

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY OFFICE OF ETHICS AND ACCOUNTABILITY
BOARD OF ETHICS**

Board Meeting Minutes

April 9, 2021

Present: Cassandra Burckhalter, Board Chair (Teleconference)
Sharon Theodore-Lewis, Board Member (Teleconference)
Charlene Gallion, Board Member (Teleconference)
Melanie Barr-Brooks, Board Member (Teleconference)

Robin Barnes-Shell, Esq., Executive Director (Teleconference)
Bamidele Alexander, Legal Counsel (Teleconference)
Jasmine Carter, Compliance Analyst (Teleconference)
Chelinda Bullock, Administrative Aide (Teleconference)

Barbara Khem, Member of the Public (Teleconference)

Next meeting: May 14, 2021 at 5:00 pm
9201 Basil Court, Suite 155
Largo, Maryland 20774

OPEN SESSION

I. OPENING OF MEETING

The Board Chair, Cassandra Burckhalter, opened the meeting at approximately 5:00 pm and welcomed all in attendance. There was a quorum present with four (4) Board Members. The meeting was held by teleconference.

II. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Board Member Sharon Theodore Lewis joined the March 12th meeting at 5:14. The three (3) Board of Ethics (Board) Members in attendance approved the March 12, 2021 and March 22, 2021 Meeting Minutes by a vote of 4-0.

III. BOARD CHAIR REPORT

The Board Chair, Cassandra Burckhalter, reminded board members to complete their Financial Disclosure Statement for calendar year 2020.

IV. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

The Executive Director informed the Board of the following Office of Ethics and Accountability compliance activities: to date, for Calendar Year 2021, there were thirty-nine (39) registered lobbyists representing one hundred twenty (120) employers; for Calendar Year 2021, one (1) termination notice was submitted; and approximately five hundred sixty-one (561), out of nine hundred fifty-one (951) required filers have not filed their Financial Disclosure Statements.

The Board was provided the ethics advice table for March, which summarized the informal ethics advice, information requests and legal advice provided by the Office of Ethics and Accountability.

The Board adopted a resolution that an official or employee who separates from Prince George's County Government, may file one Financial Disclosure Statement for the calendar year immediately preceding and any portion of the current calendar year during which that official or employee held office or employment up to the date of separating from the County, by a vote of 3-0.

V. READING OF WRITTEN STATEMENT FOR CLOSING MEETING UNDER THE OPEN MEETING ACT

At 5:18 pm, a motion was made by Board Chair Cassandra Burckhalter and seconded by Board Member Charlene Gallion to close the open portion of the meeting to comply with a specific constitutional, statutory or judicially imposed requirement that prevents public disclosure about a particular proceeding or matter and to consult with legal counsel. The statement was read by the Board Chair Cassandra Burckhalter. The motion was approved by a vote of 4-0. The reason for closing the meeting, and the topics discussed with legal counsel involved among other matters, investigations in accordance with the State Government Article, §10-508(a). Those in attendance were as follows:

Cassandra Burckhalter, Board Chair (Teleconference)
Sharon Theodore-Lewis, Board Member (Teleconference)
Charlene Gallion, Board Member (Teleconference)
Melanie Barr-Brooks, Board Member (Teleconference)

Robin Barnes-Shell, Esq., Executive Director (Teleconference)
Bamidele Alexander, Legal Counsel (Teleconference)
Jasmine Carter, Compliance Analyst (Teleconference)
Chelinda Bullock, Administrative Aide (Teleconference)

CLOSED SESSION

Advisory Opinion 21-0070

The Board discussed an issuance of an advisory opinion regarding a potential Conflict of Interest involving a County official's business activity regarding real property transactions with entities doing business with the County.

Advisory Opinion 21-0244

The Board was provided an update regarding an advisory opinion response from a County employee of a denied waiver request regarding the potential Conflict of Interest with a County's employee's business.

Investigation 21-0251

The Board was provided a report with recommendations on an investigation involving an allegation of Conflict of Interest involving a County employee and a County vendor. The Board voted 4-0, the individual(s) implicated in the investigation are not subject to the authority of the Prince George's County Code of Ethics. Therefore, this matter falls outside the jurisdiction of the Board.

Investigation 21-0259

The Board was provided a report with recommendations on an investigation involving an allegation of Disclosure of Confidential Information involving a County employee and use of personal equipment and attempt to circumvent County's policies. The Board voted 4-0, there is a reasonable basis to believe a violation of the Prince George's County Code of Ethics has occurred. The Board will reserve taking further action for thirty (30) days to allow the agency to respond to the identified ethics violation.

Investigations 21-0282

The Board was provided an update on an investigation involving an allegation of Prestige of Office involving a County employee doing business with a County vendor.

The Board granted a waiver request from a designated filer of a late fee for the delinquent filing of a Financial Disclosure Statement. The motion was approved, by a vote of 4-0.

The Board was provided updates on pending cases.

At the conclusion of all business, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting. The motion was approved 4-0. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:30pm.