



NEW CASTLE COUNTY ETHICS COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF JANUARY 19, 2022  
PUBLIC MEETING

In attendance:

Commission Members:

Robert Ralston; Kellie Tetrick; Johanna Bishop; Brandon Brice; Robert Hicks and Charles Toliver

Ethics Commission Staff<sup>1</sup>:

Julie M. Sebring, Legal Counsel  
Alison Lewis, Confidential Assistant  
Raymond Carr, Ed.D., Investigator

Absent (excused):

Sally Jensen

Chair Ralston opened the Public Session of this meeting at 4:46 p.m. The meeting was advertised per State law and held virtually via Zoom.\*

At 4:47 p.m., upon approval by Chair Ralston and consent of the Commission to move out of the order in the agenda, Commissioner Brice made a motion to move into Executive Session. The motion carried, 5 – 0. At 5:03 p.m., Commissioner Bishop made a motion to return to Public session. Commissioner Brice seconded the motion. The motion carried, 5 – 0.

**Public Meeting Minutes:** The Commissioners reviewed the draft minutes of the December 15, 2021, Public Session of the Ethics Commission meeting. Commissioner Bishop made a motion to approve the draft minutes as submitted, and Commissioner Brice seconded the motion.

VOTE: 4 – 0 - 1, motion carried.

**Executive Session Minutes:** The Commissioners reviewed the minutes of the December 15, 2021, Ethics Commission meeting, Executive Session. Commissioner Bishop made a motion to approve the draft minutes as submitted, and Commissioner Hicks seconded the motion.

VOTE: 4 - 0 - 1 , motion carried.

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\* Due to unavoidable circumstances, this meeting was held virtually, only.

**Finance Reports:** Commissioners reviewed a year-to-date expense report generated using Munis, as well as a report listing the Commission's expenses for the month of December 2021.

### **Committee Reports**

**Administrative Committee:** Counsel provided the Commissioners with an updated report on the progress being made by the ECRC with respect to Code review. Chair Ralston went through the memorandum from the ECRC and reported to the Commission the Administrative Committee's review and revisions of the recommended Code changes from the ECRC. The Commission discussed the recommended changes and adopted the recommendations from the Administrative Committee, as set forth below under New Business.

**Forms Committee:** Counsel reported to the Commission a recent issue with an SFI filing. Counsel advised the Commission that the issue experienced by the filer was not likely to have been a problem with the system software. The issue was quickly resolved by Ms. Lewis and the SFI was filed and approved.

**Training Committee:** The next scheduled Ethics Code training for County officials and employees will be held on Wednesday, January 27, 2022 (10 a.m - noon) via Zoom. The Zoom link will be sent to the Commissioners.

### **Ethics Commission Office updates:**

The next Commission meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 9, 2022, as a hybrid meeting per State law. New Castle County reinstated its face mask policy while in County buildings, so anyone entering a County building will be required to wear a mask. Additionally, the safety protocols for in-person attendance at the Ethics Commission meeting are included on the meeting notices and agenda, which are posted and advertised prior to each meeting per State law.

Counsel was asked if there was any update on the email address issue that was discussed at the last meeting. Counsel advised that she had not yet spoken with Delmarva Digital about that but would contact them as soon as practicable.

### **Old Business:**

**FY23 Budget Presentation:** The FY23 budget presentation to the County Executive is scheduled for Wednesday, January 26, 2022, at 9:00 a.m. The presentation will be held virtually via Microsoft Teams. Counsel and Commissioners decided to hold a "test" meeting on Microsoft Teams because they do not usually use Teams for meetings. Ms. Lewis will schedule and advise the Commissioners and Counsel of the same. Chair Ralston will be presenting the FY23 budget request to the County Executive on the 26<sup>th</sup>. Any Commissioner planning to attend that meeting should let Counsel or Ms. Lewis know as soon as possible so that we can make sure that they receive the Teams link for the meeting.

**New Business:**

Commissioner Toliver made a motion to adopt the Code revisions and other recommendations from the Administrative Committee, based upon the recommendations from the ECRC, and Commissioner Brice seconded the motion.

VOTE: 6 - 0 , motion carried.

C21-02: Commissioner Toliver made a motion to authorize the issuance of two subpoenas in this matter as discussed in the Executive Session, and Commissioner Hicks seconded the motion.

VOTE: 6 - 0 , motion carried.

**Public Comment:** There were no members of the public in attendance.

At 6:10 p.m., Commissioner Bishop made a motion to again move to Executive Session, and Chair Ralston seconded the motion. The motion carried, 6 – 0. At 6:36 p.m., Vice Chair Tetrick made a motion to return to Public session. Commissioner Bishop seconded the motion. The motion carried, 6 – 0.

At 6:37 p.m., Commissioner Toliver made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Commissioner Tetrick seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously, 6-0.

The draft minutes were prepared by Alison Lewis, Confidential Assistant, and reviewed by Julie M. Sebring, Esquire.