

BOARD OF ETHICS
Open Session Minutes
July 19, 2007 - 8:50 a.m.
740 North Sedgwick, Suite 500

Board Members Present

Darryl L. DePriest, Chair
Miguel A. Ruiz
Mary Beth S. Robinson
John L. Wilhelm, M.D.

Michael F. Quirk (Absent)

Staff Present

Steven I. Berlin, Acting Executive Director
Michael Haggerty, Deputy Director
Richard J. Superfine, Legal Counsel
Briana Billingslea, Attorney-Investigator
Edward Primer, Program Director
Pauilly Casillas, Staff Assistant
Jef Johnson, Coordinator of Special Projects

I. Approval of Minutes

The Board VOTED 4-0 (Michael F. Quirk, absent) to approve the Open Session minutes of the June 13, 2007 meeting, as amended.

II. Chair's Report

Mr. DePriest commented upon his retirement from the board after approximately 16 years of service, 10 of them as Chair. He thanked the other board members and the staff for all their work, stating it had been a privilege and honor to work with them and for the people of Chicago.

III. Acting Executive Director's Report

A. Education-Classes

Since the last Board meeting, there have been 2 regularly scheduled classes for persons required to attend ethics training. On June 20, 7 attended, and on July 18, 35 attended. There are currently 32 scheduled for August 1, and 25 for August 15.

At the request of the Mayor's Office of Protocol, on June 29, staff made a 25 minute presentation to the Vice Mayor of Prague, Czech Republic.

On July 20, staff will conduct a special 60-minute class for 4 aldermen whose quadrennial mandatory ethics training deadline is in September 2007.

On July 23, the Acting Executive Director will serve on a panel discussion on ethics in government at the invitation of the President of the Chicago Chapter of the National Forum for Black Public Administrators, to be held at Roosevelt University. Approximately 30 attendees are expected. The invitation comes from the chapter's President, via a member who is an employee in the City's Budget Office.

B. Mandatory Annual Ethics Education

As of today at 2:00 p.m., 22,985 employees—approximately 60% of the City’s workforce-- have completed the 2007 on-line ethics training program.

The 2007 program for aldermen went live in mid-June. Nearly all 50 aldermen have designated training liaisons to oversee training of their staff members. At this time, 3 aldermen have completed the program.

Staff oversaw the production of both PowerPoint versions and DVD versions of the on-line training program, and copies were given to representatives of the Departments of Streets & Sanitation and Fire. Each department anticipates training a percentage of its employees in this manner. My congratulations and thanks to staff for their hard work and perseverance in completing this task.

C. Statements of Financial Interests

Through today, there remain 32 employees and 1 appointed official who, despite having been found in violation of the Ordinance by the Board in September, have failed to file their 2006 Statements of Financial Interests by May 31, as required by law.

As of today, there remain 165 employees and 20 appointed officials who have not yet filed their 2007 forms as required by Ordinance.

To date, staff has collected \$14,240 in late filing fees for 2007.

Staff continues to work with each department’s ethics liaison to achieve 100% compliance with this requirement.

D. Lobbyist Registration

There are currently 558 lobbyists who have registered with the City for 2007. Since the last meeting no lobbyists have terminated their registration. To date, approximately \$114,000.00 in lobbyist registration fees have been deposited with the Department of Revenue.

Staff continues to work with BIS in completing an online registration program. However, this agency has been stalled in its work, and awaits BIS notice for staff to move into either “Phase II” of the project or to begin an alternate design for a portion of the new program.

E. Illinois Freedom of Information Act

Since the last regularly scheduled Board meeting, the office received one request for 98 lobbyists' filings, one for 177 aldermanic recusal documents and one for 8 documents in the custody of a separate agency. 275 documents were produced in response.

Since the last meeting the following requests for review of documents were received:

1. This request was for NINETY-EIGHT forms. It was a request to review all lobbyist filings for eight lobbyists from and including years: 1997-2007; and four lobbyists from and including years: 2001-2007. Records were available for 2005-2007 for two lobbyists, 2004-2007 for two lobbyists and 2004-2005 for one lobbyist. Of the records produced, ninety-eight were copied.
2. This request was for ONE HUNDRED SEVENTY-SEVEN forms. The forms were Aldermanic recusals. All records were produced and copied.
3. This request was for EIGHT forms. The forms were in the jurisdiction of another agency. No forms were available.

F. COGEL

The Acting Executive Director has received authorization from the Mayor's Office and Budget Office to attend the annual meeting of the Council of Governmental Ethics Laws, in mid-September in Victoria, BC. The agency is a member in good standing of this organization, with 450 members throughout the US and Canada. The meeting will have breakout sessions on ethics, campaign financing, lobbying regulation, FOIA, and financial disclosure. The COGEL Site Selection Committee has chosen Chicago as the site for the 2008 COGEL Conference, in December 2008. Staff will be meeting with representatives from COGEL and from other City departments to begin planning.

G. Budget

Staff is in the process of preparing the agency's 2008 budget submission. At this time, no significant changes are expected, but the agency will be requesting modest increases in funding to purchase desktop publishing software (to redesign FIS forms, produce new educational materials, etc.), network the Xerox machine, purchase equipment that will allow staff to produce training DVD's in-house, and cover costs associated with the City's hosting of the 2008 COGEL conference.

H. Retiring Board Chair

The Acting Executive Director read the following statement: "It is with deep admiration and gratitude that we honor Darryl DePriest today, as this is his last meeting as a member and Chair of the Board, after nearly 17 years of dedicated service, including 10 as Chair. On behalf of the entire staff, past and present, and the other Board members, past and present, I want to thank him for his efforts and leadership and wish him well in all future endeavors. And on behalf of all, I am honored to present him with this desk plaque as a token of our gratitude, and on behalf of the Administration, with this letter from the Mayor."

IV. Old Business

None.

V. New Business

None.

The Board VOTED 4-0 (Michael F. Quirk, absent) to adjourn into Executive Session at 9:17 a.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.