



ETHICS REVIEW COMMISSION

MEETING MINUTES Wednesday, October 27, 2021

The Ethics Review Commission (“Commission”) convened in a special called meeting on Wednesday, October 27, 2021, at City Hall, Room 1101, 301 W 2nd Street, Austin, Texas, and via Videoconference.

Chair Luis Soberon called the meeting to order at 6:12 p.m.

Commissioners in attendance: Chair Luis Soberon, Vice-Chair Mary Kahle, Secretary Robin Lerner, and Commissioners Betsy Greenberg, Donna Beth McCormick, and Nguyen Stanton were present at City Hall. Commissioners Debra Danburg and Mikki Teneyuca attended via videoconference.

Members absent: Commissioners Raafia Lari and Michael Lovins. Also, Commissioner Sidney Williams was not in attendance due to the necessity to complete boards and commissions training.

City Staff in Attendance: Lynn Carter, Commission Executive Liaison and Assistant City Attorney, and Meredith Mooney, Executive Assistant, Law Department.

CITIZEN COMMUNICATION

Each person who signed up to speak prior to the meeting being called to order and who designated this item on which to speak, or who did not designate an agenda item on which to speak will be allowed three minutes to speak.

No public speakers registered to speak.

1. NEW BUSINESS

Discussion and possible action regarding the following:

- a. Scheduling the Commission’s November and December regular meetings.
No action was taken on this item. Thus, the November 10, 2021 and December 8, 2021 regularly schedule meetings of the Commission remain unchanged.
- b. Adopting a meeting calendar for 2022.

Commissioner Greenberg made a motion to meet on the fourth Wednesday of the first ten months of 2022 and the second Wednesday of November 9, 2022 and December 14, 2022. Commissioner McCormick seconded the motion. The motion passed on the unanimous vote of the members in attendance. Voting in favor: The motion passed on the unanimous vote of the members present (8-0). Voting in favor: Chair Soberon,

Vice-Chair Kahle, Secretary Lerner, and Commissioners: Danburg, Greenberg, McCormick, Stanton, and Teneyuca. Commissioners Lari, Lovins, and Williams were absent. The 2022 calendar adopted by the Commission is attached to these minutes.

- c. Timing and process for evaluating and making recommendations to Council on dollar limits established in Chapter 2-2 (Campaign Finance) in accordance with City Code subsection (A)(5) of Section 2-7-30 (Duties).

This item was discussed; no action was taken.

- d. Content of the agenda for future meetings.
This item was discussed; no action was taken.

OLD BUSINESS

Discussion and possible action regarding the following:

- a. Draft Op-Ed by the Working Group on Race, Identity, and Equity
- b. Draft Commission Statement on Equity, Access, and the Need for Reform by the Working Group on Race, Identity, and Equity
- c. Working group status reports and/or recommendations on the following.
 - i. Working Group on Sanctions, Procedures, and other Issues (Chair Soberon, Vice-Chair Ohueri, and Commissioners Greenberg, Lerner, and Stanton) on the following subjects:
 - Commission sanctions including effectiveness, past cases, and recommendations.
 - Potential amendments to City Code, Chapter 2-7 (Ethics and Financial Disclosure).
 - Commission procedures including effectiveness, past cases, and recommendations.
 - Scope of work of the Commission (powers, duties, and obligations), including effectiveness, past cases, and recommendations.
 - Potential amendments to the Rules of the Ethics Review Commission.
 - Best practices for city attorney opinions including effectiveness, past cases, and recommendations.
 - ii. Working Group on Race, Identity, and Equity (Commissioners Kahle, Lari, and Soberon) status report and/or recommendations on: addressing issues of race, identity, and equity including: (i) planning for presentations or trainings by the Equity Office; (ii) helping focus the Commission's evaluation of racial injustice and how the Commission can operate more fairly and effectively in light of racial injustice.

This item was discussed; no action was taken.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: APRIL 14, 2021, JULY 14, 2021, and SEPTEMBER 22, 2021 COMMISSION MEETINGS

Discussion and possible action regarding the minutes for:

- (a) the April 14, 2021 regular commission meeting;
- (b) the July 14, 2021 regular commission meeting; and
- (c) the September 22, 2021 special-called commission meeting.

Commissioner McCormick moved to adopt the minutes for all three meeting dates listed above, which was seconded by Commissioner Danburg. After some discussion, Commissioner McCormick offered a substitute motion to approve the minutes for the April 14, 2021 meeting separately, which was seconded by Commissioner Danburg. The substitute motion passed unanimously by vote of all members in attendance (Chair Soberon, Vice-Chair Kahle, Secretary Lerner, and Commissioners: Danburg, Greenberg, McCormick, Stanton, and Teneyuca. Commissioners Lari, Lovins, and Williams were absent). The Commission then voted (6-0-2) to adopt the April minutes; voting in favor: Chair Soberon, Vice-Chair Kahle, Secretary Lerner, and Commissioners: Danburg, Greenberg, and McCormick. Commissioners Stanton and Teneyuca abstained; Commissioners Lari, Lovins, and Williams were absent.

Secretary Lerner then made a motion to approve the July and September minutes, which was seconded by Commissioner McCormick. The July 14 and September 22 minutes were adopted with direction to correct the spelling of Commissioner Nguyen Stanton's first name in the July minutes. The motion passed on a unanimous vote of the members present (Chair Soberon, Vice-Chair Kahle, Secretary Lerner, and Commissioners: Danburg, Greenberg, McCormick, Stanton, and Teneyuca. Commissioners Lari, Lovins, and Williams were absent).

4. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Future agenda items were discussed, including adding a mission statement or other description to the Commission's agendas, a video describing the Commission's role for the Commission website, the possibility of the Commission having an intern to assist with its duties, the budget process, and the working group on procedures and sanctions adding an item on an ombudsperson.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:09 p.m.