Erie County Ethics Board

Meeting MINUTES – **IN BOLD**

May 1, 2023 8:30 a.m:

**Budget Conference Room (16th Floor) – Rath Building**

Members: \_x\_\_Chris Trapp, Chair

\_x\_\_Brian Downey, Vice Chair

\_x\_\_Heather Gresham

\_x\_\_Ellen Kennedy

\_x\_\_Taunya Abaya, Secretary

Staff: \_x\_\_Aaron Rubin, Counsel

\_x\_\_William Licata

Others Present:

1. Meeting call to order. – **Called to Order 8:36 AM**

2. February, February Special Meeting and April meeting Minutes for review, corrections, and approval

a. **All approved, Ellen Kennedy abstains for February and Taunya Abaya abstains for April**

3. Website / Email Updates (Witherspoon/Chair):

a. Personnel Department needs to give Ethics Committee electronic access to the Ethics Disclosure Forms so that they can be reviewed by the Ethics Committee.

b. April Baskin not present – how do we get the Erie County Legislature to deal with nepotism issues regarding hiring and supervision. Will be discussed when she attends the June 5, 2023 Meeting.

c. (CT) sent out the Annual Report electronically and followed the same basic format.

d. Two emails received on Website – 1) Person wants to file a complaint against the Erie County Bar Association and attorneys. (CT) We have no jurisdiction over Erie County bar Association and attorney complaints are handled by State bar. (CT) will respond. 2) Request to create a more secure email [ErieEthicsBoard@erie.gov](mailto:ErieEthicsBoard@erie.gov) NOT [ErieEthicsBoard@gmail.com](mailto:ErieEthicsBoard@gmail.com) (BD) Have an email box that is encrypted for the Financial Disclosure Forms. This email is coming from computer department, perhaps they know better than us.

e. Request of Town of Cheektowaga - **Town of Cheektowaga – one of the Town of Cheektowaga members of its Ethics board had a confrontation with the Cheektowaga Town Attorney. The Board Member wants the Town Attorney removed by the Erie County Ethics Board. (CT) We don’t have the authority to remove anyone from a Town Ethics board. (CT) We can give an opinion on whether the conduct was unethical behavior. (CT) President Trapp will give an opinion after he collects more facts, he will look at and report to the Board.**

f. Financial Disclosures - How many required additional follow-up letters last year. Formal letters reminding the applicant to sign the disclosure form.

d. Ask April Baskin to attend the upcoming meeting on June 5, 2023.

5. New Business: - **No new business.**

6. Public Comments – **No public comments.**

7. Motion to adjourn - **Heather Gresham made a motion to adjourn. Taunya Abaya seconded. All in favor**.

8. Next meeting June 5, 2023 at 8:30 a.m., 16th floor ECH