



**Vermont State Ethics Commission
Meeting Minutes
September 4, 2024 (unapproved)
Remote Attendance***

1. Call to Order: The regular meeting, held remotely via Zoom, was called to order by Chair Paul Erlbaum at 10:02 a.m. Also in attendance were Commission members Michele Eid, Jack Kennelly, Sarah Butson, Executive Director Christina Sivret and Administrative Assistant Erin Smith. Chris Davis arrived at 10:05.

2. Public Comment: None.

3. Approval of Minutes: On the motion of Michele Eid, seconded by Jack Kennelly, the minutes of the June 5, 2024 were approved.

4. Executive Director's Report:

New Commissioners: Executive Director Sivret reported that a new commissioner, appointed by the Senate Committee on Committees, had been expected to start this month but resigned last week due to the potential for her outside activities to create conflicts of interest with the Commission's work. We are now waiting for a new appointment from the Senate Committee on Committees and another appointment from the Speaker of the House. Executive Director Sivret said she would pass on the names of some members of the public who had expressed interest in the appointment to legislative appointing authorities.

Online Financial Disclosure Platform: Executive Director Sivret reported that she met with the Secretary of State's Elections team regarding the possibility of sharing the Commission's online financial disclosure filing system, to include cost sharing, with their office as both Executive Officers and candidates file the same disclosure form. They are going to consider the proposal and circle back in a few months.

Other: Executive Director Sivret reported that the person originally identified to develop the online municipal ethics training had to withdraw for personal reasons and she is now looking for a replacement. Michele Eid remembered a speaker from COGEL who may be worth reaching out to for recommendations. Paul Erlbaum mentioned that he may also be interested in attending COGEL this year along with Jack Kennelly.

5. Executive Session: At 10:17 a.m., on the motion of Michele Eid, seconded by Chris Davis, the Commission went into Executive Session. Executive Director Chris Sivret reported on complaints and requests for Guidance that had come in since the last Commission meeting. At 10:47 Michele Eid moved to leave Executive Session, seconded by Chris Davis.

6. Other business: Paul Erlbaum asked for an update regarding the development of a Commission policy regarding communications between commissioners and their appointing authorities. Executive Director Sivret said it is on her to do list and that right now she is working on a “best practices” document for ethics investigations for municipalities. Paul Erlbaum brought up keeping protections for whistle-blowers on the legislative wish- list for the Commission. It is not clear how likely it is that this will be included in legislation this year, but it remains a goal moving forward.

7. Adjournment: At 10:52 am, Michele Eid moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Jack Kennelly.