

WASHINGTON SUBURBAN SANITARY COMMISSION

BOARD OF ETHICS

OPEN SESSION MINUTES

Wednesday, July 10, 2024
Commissioners' Conference Room
Laurel, Maryland

The Board of Ethics ("Board") met in person to conduct an Open Session pursuant to Maryland Code Annotated, General Provisions Article, Title 3, Open Meetings Act, § 3-305(b)(13).

Chair Pruden called the meeting to order at 1:06 p.m. with the following members present:

George Pruden II, Chair
Steven Hausman, Member
Jeffrey Hysen, Member (virtual)
Chandria Slaughter, Alternate Member (virtual)

Also present:

Angelique Dorsey White, Ethics Officer
Lisa Arnquist, Legal Counsel to the Board
Latonya Allen, Administrative Assistant.

Open Session

Approval of Open Session Minutes – June 12, 2024

The Board reviewed the draft Open Session Minutes from the June 12, 2024 meeting.

On motion of Mr. Hysen and seconded by Mr. Pruden, three members of the Board (Hysen, Pruden, and Hausman) voted to approve the June Open Session Minutes as amended.

Matters of Discussion

Ethics Program Monthly Report

Ms. Dorsey White provided an update on the activities in the Ethics Office for June 2024. She reported that she provided ethics training to 19 new employees. She also conducted two additional sessions for 57 student interns.

Ms. Dorsey White shared that the Ethics Office provided guidance on 10 matters. The category that received the most inquiries was Soliciting or Acceptance of Gifts.

Chair Pruden asked for an update on the outside employment activities. Ms. Dorsey White responded that staff and managers have been compliant. She stated she has often been asked why the amount of work hours must be reported. Her explanation is that managers need to be aware in the event an employee's WSSC work is potentially affected by the secondary employment. She added that approximately 160 applications have been received since the inception of the process and approximately 127 have been approved. Ms. Dorsey White added that the outside employment process assists her in identifying work situations that may require a waiver request. She stated she will provide periodic updates on this topic at future meetings.

Ethics Office Reorganization

Ms. Dorsey White shared the resolution reorganizing the Ethics Office that was adopted by the Commissioners at the June Commission meeting. The reorganization goes into effect September 1, 2024.

Additionally, the Commissioners changed the by-laws related to how Board members are appointed. The changes include:

- The Corporate Secretary, an Audit Committee member, and the Inspector General will serve as the interview panel;
- The search committee will recommend two candidates instead of three to the Commissioners for appointment; and
- The Ethics Office will handle advertisement of any vacancies.

Further, Ms. Dorsey White shared that she strongly advocated for Ethics to be part of the strategic plan. This effort was successful because the final plan includes Ethics in the mission¹ statement and as one of the values². The Board expressed appreciation to Ms. Dorsey White for her initiative.

Delinquent Financial Disclosure Filer(s)

Ms. Allen reported that there were no delinquent financial disclosure filers.

¹ WSSC Water's Smart One Water Mission: "WSSC Water ensures all communities thrive by ethically delivering safe, reliable and sustainable water and wastewater services."

² Value: "Accountable. We take responsibility for our actions by being transparent and ethical with our decisions."

Closed Session Approval

At 1:46 p.m., on motion of Dr. Hausman and seconded by Mr. Hysen, three members of the Board (Hausman, Hysen, and Pruden) voted to conduct a Closed Session pursuant to Maryland Code Annotated, General Provisions Article, Title 3, Open Meetings Act, § 3-305(b)(13) to approve June 12, 2024 Closed Session Minutes; General Provisions Article § 3-305(b)(13) and WSSC Code of Ethics Ch. 1.70.110 to address four Complaints; General Provisions Article § 3-305(b)(13) and WSSC Code of Ethics Ch. 1.70.060 to address two Advisory Opinion requests; General Provisions Article § 3-305(b)(1)(ii) to discuss a personnel matter that affects one or more specific individuals; and General Provisions Article § 3-305(b)(7) to obtain legal advice regarding four Complaints, two Advisory Opinion requests, a personnel matter, and Potential Complaints/Legal Investigations.

Attendees: Chair George Pruden; Member Steven Hausman; Member Jeffrey Hysen (virtual); and Alternate Member Chandria Slaughter (virtual). Staff present: Ethics Officer Angelique Dorsey White; Legal Counsel to the Board Lisa Arnquist; and Administrative Assistant Latonya Allen.

Closed Session

Approval of Closed Session Minutes – June 12, 2024

The Board reviewed the draft Closed Session Minutes from the June 12, 2024 meeting.

On motion of Dr. Hausman and seconded by Mr. Hysen, three members of the Board (Hausman, Hysen, and Pruden) voted to approve the June Closed Session Minutes.

Complaint C-23-01

Ms. Dorsey White provided an update on this case.

On motion of Mr. Hysen and seconded by Dr. Hausman, three members of the Board (Hysen, Hausman, and Pruden) voted to approve the summary of decision for posting subject to further review and signature of the Chair.

Complaint C-24-04

Ms. Dorsey White provided an update on this case.

Complaint C-24-05

Ms. Dorsey White provided an update on this case.

Complaint C-23-06

Ms. Dorsey White provided an update on this case.

Advisory Opinion A-24-01

Ms. Dorsey White provided an update on this matter.

On motion of Mr. Hysen and seconded by Dr. Hausman, three members of the Board (Hysen, Hausman, and Pruden) voted to approve the advisory opinion.

Advisory Opinion A-24-02

Ms. Dorsey White provided an update on this matter.

Potential Complaints

PC2024-14

Ms. Dorsey White provided an update on this matter.

On motion of Dr. Hausman and seconded by Mr. Hysen, three members of the Board (Hausman, Hysen, and Pruden) voted to file a complaint on its own motion pursuant to Code of Ethics Ch. 1.70.080(b) for a violation of Ch. 1.70.020 and Ch. 1.70.200(a).

Legal Investigations

Ms. Arnquist provided updates on legal matters.

Personnel Matter

The Board discussed this matter.

Adjournment

On motion of Dr. Hausman and seconded by Mr. Hysen, three members of the Board (Hausman, Hysen, and Pruden) voted to adjourn the meeting at 3:55 p.m.


Angelique Dorsey White, Esq.
Ethics Officer