



***ETHICS REVIEW COMMISSION
REGULAR CALLED MEETING MINUTES
AUGUST 23, 2023***

The Ethics Review Commission convened in a Regular Commission meeting on August 23, 2023, at City Hall, Boards & Commissions Room #1101, at 301 W 2nd Street in Austin, Texas and via Videoconference.

Chair Soberon called the Ethics Review Commission Meeting to order at 6:06 p.m.

Commissioners in Attendance: Chair Luis Soberon, Vice-Chair Mary Kahle, and Commissioners Amy Casto, Edward Espinoza, Haksoon Andrea Low, Michael Lovins, William Ross Pumfrey, and Sidney Williams were present at City Hall.

Commissioners in Attendance Remotely: Commissioner Alysa Nuñez.

Commissioners Absent: Secretary Nguyen Stanton-Adams and Commissioner Mikki Teneyuca.

Vacancy: None.

City Staff in Attendance: Lizette Benitez, Staff Liaison; and Victoria Hayslett, Commission Executive Liaison & Assistant City Attorney.

PUBLIC COMMUNICATION: GENERAL

One speaker, Christina Flores, signed up for General Communication in person and was allotted three minutes to speak.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

1. The Ethics Review Commission may announce it will go into Executive Session pursuant to Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code to receive advice from legal counsel on any matter listed in this agenda. The Commission may go into Executive Session to discuss:

A complaint filed by Daniel Llanes against José Velásquez raising claimed violations of City Code Chapter 2-7 (Ethics and Financial Disclosure), Subsection 2-7-72(E) (Reports).

The Commission went into Executive session at 6:12 p.m. Commissioner Nuñez abstained from items 1 and 2 and did not participate in Executive Session.

The Commission reconvened the public meeting at 7:19 p.m. However, Commissioner Nuñez did not rejoin the meeting.

PRELIMINARY HEARING

A complaint filed by Daniel Llanes against José Velásquez raising claimed violations of City Code Chapter 2-7 (Ethics and Financial Disclosure), Subsection 2-7-72(E) (Reports).

Parties attending: Complainant's counsel Bill Aleshire, Complainant Daniel Llanes, and Respondent's counsel Ross Fischer. All parties signed oath forms and spoke on item 2.

The Commission heard opening statements from Bill Aleshire, Counsel for Complainant, and Ross Fischer, Counsel for the Respondent. The Commission then asked questions of the parties.

Commissioner Low's motion to find reasonable grounds that a violation occurred and set a final hearing was seconded by Vice-Chair Kahle. The motion was tabled by unanimous consent.

Counsel for Respondent Ross Fischer provided an admission to the Commission that there was a violation to counts 1, 2, and 4 on the complaint filed.

Commissioner Williams' motion to find that an admission has been made to counts 1, 2, and 4 and to find that no reasonable grounds existed on count 3 was approved on a 7-1 vote of all members present. Commissioner Espinoza seconded the motion. Voting in favor: Chair Soberon and Commissioners Casto, Espinoza, Low, Lovins, Pumfrey, and Williams. Vice-Chair Kahle abstained, and Commissioner Nuñez recused. Secretary Stanton-Adams and Commissioner Teneyuca were absent.

Chair Soberon explained to the Commission the sanction options and allotted each party three minutes to explain their sanction recommendations.

Vice-Chair Kahle's motion to send a letter of admonition to City Council Member Velásquez was approved on a 6-2 vote of all members present. Commissioner Low seconded the motion. Voting in favor: Chair Soberon, Vice-Chair Kahle, and Commissioners Casto, Lovins, Low, and Williams. Voting against: Commissioners Espinoza and Pumfrey. Commissioner Nuñez recused. Secretary Stanton-Adams and Commissioner Teneyuca were absent.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approve the minutes of the Ethics Review Commission Regular Meeting held on June 28, 2023.

Commissioner Williams' motion to adopt the minutes with Commissioner Low's amendments was approved on a 6-2 vote of all members present. Commissioner Casto

seconded the motion. Voting in favor: Chair Soberon and Commissioners Casto, Lovins, Low, Pumfrey, and Williams. Vice-Chair Kahle and Commissioner Espinoza abstained. Secretary Stanton-Adams and Commissioners Nuñez and Teneyuca were absent.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Soberon adjourned the meeting at 9:22 p.m. without objection.

The preceding minutes were approved on an 8-0 vote of all members present at the September 27, 2023 Regular Commission meeting on Commissioner Casto's motion and Vice-Chair Kahle's second. Secretary Stanton-Adams and Commissioner Teneyuca were absent.