



***ETHICS REVIEW COMMISSION
REGULAR CALLED MEETING MINUTES
AUGUST 28, 2024***

The Ethics Review Commission convened in a Regular Commission meeting on August 28, 2024, at City Hall, Boards & Commissions Room #1101, at 301 W. 2nd Street in Austin, Texas and via Videoconference.

Chair Michael Lovins called the Ethics Review Commission Meeting to order at 6:11 p.m.

Commissioners in Attendance: Chair Michael Lovins, Vice-Chair Haksoon Andrea Low, Secretary Nguyen Stanton-Adams, and Commissioners Edward Espinoza, Adam Materne and William Ross Pumfrey were present at City Hall.

Commissioners in Attendance Remotely: Mary Kahle.

Commissioners Absent: Amy Casto and Alysa Nuñez.

City Staff in Attendance: Lizette Benitez, Staff Liaison; Caroline Webster, Commission Executive Liaison & Assistant City Attorney.

PUBLIC COMMUNICATION: GENERAL

No one registered to speak during public communication.

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There is no limit on the number of speakers who may speak on agenda items. There is a limit on the number of speakers who may speak on items not posted on the agenda—only the first ten speakers who register prior to the meeting being called to order will be allowed a three-minute allotment to address non-agenda items. For more information on public communication, please see the “**Notice Regarding Public Communication**” at the end of this agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- 1. Approve the minutes of the Ethics Review Commission Regular meeting on July 24, 2024. Secretary Stanton-Adams’ motion to approve the minutes with amendments to include “Future Agenda Items” passed on an 7-0 vote of all members present. Commissioner Pumfrey seconded the motion. Voting in favor: Chair Lovins, Vice-Chair Low, Secretary Stanton-Adams and Commissioners Espinoza, Kahle, Materne and Pumfrey. Commissioners Casto and Nuñez were absent.**

BRIEFINGS

2. Briefing of the Annual Internal Review report made by Chair Lovins.

Chair Lovins presented the Annual Internal Review Report to the Commission, outlining the preliminary hearings and other actions conducted in accordance with the Ethics Review Commission's mission statement.

After taking up item 2, the Commission moved onto item 5.

3. Staff Briefing from Caroline Webster regarding three recent complaints received.

Executive Liaison Caroline Webster presented updates on three recent complaints received in July. One complaint, filed by Julie Oliver against Mike Siegel, did not meet the filing requirements. Ms. Oliver was informed she could resubmit her complaint, but no further action was taken. The other two complaints were filed by Betsy Greenberg against mayoral candidates Douglas Greco and Kirk Watson for allegedly exceeding campaign contribution limits. The Commission was informed that preliminary hearings for these complaints are set for September 25th, with notices to be sent to all parties involved detailing the hearing date, process, and their rights. Additionally, the Commission was informed that outside counsel is being sought outside of the City of Austin to handle both complaints to avoid conflicts of interest.

4. Briefing from the Working Group to Review ERC Complaints Process regarding a status report on consideration of commission-initiated complaints.

Vice-Chair Low and Chair Lovins provided an update on the status of the Working Group to Review ERC Complaints Process, notifying the Commission that a memo had been started and work was being done, however at the moment there is no further updates.

DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS

Consideration, discussion, and potential action regarding:

5. Discussion regarding gathering feedback about scheduled candidate events, and Q & A with Carol Eckelkamp, League of Women Voters Austin Area (LWV-AA).

Carol Eckelkamp, a member of the LWV-AA, briefed the Commission on the League's work with the City of Austin. This includes educating voters by moderating candidate forum events and live debates, engaging with the community to identify key issues and solicit feedback, and crafting questions to understand candidates' views and ensure fairness.

After taking up item 5, the commission moved onto item 3 .

6. Changes to the membership of the Working Group to Review ERC Complaints Process.

Secretary Stanton-Adams' motion to appoint Commissioner Materne to the Working Group to Review ERC Complaints Process passed on an 6-1 vote of all members present. Commissioner Pumfrey seconded the motion. Voting in favor: Chair Lovins, Vice-Chair Low, Secretary Stanton-Adams and Commissioners Espinoza, Kahle and Pumfrey. Commissioner Materne abstained and Commissioners Casto and Nuñez were absent.

7. Potential formation of a working group to look into reviewing and revising the ERC bylaws.

Secretary Stanton-Adams' motion to form Working Group to Review and Revise the ERC Bylaws was seconded by Commissioner Pumfrey.

Commissioner Materne proposed an amended motion to standup the Working Group to review and Revise the ERC Bylaws if three Commissioners join the Working Group. Commissioner Espinoza Seconded the motion.

After further discussion from the Working Group, Commissioner Materne made a motion to withdraw the amended motion, going back to Secretary Stanton-Adams' original motion, seconded by Commissioner Pumfrey. The motion to form the Working Group to Review and Revise the ERC Bylaws passed unanimously on a 7-0 vote of all members present.

Commissioner Materne's motion to nominate Secretary Stanton-Adams and Commissioner Pumfrey to the Working Group passed on a vote of 7-0 of all members present. Secretary Stanton-Adams' seconded the motion.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- **Potential changes to membership of Working Group to Review and Revise the ERC Bylaws – to be added on January 2025 agenda.**
- **Discussion of Memorandum of Understanding between COA and LWV-AA – to be added on October 2024 agenda.**
- **Potential briefing/update from Caroline Webster regarding Greco and Watson complaints – to be added on October 2024 agenda, if September 2024 preliminary hearings are postponed.**

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Lovins adjourned the meeting at 8:21 p.m. without objections.

The preceding minutes were approved with amendments on an 8-0 vote of all members present at the September 25, 2024 Regular Commission meeting on Secretary Stanton-Adams' amended motion and Commissioner Kahle's second. Commissioner Materne was absent.