MINUTES January 3, 2018

The State Ethics Commission met on Wednesday, January 3, 2018 at the State Ethics Commission Office at 6 Baldwin St., Room 315, Montpelier, Vermont. Commissioner Chair Madeline M. Motta, Commissioners Julie Hulburd, Suzanne Lowensohn and Sarah Biolsi Vangel, and Executive Director Brian Leven, were present. The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 10:17 am.

1. Approval of minutes.

Julie Hulburd moved to approve the minutes of the December 19 meeting. The motion was seconded by Suzanne Lowensohn and approved unanimously.

2. Welcome Executive Director and Office Setup.

The Commission officially welcomed newly hired Executive Director Brian Leven to his first meeting. Mr. Leven updated the commissioners in on the work he had done in his first week, including connecting with various other state agencies to aid in the ongoing set up of the Commission’s work. There was discussion of remaining set up logistics like signs for the office, a post office box, stationary and office equipment, and how to move those items forward. A phone line has been set for the Commission with the number (802) 828-7187. The Commission is considering an 800 number for complaints in the future.

3. Timeline of Ethics Commission Tasks.

The commission reviewed a timeline of upcoming tasks prepared by the Chair, including website development, public outreach and marketing, organizational structure and the financial disclosure statements mandated by Act 79. Development of a live website for the commission rejected due to complications with an outside person having access to the state server. Mr. Leven will work in conjunction with Agency of Digital Services to create the Commission’s website as soon as possible. The commissioners then discussed the need for public outreach/marketing of the Commission to make the public and individuals in state government aware of the Commission, its role, and the services and guidance it can provide. An initial press release is contemplated once the website and mailing address of the Commission are finalized. Chair Motta and Commissioner Julie Hulburd will work with Mr. Leven on this going forward. Mr. Leven also notified the commissioners that he had been contacted by WCAX and would do an on-air interview in the immediate future about the Commission. The Commission also discussed the need to establish procedures for the commission’s receipt, handling, and tracking of complaints moving forward.

4. Financial Disclosure Form.

Chair Motta and Commissioner Lowensohn presented updated versions of the financial disclosure forms for candidates, executive branch officers and the commission. The commissioners worked through and made edits to those forms. Commissioner Lowensohn will update those forms to final drafts to be presented to the Secretary of State and chairs of both the House and Senate Government Operations Committees for review and comment before the forms are made available to the statutory parties.

5. Discussion of Regular Meeting Time and Location.

The commissioners discussed setting a regular monthly meeting of the Commission to be held at the State Ethics Commission Office on the first Wednesday of every month from 10am-12 pm. The Commission tabled a formal resolution on this regular meeting time until Commissioner Davis could be consulted. The next special meeting is set for Wednesday February 7, 2018 at 10 am at the Commission Office.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:24 pm.

Submitted by Sarah Biolsi Vangel