

# MILWAUKEE COUNTY ETHICS BOARD

Thursday, October 14, 2010

3:00 PM

Milwaukee County Courthouse, Room 201B

## MINUTES

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Present: David Carr (Chair)  
Paul Hinkfuss (Vice Chair)\*  
Rebecca Blemberg  
Marcia Facey  
Christian Flores  
Henry Hamilton III\*\*

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### 1.0 Roll Call

Roll call was taken. All were present except Mr. Hinkfuss, who was temporarily excused, and there was a quorum.

\*Mr. Hinkfuss was not present at roll call, but arrived at 3:35PM.

\*\*Mr. Hamilton was excused early at 3:35 PM.

### 2.0 Approval of the Minutes for the Meeting of April 29, 2010

Ms. Blemberg moved, Ms. Facey seconded, and the Board, by vote (5-0), approved the minutes of the meeting of April 29, 2010.

### 3.0 Report of the Chairman

#### 3.1 Letter from Supervisor Peggy West Requesting Review of Ethics Board Objectives

At Supervisor West's request, this matter was laid over to the December 9, 2010 meeting.

#### 3.2 Report on Lobbyists (*Informational only*)

The Board reviewed both the second and third quarter lobbying reports submitted by County Clerk Joe Czarnezki. There was discussion regarding the diminishing

number of registered lobbyists. On the second quarter report, Mr. Czarnezki had expressed concern that some lobbyists might not be aware of the ordinance regulating lobbying activity. Executive Director Veronica W. Robinson informed the Board that she had spoken with Mr. Czarnezki earlier in the year about working together to send a mass mailing to current and former lobbyists and principals at the State, County, and city levels. Mr. Czarnezki declined this option. Ms. Robinson stated that, short of using historical registries, she was unaware of another means of identifying who might be an unregistered lobbyist. Her goal at present is to continue the practice of sending an annual reminder to County officials about the lobbying ordinance. In addition, as part of the developing Ethics Education Program, Ms. Robinson intends to a Lobbying brochure geared toward County employees and officials.

3.3 Confidential Advisories

3.4 Confidential Verified Complaints & Investigation Requests

The Board met in closed session pursuant to Section 19.85(l) (f), Wis. Stats, to discuss items 3.3 and 3.4.

3.5 Status report from Rules of Procedure and By-Laws Review Committee

The committee members were still working on the review of the Ethics Code Rules of Procedure and By-Laws. There was brief discussion about the purpose of the Rules of Procedure. The matter was laid over for an update at the December 9, 2010 meeting.

4.0 Supervisor Joe Rice's resolution to modify the Ethics Code as it relates to confidential information, privileged communications, and information acquired in meetings during closed session. (*Informational only*)

Ms. Robinson notified the Board that Supervisor Rice's resolution had been submitted to the Judiciary Committee at its July and September 2010 meetings. The Committee both times referred questions to Corporation Counsel and the resolution was laid over to the next meeting. Deputy Corporation Counsel Robert E. Andrews was not present to summarize his responses to the Judiciary Committee. The Board had no questions, but asked Ms. Robinson to keep them briefed on the status of the resolution.

5.0 Report from the Executive Director

5.1 Status report on in-house development of Ethics Training

Ms. Robinson briefed the Board on the hard-copy training materials and on-line website enhancements completed since the cancellation of the Ethics Training Contract. Ms. Robinson also highlighted the savings to-date, and informed the

Board that she would be appearing before the Finance and Audit Committee and the Judiciary, Safety, and General Services Committee to provide an update of the same.

5.2 Status of independent legal counsel

Ms. Robinson informed the Board that as a result of an earlier-identified conflict of interest, the current contract for the Ethics Board's outside counsel would not be renewed at the beginning of 2011. Ms. Robinson asked the Board for recommendations; none were given. Ms. Robinson also asked if it would pose a conflict of interest if the resulting firm turned out to be one at which an Ethics Board member worked. The matter was left open for reconsideration and Ms. Robinson stated she would discuss the matter with Corporation Counsel.

5.3 Ethics Code 9.02(11) – Lobbying Definition

Ms. Robinson informed the Board that the current Code includes a definition for Lobbying, but the Ethics Code does not reference lobbying anywhere else in the document. The Board noted the matter and took no action.

5.4 The Ethics Code Study Committee Briefing on November 10, 2010 at the Milwaukee County Courthouse in Room 201-B at 10:00 AM.

The Board was given the meeting date of the upcoming Ethics Study Committee at which Ms. Robinson would provide an update of the Ethics Training Program.

6.0 Ms. Facey moved, Mr. Flores seconded and the Board voted (5-0) to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,



Veronica W. Robinson, Executive Director