



## **MEETING MINUTES**

### **BOARD OF ETHICS**

Tuesday, May 2, 2017

7:00 p.m.

Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center  
2100 Ridge Ave, Room 2404

Members Present: Mark Sheldon, Kelda Harris-Harty, Jennifer Billingsley, Karena Bierman and Vincent Thomas.

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Michelle Masoncup, Staff Attorney

Presiding Member: Mark Sheldon, Committee Chair

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Chairman, M. Sheldon declared that the Board had a quorum, with all members present and called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

The Board approved the minutes of June 21, 2016.

M. Sheldon reports that the Board received a new complaint filed by Carolyn Murray 17-BOE-003 against Alderman Holmes for alleged violations of the Code of Ethics. Carolyn Murray addressed the Board to add any additional comments to the written complaint.

Carolyn Murray alleged that Alderman Holmes showed favoritism by sending a newsletter that discussed the past election results.

J. Billingsley asked if there was a determination by the election judge on the polling place issue raised. C. Murray said that she filed a report and the election judge said that it wasn't allowed. V. Thomas asked if the election judge issued a written ruling on the issue. C. Murray said complaints were made to Election Board, but in this situation there was no report.

Alderman Holmes spoke the Board on the issues raised. She said that she did drive voters to the polling place. She indicated that she did not speak to voters in the lobby and make any endorsement or tell them who to vote for at Primm Towers. The newsletter is put together by a group of residents of the 5<sup>th</sup> Ward, they have always sent it out without City help, and the City doesn't generate her newsletter.

The Board moved into closed session pursuant to M. Sheldon's motion citing 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(15) to discuss the new complaint and the two issues that it took under advisement during the April 18<sup>th</sup> meeting.

The Board re-convened into Open Session and K. Bierman read the Board's findings with an advisory opinion to be prepared and reviewed by the Board:

1. Ester/Ducre and Murray complaints: Alderman Holmes distribution of an endorsement utilizing City resources was non-compliant with the City Code. Addressing the second part of Carolyn Murray's complaint, the Board found that distribution of the 5th Ward newsletter following the election was not a violation.

2. Witenberg Complaint: The Board held that Alderman Holmes acted in a manner that showed lack of impartiality by utilizing information obtained in the course of duties as an elected official from a candidate to another candidate's campaign team member.

3. Ester Complaint: The Board found an appearance of impropriety when a member of a City board presented a request for grant funding as an employee of the grant requester to a different City board. However, the Board found that upon the information presented, Robin Rue's direct financial interest was sufficiently tenuous as to not constitute a violation of the Code of Ethics and strongly cautious that all those serving on city boards must understand the implications of giving testimony to influence action when they have a financial interest in the outcome.

J. Billingsley nominated Kelda Harris-Harty for the new chair of the Board of Ethics and the Board unanimously approved the nomination.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Upon motion and second, the meeting was adjourned.