



Jan H. Gardner
County Executive

FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT

FREDERICK COUNTY ETHICS COMMISSION Office of the County Attorney

Stephen K. Hess, Chair

Minutes of the Public Meeting of the Frederick County Ethics Commission

**Wednesday, March 9, 2022
7:00 P.M.**

Present:

Rev. Douglas P. Jones (Vice-Chair)
Anna Johnson-Winegar
Deborah L. Lundahl
Mr. Michael G. Bunitsky
James A. Stanker

Absent:

Rev. Stephen Larsen
Stephen K. Hess (Chair)
Ms. Ysela Bravo (Alternate)

Also in Attendance

Andrew J. Ford, Assistant County Attorney

The Frederick County Ethics Commission meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m. on March 9, 2022. The meeting was held virtually via Microsoft Teams.

1. Call to Order / Roll Call.
2. Approval of Agenda.
3. Approval of the minutes from the February 9, 2022 meeting.
4. Review Financial Disclosure Statement process for 2021 Statements (due in April 2022).
5. Discussion of State-required changes to the County's Ethics Law as well as other possible recommendations to the County Executive for amendment of the County's Ethics Law.
6. Vote to conduct an administrative function meeting to discuss a request for an advisory opinion and the status of pending complaints.

Approval of Agenda. Commissioner Lundahl made a motion to approve the Agenda. Commissioner Stanker seconded the motion, which was approved with Commissioner Stanker abstaining.

Approval of Minutes of February 9, 2022. The draft minutes of the February 9, 2022, public meeting were e-mailed to the members before the meeting. Commissioner Johnson-

Winegar made a motion to approve the draft minutes. Commissioner Lundahl seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

Review of Financial Disclosure Statement process for 2021 Statements (due in April 2022):

Mr. Ford reviewed the process for upcoming Financial Disclosure Statements for 2021. Statements will be distributed in April. Mr. Ford notified the Commission that due to a change in Human Resource's classification plan the language of Section 1-7.1-7 (1)(a) of the Ethics Law would inadvertently require a substantial number of employees to complete a Financial Disclosure Statement for the first time. Such employees are not typically be at a level that such Statements are necessary or warranted. The Commission considered reducing the number of required disclosure statements based on the changes in the classification plan as well as the contemplated changes to the Ethics Law; however, because of the absence of some members of the Commission, the Commission decided to schedule another meeting before the end of March to further consider such a change.

Ethics Law Changes: The Commission discussed proposed changes to the Ethics Law required by the State Ethics Commission as well as changes based on the revised compensation plan. No recommendation was necessary given the changes are required by State law and regulation. With respect to the issue of changes to Section 1-7.1-7 (*i.e.*, appropriate minimum grade for requiring Financial Disclosure Statements and list of boards and commissions), the Commission decided to postpone this until the next meeting.

Administrative Function: The Commission recently a request for an advisory opinion. Commissioner Bunitsky made a motion to hold an administrative function meeting. Commissioner Lundahl seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

Required information regarding the administrative function meeting – The Commission ended the Microsoft Teams meeting and after a short break to reconnect via Teams convened an administrative function meeting via Microsoft Teams. Present for the meeting were Commissioners Jones (Vice-Chair), Stanker, Lundahl, Bunitsky, and Johnson-Winegar. Mr. Ford was also in attendance.

The Commission discussed the request for an advisory opinion and requested Mr. Ford to gather additional information for the Commission's consideration.

There being no other business before the Commission, upon motion by Commissioner Lundahl, seconded by Commissioner Stanker, the Ethics Commission adjourned its administrative function meeting at approximately 8:07 p.m.

/s/
Andrew J. Ford
Assistant County Attorney