

In the Matter of
Robert Meffley
Respondent

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Before the
State Ethics Commission
Complaint No. C-2-26

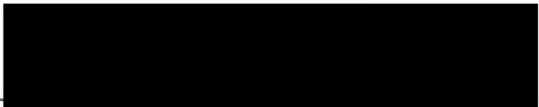
ORDER

Having considered the Stipulation of Settlement Agreement entered into between the Respondent, Robert Meffley, and Katherine P. Thompson, Staff Counsel to the State Ethics Commission, on September 17, 2026, the State Ethics Commission hereby determines that the matter complained of herein has been settled by the Respondent's execution of the Stipulation of Settlement Agreement, attached hereto and made part hereof.

ORDERED, that the Respondent is reprimanded, and that this Order and the Stipulation of Settlement Agreement are public documents.

STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

Date: September 17, 2026

By: 
Craig D. Roswell, Chair

RECEIVED

In the Matter of:

Before the State Ethics Commission SEP 14 2026

ROBERT MEFFLEY

Complaint No. C-2-26 STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

Respondent

STIPULATION OF SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

1 This Stipulation of Settlement Agreement (hereinafter "Agreement") was made on the day of September, 2026, between Robert Meffley, Respondent, and Katherine P. Thompson, Staff Counsel to the State Ethics Commission ("Staff Counsel").

STIPULATIONS

1. The State Ethics Commission ("the Commission") is an executive agency of the State of Maryland established for the purpose of enforcing the Maryland Public Ethics Law (General Provisions Article, Title 5, Annotated Code of Maryland, (hereinafter the "Ethics Law")).
2. Robert Meffley (the "Respondent") was, at all times relevant to this matter, a member of the Upper Shore Regional Council, an executive unit of the State of Maryland, and a public official subject to the conflict of interest provisions of the Ethics Law.
3. On April 13, 2026, the Commission received correspondence from an individual ("the Complainant") requesting that a complaint be issued against the Respondent for multiple violations of the provisions of the Ethics Law. The Commission met on June 4, 2026, and authorized the issuance of the complaint. Staff Counsel was directed to perform a preliminary investigation into the allegations.
4. On June 15, 2026, a copy of the foregoing Complaint issued in proceeding C-2-26 was forwarded by both regular mail and electronic mail to the Respondent.
5. During Staff Counsel's investigation and review of documents, it was determined that the Respondent had a financial interest in a business that was a subcontractor on a contract with Bay Country Associates, who had a contract with the Cecil County Farm Museum ("CCFM"), the recipient of funds awarded by the Upper Shore Regional Council.
6. Section 5-502(b)(1)(i) of the Ethics Law prohibits a State official from holding a financial interest in an entity that is subject to the authority of that official or of the government unit with which the official is affiliated. Section 5-502(b)(1)(ii) of the Ethics Law prohibits a State official from holding a financial interest in an entity that negotiates or enters into a contract with the official's governmental unit or an entity that is a subcontractor on a contract with that governmental unit. "Financial

interest" is defined in § 5-101(n)(2)(i) as ownership of more than 3% of a business entity by an employee or the spouse of an employee. Through its published opinions, the Commission has defined a "matter" as "any proceeding, application submission, request for ruling or other determination, contract, claim, case or such particular matter." (Op. No. 80-17). In this matter, the Respondent's financial interest was through his personal business, which served as a subcontractor on a contract funded by the Upper Shore Regional Council through the Maryland Department of Commerce.

7. The Respondent is voluntarily entering into this Agreement to admit certain violations of the Ethics Law, to accept certain sanctions, and to resolve the matter now pending against him without a hearing before the Commission.
8. Staff Counsel's investigation further revealed that the Respondent's personal business earned no profit through its participation as a subcontractor on the CCFM project. Instead, the Respondent's business donated approximately \$9,826.00 of its own company assets to ensure the project had sufficient financial resources to reach completion, rendering the Respondent's involvement an act of charitable support to advance the project rather than an effort to derive financial profit.
9. The CCFM, the funding recipient, requested bids. It received a bid from Bathon Builders for \$462,550.00, which exceeded funds available to perform its project. The CCFM requested a bid from Bay Country Associates. That entity proposed a price, in part, based on a requested quote from the Respondent's company to ascertain the price of subcontract work (plumbing) that Bay Country Associates could not perform. Bay Country Associates consulted the Respondent who agreed to perform subcontract work at a discount as a charitable contribution. The Respondent, through his company, agreed to provide a quote that would be sufficient to complete the subcontract work without profit (\$5,000.00 worth of labor) and additionally donating kitchen supplies (bowls, sink, faucets) valued at \$4,826.00. The labor without profit (donation of \$5,000.00) plus donation of supplies (\$4,826.00) amounts to a \$9,826.00 contribution to the CCFM.
10. The Respondent has been represented throughout these proceedings by counsel, Lance M. Young, Esquire, as indicated by his signature on this Agreement.

NOW THEREFORE, in consideration of the agreed facts contained herein, and effective on the date of the Commission's acceptance of the terms of this Agreement, Robert Meffley, Respondent, and Katherine P. Thompson, Staff Counsel, agree as follows:

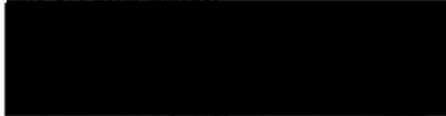
- A. The Respondent stipulates that his financial interest in a personal business, which was a subcontractor on a contract funded by his State governmental unit, was in violation of the financial interest provisions in § 5-502(b)(1) of the Ethics Law.
- B. The Respondent understands that violations of the conflict of interest provisions of the Ethics Law may result in civil fines pursuant to § 5-902 of

the Ethics Law. The Respondent further agrees to pay, in lieu of potential fines, the sum of TWO HUNDRED FIFTY and no/100 DOLLARS (\$250.00) for the above admitted violations of the Ethics Law. That said sum will be paid by check or money order made payable to the "State of Maryland" in care of the Commission on or before September 11, 2026. The fee shall be distributed to the Fair Campaign Financing Fund established under § 15-103 of the Fair Campaign Finance Article. If the fee is not paid, it is agreed that the matter will be transferred to the Maryland State Central Collection Unit for the purpose of collecting the monies owed.

- C. This Agreement will serve as a reprimand to the Respondent for the above admitted violations of the Ethics Law effective the date of the Commission's acceptance of this Agreement.
- D. The Respondent waives any formal proceedings and hearing in this matter if the Commission accepts this Agreement and agrees that acceptance of this Agreement by the Commission constitutes a final action and finding of violation by the Commission.
- E. The Respondent further agrees that this Agreement is not subject to the confidentiality provisions of the Ethics Law and will be public information unless otherwise protected.
- F. Upon execution of this Agreement by the Respondent, Staff Counsel will recommend that the Commission suspend any further proceedings against the Respondent and recommend further that the Commission issue a Final Order consistent with the terms of this Agreement. Should the Respondent fail to comply with the terms of this Agreement, and after written notice to him, the Commission reserves the right to issue a further order regarding this matter or to schedule a hearing in this matter.
- G. In the event that the Commission declines to accept this Agreement, both the Respondent and Staff Counsel are relieved of their respective obligations hereunder, and neither this Agreement, nor any admission it may contain, shall be admissible in any subsequent proceeding by the Commission.
- H. The Respondent and Staff Counsel are entering into this Agreement for the sole purpose of resolving this matter and for no other purpose.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, Robert Meffley, Respondent, and Katherine P. Thompson, Staff Counsel, State Ethics Commission, have hereunto set their hands.


Katherine P. Thompson, Staff Counsel
State Ethics Commission
45 Calvert Street, 3rd Floor
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(410) 260-7770


Robert Meffley


Lance M. Young, Esquire
MacLeod Law Group, LLP
110 N. Cross Street
Chestertown, MD 21620
Attorney for Respondent

State of Maryland
County of: Cecil, to wit:

Before me, the undersigned, a Notary Public in and for the State and County aforesaid, personally appeared Robert Meffley, who made oath in due form of law on this 1 day of September, 2026, that the matters and facts hereinabove set forth in the Stipulation of Settlement Agreement are true to the best of his knowledge, information and belief and it is his voluntary act and that he executed this Agreement for the purposes set forth herein.

[Redacted Signature]
Notary Public

My Commission Expires:

6/29/2030



State of Maryland,
County of: Anne Arundel, to wit:

Before me, the undersigned, a Notary Public in and for the State and County aforesaid, personally appeared Katherine P. Thompson, Staff Counsel to the State Ethics Commission, who made oath on this 18th day of September, 2026, in due form of law that she executed this Agreement for the purposes therein contained.

[Redacted Signature]
Notary Public

My Commission Expires:

June 20, 2029

(Notary Seal)



Accepted by the Commission

[Redacted Signature]
Craig D. Roswell, Chair
for the Commission

Date: Sept. 17, 2026