



Vermont State Ethics Commission

Meeting Minutes

June 7, 2023

Remote Attendance*

1. Call to Order: The regular meeting, held remotely via Zoom, was called to order by Paul Erlbaum at 10:02 A.M. Also present for the meeting were Commission members Sarah Butson, Michele Eid, Sarah Biolsi Vangel, Executive Director Christina Sivret, and Administrative Assistant Erin Smith. Commissioner Christopher Davis was absent.

2. Approval of Minutes: As there was not a quorum of Commissioners who were present at the May 3rd meeting, the minutes from the May 3rd were not approved.

3. Public Comment: None.

4. Executive Session: At 10:04 A.M., on the motion of Michele Eid, second by Sarah Biolsi Vangel, the Commission went into Executive Session to discuss complaints and Guidance requests received over the last few weeks, including an Advisory Opinion. At 10:50 A.M., on the motion of Sarah Biolsi Vangel, second by Michele Eid, the Commission voted to conclude the Executive Session and return to open session. On the motion of Sarah Biolsi Vangel, second by Michele Eid, the Commission voted to approve Advisory Opinion AO_3_2023 with the grammatical corrections discussed in Executive Session.

5. Executive Director's Report:

Legislative Update: Although legislation proposing penalties for the late filing of required candidate financial disclosure forms passed the Senate, it didn't make it to the House in time for a vote. The Commission will add this to next year's legislative agenda, which will also include bills related to municipal ethics and enforcement powers for the Commission. The Campaign Legal Center is providing the Commission with volunteer consulting services and will prepare a report on national best practices for municipal ethics to help the Commission draft a proposed municipal ethics framework for Vermont. Consultant T.J. Jones will assist the Commission with research related to enforcement powers for the Commission.

Contract with Mark Perrault: Mark Perrault will be brought in on a short-term contract starting in September to help with municipal ethics research. He has a legal background and previously worked for the joint fiscal office. His fiscal analysis skills will be an added benefit in drafting next year's legislative proposals.

6. Other: The Commission is taking steps to create a searchable database for financial disclosures that are submitted to the Ethics Commission. In 2024, this will include sheriffs as well as Executive Officers, with possible room for expansion in the future. Commission Chair Paul Erlbaum thanked Executive Director Sivret for the work that she's done this session. He also suggested possible speakers for a future public event related to ethics.

7. Adjournment: Michele Eid moved to adjourn, second by Sarah Biolsi Vangel. The meeting adjourned at 11:22 A.M.