussion also brought up the need for better communications between the Ethics Board and the DA which will be more readily available now that there is a Chief Ethics Officer. Protocol will be set up for information to move more smoothly.**

6. Public Comments

- Ms. Casilo & Paul Bologna: Concerned about optics.
  - Wants Board members to publicly state what candidate and political party they have donated to.**
  - Wants Board to change policies that only the Legislature can change.**
- Peter Reese: Abused the Board by yelling and grandstanding.**
- Chris from Channel 4News brought up a good point about his issues getting up to the 16<sup>th</sup> floor intime- The CEO will contact the officers on the first floor and the Board will start the meetings at 8:40 am from now on.**

7. Motion to adjourn: **Heather Moved, Brian Seconded, all approved.**

8. Next meeting **November 9, 2023 at 8:40 a.m., 16th floor ECH**