

Philadelphia Board of Ethics
Meeting Minutes
Public Session
March 15, 2006
Municipal Services Building
Room 16 B
5:00 – 7:00 PM

Present:

Board

Charisse R. Lillie, Esq., Chair
Daniel P. McElhatton, Esq., Vice Chair

Staff

Evan Meyer, Esq.
J. Shane Creamer, Jr., Esq.

Guest

Joan Decker, Records Commissioner

Agenda:

I. Approval of Minutes

The Board approved the meeting minutes for the public and executive sessions of the February 14, 2006 meeting.

II. Financial Disclosure Update

Records Commissioner Joan Decker provided the Board with an update on the 2006 financial disclosure process. Commissioner Decker reported that the financial disclosure process timeline was on schedule. All financial disclosure forms must be filed by 5:00 pm on May 1st with the Records Department.

III. New Ethics Legislation: Campaign Finance Database

Records Commissioner Decker also provided the Board with an update on her Department's efforts to comply with the requirements of Bill 050014, which was passed by the City in December 2005. That Bill requires candidates and political committees who are required to file campaign finance reports with the City Commissioners to simultaneously file the same information with the new Ethics Board. The new Board must then publish the information on the City's website. The Ordinance took effect immediately. Until voters approve an amendment to the City Charter that will authorize the creation of the new Ethics Board, the Records Department is responsible for carrying out the requirements of the ordinance.

Commissioner Decker explained that, because campaign finance reports are not filed electronically with the City Commissioners, a new database and electronic filing system would have to be created. The Records Department is working with a consultant to create the database and a process for electronic submission of the campaign finance information. In the mean time, in order to comply with the spirit of the law, the Records Department scanned all 138 annual campaign finance reports that were filed with the City Commissioners by January 31, 2006 into a database and manually indexed the reports – some of which exceeded 200 pages – so that the information is searchable by the fields that have been indexed.

The database is now available on the City's web site. The Records Department continues to work on a fully electronic database with its consultant, and hopes to have that system ready for testing in the coming months. The new electronic system will mirror the State's campaign finance filing requirements as well as approximately half a dozen campaign finance report systems offered by vendors and certified by the State.

Mr. Creamer also reported that a link to the Campaign Finance Report Database has been added the Ethics Board's web site (under "Links").

IV. Ethics Opinion Archive

Mr. Meyer reported to the Board that he had begun an effort to assemble older Ethics Board Opinions into an archive, in order to create a potential resource for the new Ethics Board, if voters approve the ballot question on May 16th. Mr. Meyer also proposed that the Board publish the Opinions once

they are archived. Ms. Lillie said that she thought that creating an archive of older Ethics Board Opinions was a good idea and added that she would also be in favor of making the archive available online, on the Board's web site.

V. Executive Director's Report

1. Legislative Update

Mr. Creamer reported that the hearing scheduled on February 23rd before City Council's Legislative Oversight Committee on ethics training and education was postponed. No new date has been scheduled for the hearing.

Council is scheduled to hold a hearing on the Law Department's budget on March 28th at 1:15. The Ethics Board's budget is included in the Law Department's budget.

2. DOJ Antitrust Awareness Training

Working with the Managing Director's Office, Mr. Creamer reported that Antitrust Awareness Training has been scheduled for operating department procurement officers for April 4th at 10:00 am in Conference Room "C" on the 16th floor of the Municipal Services Building. Mr. Creamer said that this session was requested after Ed Panek gave a presentation on the training program at the Managing Director's Commissioners' Meeting on February 1st.

3. Ethics Training

Mr. Creamer reported that all City departments have submitted their ethics training schedules. He added that the Training Coordinators in each department have been asked to provide an estimate on how many employees have been trained so far. Central Personnel has already trained 470 employees in some of the smaller departments that do not have a trainer among their staff.

Just over 250 trainers were trained in eight "train-the-trainer" sessions to deliver ethics training their departments. Although we anticipate that it will take until the end of the calendar year to train all City employees (particularly those in the larger, uniformed departments), a majority of City employees will be trained by June.

Ashley Anders, who has been instrumental with the successful implementation of the training program, will be leaving the City to take a position in the private sector on March 24th.