

**City of Atlanta Board of Ethics Meeting  
Minutes of May 18, 2017**

The monthly meeting of the City of Atlanta Board of Ethics was called to order by Board Vice-Chair Brent Adams at 6:09 p.m. in the City Council Committee Room 1, 55 Trinity Avenue, Atlanta, Georgia 30303. Attending the meeting were board members Todd Gray, Riah Greathouse, Nichola Hines and Jessica Stern. Board Chair Kate Wasch was absent. Staff members Jabu M. Sengova, Sherry H. Dawson, Janet R. Keene and Carlos R. Santiago also attended.

**MINUTES**

1. Ms. Stern moved to approve the minutes of the February 16, 2017 board meeting which was seconded by Nichola Hines. The Board unanimously adopted the minutes.

**ENFORCEMENT ACTION**

2. **CO-17-001. In the Matter of Kwanza Hall**

Mr. Santiago presented a probable cause report for Case Number CO-17-001 concerning City Council Member Kwanza Hall. The Ethics Office investigated a complaint which alleged that Mr. Hall violated Section 2-813 of the Atlanta Code of Ethics. The complaint alleged that Mr. Hall voted on legislative matters concerning the Atlanta Medical Center while also serving on the Atlanta Medical Center Board of Directors, that he filed false City of Atlanta Financial Disclosure Statements by failing to disclose his wife's employment with the City, and that he violated campaign finance rules. The Ethics Office determined that the complaint should be dismissed for lack of probable cause because Mr. Hall was not required to recuse himself from voting on the legislative items which arose during his term on the Atlanta Medical Center Board, his wife was not employed by the City of Atlanta during the time period referenced in the complaint, and campaign finance violations do not fall under the jurisdiction of the Board of Ethics. Following a brief discussion, Ms. Hines moved to adopt the recommendation to dismiss the complaint which was seconded by Mr. Gray and unanimously approved by the Board.

**FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE**

3. **2017 Roll of Delinquent Filers**

Mr. Santiago presented the 2017 Roll of Delinquent Filers. Ms. Stern moved to adopt the roll as presented. Ms. Hines seconded the motion which was carried by the Board.

4. **Report to Board on 2017 Filing Season**

Ms. Sengova delivered the May 2017 report to the Board on persons required to file an annual financial disclosure statement, those who complied with the filing requirements, and those who failed to file in 2017 as required by law. Ms. Sengova noted that the percentage of timely filers was 96 percent this year based on a total of 2631 timely filers; an increase over last year's 94 percent timely filing rate with 2390 timely filers. Ms. Sengova further stated that this

year's rate is comparable to 2014 of 96 percent timely filers based on 1694 required filers.

5. **Resolution for 2017 Transparent Diamond Awards.**

Ms. Stern moved to adopt the resolution for the 2017 Transparent Diamond Awards which was seconded by Mr. Adams and unanimously approved by the Board. The Board recognized the following city departments for 100% compliance with the filing requirement: Atlanta Fire Rescue Department, City Auditor's Office, City Council, Department of Corrections, Department of Finance, Department of Law, Office of the Solicitor, Public Defender's Office, and Worksource Atlanta. The Honorable Mention list included: Atlanta Information Management (AIM), Atlanta Police Department, Department of Aviation, Department of Human Resources, Department of Procurement, and Department of Watershed Management. These departments were formally recognized at a 5:00 p.m. ceremony prior to the Ethics Board meeting.

**FORMAL ADVISORY OPINION**

6. **2017-1 Appearance of Impropriety**

Ms. Sengova presented FAO 2017-1: Appearance of Impropriety, which seeks to provide guidance to city officials and employees. The opinion discusses how it may often be difficult for an official or employee to see how a given activity or action may give rise to an appearance issue even when there is no apparent conflict. Ms. Sengova presented FAO 2017-1 to provide clear guidance to avoid any improprieties. Following a brief discussion, Ms. Stern made a motion to adopt the opinion and Mr. Gray seconded the motion. The opinion was unanimously approved by the Board.

**ETHICS OFFICER'S REPORT**

7. **Work Plan**

Ms. Sengova reported on activities that support the Ethics Office Work Plan in the following areas: operations, which included the relocation of the Ethics Office, training, advice, public education and outreach, investigations and enforcement actions, and financial disclosure including the electronic disclosure system.

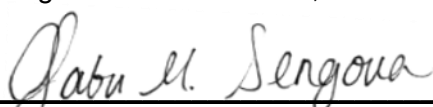
8. **FY17 Budget Report**

Ms. Sengova reported that the Ethics Office was spending as budgeted for the remainder of fiscal year 2017.

9. **FY18 Budget Update**

Ms. Sengova reported that the FY18 budget has been approved. The Ethics Office staff attended a budget briefing May 11 during which our major request concerned the e-file system.

Having no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

  
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Jabu M. Sengova, Ethics Officer  
Approved July 20, 2017.