



# Atlanta Ethics

## Integrity Matters

Volume 10, Issue 1 Summer 2016

### BOARD OF ETHICS

#### UPCOMING MEETINGS:

- ◆ July 21, 2016
- ◆ September 15, 2016
- ◆ October 20, 2016
- ◆ November 17, 2016

**Note:** All regular meetings of the Board of Ethics are held at 6pm EST in City Council Committee Room 1. The public is invited to attend all board meetings.

### ETHICS Q&A

*My department has a standing meeting with a city vendor every month and the vendor usually comes to our office...*

**Q1:** Can we accept the vendor's offer to provide sandwiches to our team during a working lunch?

**Q2:** Can I accept an invitation from the vendor to attend a breakfast briefing during a conference I am attending?

**Q3:** Can my team and I attend a free screening of a new movie offered by the vendor after the vendor completes a technical demonstration to our team?

### E-LEARNING COURSE LAUNCHES

A vision many years in the making finally came to fruition in the fall of 2015 as the Ethics Office launched its new e-learning course citywide. The success of the project was due to the efforts of the city departments who partnered with the Ethics team to make the vision become a reality.

So where did this vision start? The inaugural Ethics Officer, the late Ginny Looney, saw a critical need for a web based ethics course to reach employees citywide. With a small budget and limited resources, she knew this would be no easy feat.

However, with the support of the Department of Watershed Management and the Department of Atlanta Information Management, the project was completed in the Fall of 2015. The course received the robust support of Mayor Kasim Reed through his 2014 Executive Order which mandates ethics training for all city employees.

The course has been well received by the City and approximately 5,000 employees have taken the class. Many city employees found the videos and ethical scenarios engaging and entertaining, and the course tested and challenged their knowledge of key ethics rules. Ultimately, the continued success of the e-learning course will depend on the commitment of city departments.

#### FACT

The actors featured in the Ethics E-Learning course videos are current and former City of Atlanta employees.



VISIT [WWW.ATLANTAETHICS.ORG/NEWSLETTER](http://WWW.ATLANTAETHICS.ORG/NEWSLETTER)  
FOR THE ANSWERS TO THIS ISSUE'S ETHICS Q&A

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### A LESSON ON ETHICS

*City Business or Personal Time?*

Mary is a city employee who works at different locations in the City and has been assigned a city vehicle. Her co-workers have noticed that Mary routinely disappears on Tuesdays for three to four hours during her lunch break only to return to work with a different hair style. Mary's supervisor has failed to raise the issue with her.

#### FICTION

City vehicles assigned to employees for daily use can be used to run personal errands during official city hours.

One Tuesday, a citizen observes Mary at a local salon getting her hair done in the middle of the day and she is wearing her city uniform and identification. The citizen is suspicious so she takes cell phone pictures of Mary and her city vehicle number and sends the photos to the Ethics Office because she believes her behavior may be unethical. An investigation takes place and Mary now faces disciplinary action from her department and potential investigation by the Ethics Office. *(Names used above are fictional)*

**MORAL OF THE STORY:** You never know who is watching you while you are on city time. Always remember that the public is interested in how the City is spending its tax dollars.

### SUMMER ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### 2016 TRANSPARENT DIAMOND AWARDS

The Board of Ethics and the Ethics Office held the 10th annual **Transparent Diamond Awards ceremony** on June 8, 2016 at City Hall. Fifteen city departments and 38 city boards were honored for exemplary compliance with the City's financial disclosure law. Visit [atlantaethics.org](http://atlantaethics.org) for more pictures, information about the financial disclosure process, and the full list of award recipients.



**Pictured left to right:** Board of Ethics members Riah Greathouse, Jessica Stern and Brent Adams with the Honorable Christopher E. Ward and the Honorable Gary E. Jackson accepting the Diamond Award on behalf of the Atlanta Municipal Court.

#### ETHICS OFFICER RESIGNS FOR NEW POST

In April, Atlanta BeltLine, Inc., announced the appointment of former City of Atlanta Ethics Officer, Nina R. Hickson, to serve as Vice President and General Counsel. Ms. Hickson served as the City's Ethics Officer from 2012 to 2016. The Board of Ethics sincerely thanks Ms. Hickson for her service to the City of Atlanta and wishes her all the best with her new position.

#### BOARD WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

The Board of Ethics welcomes two new members to the Board. **Nichola R. Hines**, appointed by the Atlanta-Fulton County League of Women Voters, replaces De'Lonn Brown. **Todd Gray** is appointed by the Atlanta Business League (ABL) and replaces former ABL appointee, Kai Williamson.

VISIT [WWW.ATLANTAETHICS.ORG](http://WWW.ATLANTAETHICS.ORG) FOR MORE ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE BOARD OF ETHICS



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