

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

Board Meeting Minutes

January 11, 2019

Present: Cassandra Burckhalter, Board Chair (teleconference)
Covette Rooney, Board Member (teleconference)
Curtis Eugene, Board Member (teleconference)

Robin Barnes-Shell, Esq., Executive Director
Roslyn Walker, Compliance Officer
LaShanda Whaley, Legal Counsel
Lamont Judd, Investigator
Chelinda Bullock, Administrative Aide

Next meeting: February 8, 2019 at 5:00 pm
9201 Basil Court, Suite 155
Largo, Maryland 20774

OPEN SESSION

I. OPENING OF MEETING

The Board Chair, Covette Rooney, opened the meeting at approximately 5:05 pm and welcomed all in attendance. There was a quorum present with three (3) Board Members. The meeting was held at the Office of Ethics and Accountability (OEA) located at 9201 Basil Court, Suite 155, Largo, Maryland.

At 5:06 pm a motion was made by Board Member Curtis Eugene to nominate Board Member Cassandra Burckhalter for Board Chair. Board Chair Covette Rooney seconded the motion and the Cassandra Burckhalter accepted the nomination. The Board elected (3:0) Cassandra Burkhalter as the new chair.

II. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

The three (3) Board of Ethics (Board) Members in attendance approved the November 16, 2018 Meeting Minutes with a vote of 3-0.

III. BOARD CHAIR REPORT

None to report.

IV. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

The Executive Director informed the Board that OEA's collection efforts for Financial Disclosure Statements (FDS) for calendar year 2018 have commenced and notification to file was sent to County employees/officials electronically. In addition, fifty-one (51) lobbyists have registered for calendar 2018 and sixteen (16) have registered for 2019. There were one hundred sixty-three (163) Annual Reports required and twenty-one (21) have been received to date.

The Executive Director informed the Board of OEA's training efforts that included Mandatory Ethics Training for forty-four (44) new employees of Prince George's County Government through the New Employees Orientation Program and one (1) employee via the regularly scheduled monthly ethics trainings (PGCEthics). Additionally, Mandatory Ethics Training was be provided to thirty (30) new employees in the County Executive Office.

The Executive Director informed the Board of OEA of the new hire for the Investigator position and the current efforts to hire a new Compliance Analyst.

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

V. Reading of Written Statement for Closing Meeting Under the Open Meeting Act

At 5:13 pm, a motion was made by Board Chair Cassandra Burckhalter and seconded by Board Member Curtis Eugene 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 3-0. 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)
Covette Rooney, Board Member (teleconference)
Curtis Eugene, Board Member (teleconference)

Robin Barnes-Shell, Esq., Executive Director
Roslyn Walker, Compliance Officer
LaShanda Whaley, Legal Counsel

Lamont Judd, Investigator
Chelinda Bullock, Administrative Aide

CLOSED SESSION

Advisory Opinion 18-415e

The Board was provided with a request from an agency Director for additional time to respond to Board referral findings. The Board voted 3-0 to grant a sixty (60) day extension.

Advisory Opinion 19-0120e

The Board was advised of OEA's recommendation to a County official to seek a formal opinion regarding identified Conflicts of Interest.

Advisory Opinion 19-0148e

The Board was advised of a County's officials request for a formal opinion regarding a Conflict of Interest.

Board Referral 19-0016e

The Board was provided an update on the investigation of Disclosure of Confidential Information by a County employee. The Board voted 3-0 that there are insufficient facts upon which to base a determination of a violation and dismissed the complaint.

Board Referral 19-0070e

The Board was provided an update on the investigation of Use of County Resources and Solicitation by a County employee. The Board voted 3-0 that there is a reasonable basis to believe a violation has occurred; in lieu of conducting a hearing, the Board accepts the actions taken by the agency as appropriate to address the violation.

The Board was provided updates on the following outstanding cases:

Investigation 18-0371e

Alleged Use of County property related to use of County leased property which was referred to Office of Law.

Investigation 19-0113e

Alleged Misuse of Prestige of Office by a County employee related to a Director hiring family members which was referred to Office of Law due to a conflict of interest.

Investigation 19-0134e

Alleged Confidential Information and Misuse of Prestige of Office was referred to the Office of Law.

The Board was provided a written update of new and pending cases.

At the conclusion of all business, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting. The motion was approved 3-0. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 5:37 pm.