

BOARD OF ETHICS

Open Session Minutes

February 17, 2010 - 3:12 p.m.
740 North Sedgwick, Suite 500

Board Members Present

Miguel A. Ruiz, Chair
Thomas McCarthy
Lisa M. Taylor
John L. Wilhelm, M.D.

Michael F. Quirk (Absent)

Staff Present

Steven I. Berlin, Executive Director
Richard J. Superfine, Legal Counsel
Courtney L.D. Kimble, Attorney/Investigator
Edward Primer, Program Director
Pully Casillas, Staff Assistant

I. Approval of Minutes

The Board VOTED 4-0 (Michael F. Quirk, absent) to approve the Open Session Minutes of the January 29, 2010 meeting as amended.

II. Chair's Report

None.

III. Executive Director's Report

A. Education–Classes

Since the last Board meeting, staff has conducted 3 regularly and 1 specially scheduled classes for persons required to attend ethics training, on February 2, 4, 9 and 11. A total of 49 persons attended. There is currently a total of 120 people scheduled for upcoming classes. The specially scheduled class for aldermen, scheduled for February 16, was rescheduled.

B. Education–Mandatory Annual Ethics Education

Since the last Board meeting, staff verified that the City achieved 100% compliance with the 2009 mandatory training requirement. All aldermen, and all 34,088 full-time, eligible City employees complete their training. Staff is preparing the 2010 program, and expects it to be posted in mid-March. Staff has already requested and begun receiving training plans for the 2010 training from various City departments.

C. Statements of Financial Interests

Printing was just completed of 10,900 2010 Statements of Financial Interests and accompanying instructions, as well as a notice to all filers that their 2009 and 2010 forms will be available through the City's website, and they will no longer receive notice of FOIA inspections. They will be sent out to filers on February 26.

D. Updated Brochures, Newsletter

Staff is in the process of finalizing three completely revised brochures: one for the general public, one for City employees and one for persons or companies with or seeking City contracts. Once finalized, they will be posted the City's website. Staff is also finalizing the newest incarnation of a newsletter (the last time we issued a newsletter was in 2004): Ethics Matters in Chicago. Staff will post it on the website, print it and include a copy in pay envelopes for all City employees, and email it to all City personnel with City email accounts.

E. Lobbyist Registration

As of this afternoon, 466 lobbyists have registered for 2010, and 128 filed notices of termination. The forms are coming in as we speak. The Board has, so far, collected approximately \$167,000 in registration fees.

On February 10, the Board sent 82 letters of non-filing to lobbyists via certified mail, as required by Ordinance.

F. Illinois Freedom of Information Act

Since the last regularly scheduled Board meeting, the office has received 4 new requests under the Freedom of Information Act: 3 requests for information or documents not kept by this agency, and 1 request for 6 lobbyists' filings for from 5 to 9 years, resulting in production of 60 filed records and copying of 56 records.

G. Amendment to the Governmental Ethics Ordinance

At the last City Council meeting on February 10, an amendment to § 2-156-130(a) was enacted by the Council, effective immediately. The meaning of these changes was inaccurately reported in the press. Staff conferred with Alderman Allen, the measure's chief sponsor. He said that the change is intended to prohibit City Council members

from using either the so-called "1012" account, or other means (such as summer internships, etc.) to employ their relatives or domestic partners on the staffs of City Council Committees on which they serve. It was not intended to overrule Board Case No. 07048.A, which prohibits aldermen from using the 1012 account to employ their relatives on Committees on which they serve or exercise authority. Rather, it expands on that case.

IV. Old Business

None.

V. New Business

None.

The Board VOTED 4-0 (Michael F. Quirk, absent) to adjourn into Executive Session at 3:22 p.m. to review matters concerning the conduct of employees and officials of the City that could result in their discipline or dismissal, to review questions concerning matters of professional ethics and performance, to review matters in which litigation is ongoing, and/or to review matters in which the Board finds that litigation against or affecting the Board is probable or imminent.