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PANSY S. WATSON
Assistant Counsel

MINUTES OF THE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION MEETING

September 12, 2024

Commission Members Present: Craig D. Roswell, Chair
Bonnie A. Kirkland
James N. Robey, Jr.
Geneau M. Thames

Commission Members Absent: Mariela Olivares

Staff Members Present: Jennifer K. Allgair, Executive Director
William J. Colquhoun, General Counsel
Katherine P. Thompson, Staff Counsel
Ana L. Henry, Assistant General Counsel
Pansy S. Watson, Assistant Counsel
Stephen Garrett, Paralegal
Maura Pizzi, Paralegal
Aida Canales, Paralegal
Darlene Gavel, Office Manager

The meeting convened at 9:15 a.m. at 45 Calvert Street, 3rd Floor conference room. Those listed as present participated in all portions of the meeting unless otherwise noted. If other individuals participated in aspects of the meeting, they will be identified in the specific line item where their participation occurred.

ITEM 1: Tentative Agenda

Discussion: The Commission reviewed the tentative agenda.

Decision: The tentative agenda was approved as adjusted.

ITEM 2: Minutes of the June 6, 2024, Meeting

Discussion: The draft minutes of the June 6, 2024, meeting was reviewed and discussed.

Decision: The draft minutes were approved.

ITEM 3: Financial Disclosure Additions and Deletions

Discussion: Ms. Allgair presented a listing of the proposed additions and deletions to the financial disclosure list recommended by State agencies and reviewed by Financial Disclosure Administrator, Young Smith and Executive Director, Jennifer Allgair. The recommendations covered the Maryland Transportation Authority, Department of Health, Department of Labor, Comptroller's Office, Maryland Port Administration, Bowie State University, Department of General Services, Department of Natural Resources, Treasurer's Office, University of Maryland-Baltimore, Department of Information Technology, University of Maryland-Baltimore County, Maryland Energy Administration, University System of Maryland, State Highway Administration, Montgomery College, State Retirement Agency, Department of Housing & Community Development, Frostburg State University, University of Maryland Global Campus, Department of Commerce, Salisbury University, College of Southern Maryland, Carroll Community College, Department of Transportation, Maryland Clean Energy Center, Commission on Civil Rights, Higher Education Commission, Department of the Environment, Technology Development Corporation, Department of Aging, Department of Planning and Frederick Community College.

Decision: The Commission approved Ms. Allgair's recommendations on financial disclosure position additions and deletions.

ITEM 4: Executive Unit Determinations and Preliminary Financial Disclosure Exemption Determinations

Discussion: Ms. Allgair briefed the Commission on whether or not the following should be considered executive units covered by the Public Ethics Law and whether or not members of these boards would be exempt from the financial disclosure requirement:

1. Advisory Committee to the Maryland Commission on Transportation Revenue and Infrastructure (SB 362)
2. Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment Workgroup (SB 1028)
3. Workgroup for the Deaf, Deafblind and Hard of Hearing (HB 1069)
4. Task Force on Responsible Use of Natural Psychedelic Substances (HB 548)
5. Correctional Ombudsman Advisory Board (SB 134)

Decision: The Commission determined the following were executive units covered by the Public Ethics Law and granted financial disclosure exemptions for the:

1. Advisory Committee to the Maryland Commission on Transportation Revenue and Infrastructure (SB 362)
2. Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment Workgroup (SB 1028)
3. Workgroup for the Deaf, Deafblind and Hard of Hearing (HB 1069)
4. Task Force on Responsible Use of Natural Psychedelic Substances (HB 548)
5. Correctional Ombudsman Advisory Board (SB 134)

ITEM 5: Financial Disclosure Exemption Requests

Discussion: Ms. Allgair briefed the Commission on requests for exemption from the financial disclosure requirement for the Maryland Aerospace and Technology Commission and the Maryland Entertainment Industry Council.

Decision: The Commission granted a financial disclosure exemption for the Maryland Aerospace and Technology Commission but rescinded the prior exemption for the Maryland Entertainment Industry Council based on its current decision-making authority.

ITEM 6: Local Government – City of Rockville (24-0439)

Discussion: Ms. Watson briefed the Commission on the proposed amendments to the local ethics ordinance for the City of Rockville.

Decision: The Commission approved the proposed amendments.

ITEM 7: Local Government – Queen Anne’s County (23-0901)

Discussion: Ms. Watson briefed the Commission on the proposed amendments to the local ethics ordinance for Queen Anne’s County.

Decision: The Commission approved the proposed amendments.

ITEM 8: Local Government – Carroll County (24-0581)

Discussion: Ms. Watson briefed the Commission on the proposed amendments to the local ethics ordinance for Carroll County.

Decision: The Commission approved the proposed amendments.

ITEM 9: Local Government – Wicomico County (24-0491)

Discussion: Ms. Watson briefed the Commission on the proposed amendments to the local ethics regulation for Wicomico County.

Decision: The Commission approved the proposed amendments.

ITEM 10: Local Government – Talbot County Board of Education (24-0480)

Discussion: Ms. Watson briefed the Commission on the proposed amendments to the local ethics ordinance for the Talbot County Board of Education.

Decision: The Commission approved the proposed amendments.

ITEM 11: Local Government – Worcester County Board of Education (24-0315)

Discussion: Ms. Watson briefed the Commission on the proposed amendments to the local ethics ordinance for the Worcester County Board of Education.

Decision: The Commission approved the proposed amendments.

ITEM 12: Executive Director’s Report – Online Training Programs

Discussion: Ms. Allgair briefed the Commission on the status of the online training programs being produced and updated by Maryland Public Television. The first one being developed is for

A motion was made by Mr. Roswell and seconded by Ms. Thames to close the meeting to the public pursuant to §3-305(b)(13) of the Open Meetings Act to consider confidential advice matters and enforcement matters per §5-303 and §5-407 of the Public Ethics Law, and to receive the advice of counsel pursuant to §3-305(b)(7) of the Open Meetings Act. The Commission voted unanimously in favor of closing the meeting at 9:33 a.m.

ITEM 13: Informal Matter – Memo on Non-Participation Plans and Mitigation Agreements

Discussion: Mr. Colquhoun presented five non-participation agreements or mitigation agreements provided and approved by the staff. The matters included 24-0404, 24-0431, 24-0434, 24-0458 and 24-0528.

ITEM 14: Informal Matter – Department of Transportation (24-0143)

Discussion: Mr. Colquhoun briefed the Commission on the notification of a disclosed conflict pursuant to 5-501(c) of the Ethics Law regarding an employee’s participation within the Department of Transportation.

ITEM 15: Informal Matter - Department of Transportation (24-0449)

Discussion: Ms. Henry briefed the Commission on a participation exception request regarding an employee in the Department of Transportation requesting to participate in matters relating to a Department contractor where the employee’s father is employed.

Decision: The Commission approved the request for a participation exception.

ITEM 16: Informal Matter – Elected Executive Branch Official (24-0509)

Discussion: Mr. Colquhoun briefed the Commission a notification that the Commission had received regarding Section 5-505(c)(2)(vi) that on an official in the Executive Branch in exchange for speaking at an event had allowable expenses paid by a lobbyist that exceeds \$500.

ITEM 17: Informal Matter – Department of Commerce (24-0647)

Discussion: Ms. Allgair briefed the Commission on the Department of Commerce plan to create a Loaned Executive Program within the Department.

Decision: The Commission reviewed the proposal from the Department of Commerce and directed staff to provide guidance on the agency’s proposal.

ITEM 18: Informal Matter – Anne Arundel County Sheriff’s Office (24-0690)

Discussion: Mr. Colquhoun briefed the Commission on a prestige issue regarding wearing uniforms at campaign events.

Decision: The Commission approved staff recommendations.

ITEM 19: Informal Matter – Elected Executive Branch Official (24-0671)

Decision: Mr. Colquhoun briefed the Commission on a prestige issue regarding an Elected Executive Branch Official’s request to write a foreword to a book authored by another individual.

Decision: The Commission approved staff recommendations.

ITEM 20: Informal Matter – Department of Human Services (24-0424)

Discussion: Ms. Henry briefed the Commission on a secondary employment request regarding an employee in the Department of Human Services wanting to work as a practitioner with an entity that has a business relationship with the Department.

Decision: The Commission granted an exception to allow this secondary employment.

ITEM 21: Informal Matter – Department of Human Services (24-0426)

Discussion: Ms. Watson briefed the Commission on a secondary employment request regarding an employee in the Department of Human Services wanting to work as a therapist with an entity that has a business relationship with the Department.

Decision: The Commission granted an exception to allow this secondary employment.

ITEM 22: Informal Matter – Department of Human Services (24-0437)

Discussion: Ms. Watson briefed the Commission on a secondary employment request regarding an employee in the Department of Human Services wanting to work with an entity that has a referral relationship with the Department.

Decision: The Commission granted an exception to allow this secondary employment.

ITEM 23: Informal Matter – Department of Labor (24-0494)

Discussion: Ms. Henry briefed the Commission on a secondary employment request regarding an employee in the Department of Labor wanting to serve as a board member on a non-profit that receives funding from the Department.

Decision: The Commission granted an exception to allow this secondary employment.

ITEM 24: Informal Matter – Department of Human Services (24-0512)

Discussion: Ms. Henry briefed the Commission on a secondary employment request regarding an employee at the Department of Human Services wanting to work for an entity that has a business relationship with the Department.

Decision: The Commission granted an exception to allow this secondary employment.

ITEM 25: Informal Matter – Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems (24-0520)

Discussion: Ms. Henry briefed the Commission on a secondary employment request regarding an employee in the Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems serving as a member of the board of directors of a physician's professional association.

Decision: The Commission granted an exception to allow this secondary employment.

ITEM 26: Informal Matter – Department of Housing and Community Development (24-0523)

Discussion: Ms. Watson briefed the Commission on a secondary employment request regarding an employee in the Department of Housing and Community Development wanting to serve on a town planning commission.

Decision: The Commission granted an exception to allow this secondary employment.

ITEM 27: Informal Matter – Department of Health (24-0546)

Discussion: Ms. Henry briefed the Commission on a secondary employment request regarding an employee in the Department of Health wanting to work at an entity that is regulated by the Department.

Decision: The Commission granted an exception to allow this secondary employment.

ITEM 28: Informal Matter – Cecil County Circuit Court (24-0552)

Discussion: Ms. Henry briefed the Commission on a secondary employment request regarding an employee in the Cecil County Circuit Court wanting to work at a local law library.

Decision: The Commission granted an exception to allow this secondary employment.

ITEM 29: Informal Matter – Department of Health (24-0567)

Discussion: Ms. Henry briefed the Commission on a secondary employment request regarding an employee in the Department of Health working with an entity that is regulated by the Department.

Decision: The Commission granted an exception to allow this secondary employment.

ITEM 30: Informal Matter – Department of Health (24-0568)

Discussion: Ms. Henry briefed the Commission on a secondary employment request regarding an employee in the Department of Health working at an entity that is regulated by the Department.

Decision: The Commission granted an exception to allow this secondary employment.

ITEM 31: Informal Matter – Department of Agriculture (24-0569)

Discussion: Ms. Henry briefed the Commission on a secondary employment request regarding an employee in the Department of Agriculture wanting to serve on a non-profit board that has a business relationship with the Department.

Discussion: The Commission granted an exception to allow this secondary employment.

ITEM 32: Informal Matter – Department of Health (24-0591)

Discussion: Ms. Henry briefed the Commission on a secondary employment request regarding an employee in the Department of Health wanting to work as a registered nurse with an entity that is regulated by the Department.

Decision: The Commission granted an exception to allow this secondary employment.

ITEM 33: Informal Matter – Department of Human Services (24-0604)

Discussion: Ms. Watson briefed the Commission on a secondary employment request regarding an employee in the Department of Human Services wanting to work for an entity that has a referral relationship with the Department.

Decision: The Commission granted an exception to allow this secondary employment.

ITEM 34: Informal Matter – Prince George’s Community College (24-0626)

Discussion: Ms. Watson briefed the Commission on a secondary employment request regarding an employee at Prince George’s Community College working as a lecturer with a private university that has a purchase order agreement with the Community College.

Decision: The Commission granted an exception to allow this secondary employment.

ITEM 35: Informal Matter – Department of Health (24-0631)

Discussion: Ms. Watson briefed the Commission on a secondary employment request regarding an employee in the Department of Health working at an entity that is regulated by and does business with the Department.

Decision: The Commission granted an exception to allow this secondary employment.

ITEM 36: Informal Matter – Department of Health (24-0632)

Discussion: Ms. Henry briefed the Commission on a secondary employment request regarding an employee in the Department of Health working at an entity that has a business relationship with the Department.

Decision: The Commission granted an exception to allow this secondary employment.

ITEM 37: Informal Matter – Department of Health (24-0633)

Discussion: Ms. Henry briefed the Commission on a secondary employment request regarding an employee in the Department of Health working at an entity that is regulated by the Department.

Decision: The Commission granted an exception to allow this secondary employment.

ITEM 38: Informal Matter – Towson University (24-0641)

Discussion: Ms. Henry briefed the Commission on a secondary employment request regarding an employee at Towson University working with an organization that has a rental agreement with the University.

Decision: The Commission granted an exception to allow this secondary employment.

ITEM 39: Informal Matter – Governor’s Office of Crime Prevention and Policy (24-0648)

Discussion: Ms. Watson briefed the Commission on a secondary employment request regarding an employee in the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention and Policy (GOCPP) working with a fundraising organization that receives a grant from the Governor's Office for Children, which used to be affiliated with GOCPP.

Decision: The Commission granted an exception to allow this secondary employment.

ITEM 40: Informal Matter – Department of Human Services (24-0678)

Discussion: Mr. Colquhoun briefed the Commission on a secondary employment request regarding an employee in the Department of Human Services and an outside employer with a referral relationship with the Department.

Decision: The Commission granted an exception to allow this secondary employment.

ITEM 41: Informal Matter - Department of Human Services (24-0623)

Discussion: Ms. Henry briefed the Commission on a secondary employment request regarding an employee in the Department of Human Services working at an entity where SNAP benefits administered by the Department are accepted.

Decision: The Commission granted an exception to allow this secondary employment.

ITEM 42: Informal Matter – Department of Health (24-0470)

Discussion: Ms. Watson briefed the Commission on a secondary employment and financial interest request regarding an employee in the Department of Health working as a clinical psychiatrist and is regulated by the Department.

Decision: The Commission granted an exception to allow this secondary employment and financial interest.

ITEM 43: Informal Matter - Department of Health (24-0559)

Discussion: Ms. Watson briefed the Commission on a secondary employment and financial interest request regarding an employee in the Department of Health working as a clinical psychiatrist and is regulated by the Department.

Decision: The Commission granted an exception to allow this secondary employment and financial interest.

ITEM 44: Informal Matter - Department of Health (24-0544)

Discussion: Ms. Watson briefed the Commission on a secondary employment and financial interest request regarding an employee in the Department of Health working as a clinical psychiatrist and is regulated by the Department.

Decision: The Commission granted an exception to allow this secondary employment and financial interest.

ITEM 45: Informal Matter - Department of Health (24-0592)

Discussion: Ms. Watson briefed the Commission on a secondary employment and financial interest request regarding an employee in the Department of Health working as a clinical psychiatrist who is regulated by the Department.

Decision: The Commission granted an exception to allow this secondary employment and financial interest.

ITEM 46: Informal Matter – Blind Trust

Discussion: Mr. Colquhoun briefed the Commission on the status of this matter.

ITEM 47: 2025 Proposed Departmental Legislation

Discussion: Ms. Allgair briefed the Commission on the two proposed departmental bills submitted by the Commission.

ITEM 48: A-19-24

Discussion: Ms. Thompson briefed the Commission on this matter.

Decision: This matter will be closed.

ITEM 49: A-26-24

Discussion: Ms. Thompson briefed the Commission on this matter.

Decision: The matter will remain on the Preliminary Consideration Docket.

ITEM 50: A-29-24

Discussion: Ms. Thompson briefed the Commission on this matter.

Decision: The matter will be closed.

ITEM 51: A-37-24

Discussion: Ms. Thompson briefed the Commission on this matter.

Decision: The matter will remain on the Preliminary Consideration Docket.

ITEM 52: A-38-24

Discussion: Ms. Thompson briefed the Commission on this matter.

Decision: The matter will be placed on the Preliminary Inquiry Docket. (B-8-24)

ITEM 53: A-39-24

Discussion: Ms. Thompson briefed the Commission on this matter.

Decision: This matter will be closed.

ITEM 54: A-40-24

Discussion: Ms. Thompson briefed the Commission on this matter.

Decision: The matter will remain on the Preliminary Consideration Docket.

ITEM 55: A-41-24

Discussion: Ms. Thompson briefed the Commission on this matter.

Decision: The matter will remain on the Preliminary Consideration Docket.

ITEM 56: A-42-24

Discussion: Ms. Thompson briefed the Commission on this matter.

Decision: The matter will be placed on the Preliminary Inquiry Docket. (B-9-24)

ITEM 57: A-43-24

Discussion: Ms. Thompson briefed the Commission on this matter.

Decision: The matter will be placed on the Preliminary Inquiry Docket. (B-10-24)

ITEM 58: A-44-24

Discussion: Ms. Thompson briefed the Commission on this matter.

Decision: The matter will be placed on the Preliminary Inquiry Docket. (B-11-24)

ITEM 59: A-45-24

Discussion: Ms. Thompson briefed the Commission on this matter.

Decision: This matter will be further reviewed at a later meeting.

ITEM 60: B-4-22

Discussion: Ms. Thompson briefed the Commission on this matter.

Decision: This matter will be further reviewed at a later meeting.

ITEM 61: B-4-24

Discussion: Ms. Thompson briefed the Commission on this matter.

Decision: This matter will be closed with a letter.

ITEM 62: C-2-24

Discussion: Ms. Thompson briefed the Commission on this matter.

Decision: This matter will not be closed.

ITEM 63: A-31-24

Discussion: Ms. Thompson briefed the Commission on this matter.

Decision: The Commission accepted the Lobbyist Filing Agreement.

ITEM 64: A-32-24

Discussion: Ms. Thompson briefed the Commission on this matter.

Decision: The Commission accepted the Lobbyist Filing Agreement.

ITEM 65: A-34-24

Discussion: Ms. Thompson briefed the Commission on this matter.

Decision: The Commission accepted the Lobbyist Filing Agreement.

ITEM 66: A-35-24

Discussion: Ms. Thompson briefed the Commission on the status of this matter.

ITEM 67: A-36-24

Discussion: Ms. Thompson briefed the Commission on this matter.

Decision: The Commission accepted the Lobbyist Filing Agreement.

ITEM 68: C-5-23 and C-3-24

Discussion: Ms. Thompson briefed the Commission on these matters.

Decision: The Commission authorized a subpoena to be issued.

ITEM 69: A-2-24

Discussion: Ms. Thompson briefed the Commission on this matter.

Decision: A complaint will be issued in this matter. (C-7-24)

ITEM 70: A-27-24

Discussion: Ms. Thompson briefed the Commission on this matter

Decision: A complaint will be issued in this matter. (C-8-24)

ITEM 71: A-46-24

Discussion: Ms. Thompson briefed the Commission on these matters.

Decision: The Commission authorized complaints in these matters.

ITEM 72: A-47-24

Discussion: Ms. Thompson briefed the Commission on these matters.

Decision: The Commission authorized complaints in these matters.

ITEM 73: C-1-24

Discussion: Ms. Thompson briefed the Commission on this matter.

Decision: The Commission accepted the late filing as a cure in this matter.

ITEM 74: C-5-24

Discussion: Ms. Thompson briefed the Commission on this matter.

Decision: The Commission accepted the late file as a cure in this matter.

(Ms. Thompson, Ms. Allgair, Ms. Watson, Mr. Garrett and Ms. Pizzi participated in the briefings to the Commission, but did not participate in the decisions regarding Items 48 through 74.)

The meeting was adjourned at 11:56 a.m.