Vermont State Ethics Commission

Minutes from Meeting of March 6, 2019

1. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by new Commission Chair Julie Hulburd at 10:03 a.m. Present also were commission members Christopher Davis and Paul Erlbaum and Executive Director Larry Novins. Commission members Vangel and Lowensohn were not present. Martin Kurz attended the first half hour of the meeting.

2. Minutes: On the motion of Christopher Davis, second by Paul Erlbaum, the minutes of the last, February 27, 2019 meeting were approved.

3. Resolution regarding regular meeting time: The Commission approved the resolution setting 10:00 a.m. on the first Wednesday of each month as the time for regularly held meetings. Should there be a conflict with a scheduled holiday, the meeting will be rescheduled sufficiently in advance to warn interested parties.

4. Changes to General Principles in light of December 2018 effective date for 17 V.S.A. restrictions on contractor contribution: The Commission postponed discussion of this topic until its May meeting. At that time the Commission will begin its review and plans for any updates to the General Principles.

5. Ethics Commission priorities and strategies planning: The Commission reviewed its work and issues facing it. Discussion ranged from review of the Advisory Opinion issued last October to the need for governmental ethics education state wide. The Commission recognizes the need to give priority at this time to its educational responsibilities. It will make efforts through CAPS and other avenues to ensure that information about the Commission and the services provides is better known throughout state government and by the public. Commission information pamphlets have been given to CAPS which it will distribute to State employees as part the ethics training it offers. Executive Director Novins will be work with CAPS to supplement their ethics offerings. DHR is distributing Ethics Commission posters about governmental ethics to State offices throughout Vermont. Discussion of strategies and priorities will continue at the Commission’s next meeting.

6. Executive Director Report Executive Director Novins reported about correspondence received by the Commission. The Commission, on motion of Christopher Davis and Paul Erlbaum, moved into Executive Session to discuss pending ethics complaints received by the office. At the conclusion of the Executive session (motion by Christopher Davis and Paul Erlbaum), the Commission discussed ethics training topics which Mr. Novins will include in ethics trainings when they occur.

7. Adjourn: On motion of Paul Erlbaum and Christopher Davis, the meeting adjourned at 11:53 a.m. The Commission’s next meeting is scheduled for April 3, 2019 at 10:00 a.m. at the Commission office at 6 Baldwin St. in Montpelier.