

**City of Atlanta Governing Board of the Office of Inspector General and the Ethics Office**  
**Minutes of December 9, 2023, Board Retreat**

The 2023 winter retreat of the City of Atlanta Governing Board of the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) and the Ethics Office was held at the State Bar of Georgia, 104 Marietta Street, Atlanta, GA 30303

**Facilitator(s): 3T Consulting Group (3T) - Dr. Misha Ford, Mirah Young**

- **Board Members:** Nichola R. Hines (Chair), Rebecca F. M. Brubaker, Gerald M. Neumark, Natalie S. Lewis, Todd A. Gray (Vice-Chair)
- **Ethics Office:** Jabu Sengova (Ethics Officer), Carlos R. Santiago (Deputy Ethics Officer), Sherry Dawson, Joe Hines, Janet Keene, Ariyan Marshall, Larry Mason, Ibidapo Onabanjo, Portia Reeves, Raymond Robinson, Farrah Simms, Ladamian Boatwright
- **OIG:** Shannon Manigault (Inspector General), Bradford J. Garvey (Deputy Inspector General), Shelby J. Williams (Deputy Inspector General), Roslynn Anderson, Perrish Brown, Melanie Clark, Analise Dennis, Lizzie Dixon, Daniel Epstein, Felecia Henderson, Tony McNeil, Garret Palmer, J. Chandler Shockley, Jason Speights

**Absent Board Members:** Terri Simmons, Cecily Welch, Lisa K. Liang, Bing Wang

**OPENING REMARKS**

Ms. Hines opened the meeting, welcomed attendees, and outlined the purpose of the retreat.

**GROUND RULES/ICEBREAKER**

During the initial phase of the meeting, each participant engaged in concise 30-second introductions, highlighting their names, respective offices, and a personal point of interest. Following this, Dr. Ford took the floor to present the ground rules for the retreat, a set of guidelines that all participants acknowledged and unanimously agreed to abide by. Subsequently, Ms. Young took the lead in introducing the Icebreaker Winter 3T Bingo activity, providing a comprehensive overview of the game's rules to kickstart the engagement.

**2023 OFFICE RECAP**

*Ethics Office*

Ms. Sengova provided a comprehensive overview of the status of the Ethics Office, highlighting key achievements and addressing challenges across various domains, including operations, training, advice, public outreach, and investigations. She reported successful recruitment efforts to fill vacant positions within the office. Noteworthy accomplishments included the deployment of an ethics e-learning course, the relocation to a new office, and the update of the E-file system. One significant achievement highlighted by Ms. Sengova was the observed decline in Integrity Line report activity, showcasing a positive trend from 2022 (202 calls) to the present (146 calls). Ongoing initiatives were discussed, encompassing the Ethics Lunch and Learn Series, research on case management systems, and exploration of risk assessment programs. Ms. Sengova shared highlights of the successful 20th-anniversary event celebrating the Ethics Office's

milestone. In response to violations of the Code of Ethics, the office assessed \$13,000 in sanctions, demonstrating a commitment to upholding ethical standards. This overview presented a comprehensive understanding of the Ethics Office's accomplishments, ongoing initiatives, and challenges.

### *OIG*

Noting the statistics incorporated into regular meetings of the board, Ms. Manigault provided a qualitative overview of key OIG accomplishments and challenges in 2023. Among the office's accomplishments, Ms. Manigault identified: the collaboration with a marketing firm in creating a logo and launching a public awareness campaign; the re-engagement of the anti-corruption training program, where the office has been conducting live trainings tailored to each department; and the work of Compliance and IPro, and the public benefits of the attention such work has received. Among the challenges the office has faced, Ms. Manigault cited: issues gaining access to records, both electronic and hard copy, with delays and compromises to the integrity of investigations; a lack of understanding of the work of offices of inspector general; a lack of support for Charter amendments that would have benefitted OIG (and EO) and the extent to which the abbreviated timeline to socialize the reform measures impacted same; opposition and non-responsiveness to the office from a variety of sources; and bureaucratic hurdles, most notably delays in the procurement of a case management system.

### **BOARD FOCUS**

The Board discussed the critical need to enhance engagement with both offices. This concern was voiced by the staff present and duly acknowledged by the entire board. Ms. Hines requested information—regarding substantive needs and logistical details—to provide necessary assistance. In response to questions about what the board needed in terms of information both between and during board meetings, the board requested that both offices circulate completed reports on a designated day each month. The Board indicated that upon request from leadership, members will develop and send letters on behalf of both offices to advocate for annual budget needs and critical issues.

Ms. Hines discussed revisions to bylaws to institute subcommittees focused on the work of each office. Ms. Manigault raised the possibility of structural changes in light of the separation of the two offices, including establishing boards for each office (consistent with the City's Audit Committee) and consolidating the investigation function. Ms. Sengova indicated that there was no basis to consolidate the investigative function as the current structure supported collaboration between both offices, where necessary. The staff and board members discussed the benefits and challenges of such changes, noting that updates to the charter would be necessary and posed risks. Following a discussion of communication challenges between leadership of both offices, the group considered options to improve communication and administrative interaction with the board. Both offices agreed to hold regular monthly meetings,

supplementing the monthly investigative meetings between the Deputy Ethics Officer and Deputy of Compliance, with the heads and deputies of both offices.

### **2024 BREAKOUT ENGAGEMENT SESSION**

Ms. Young (3T) announced the breakout sessions of OIG and EO into two rooms for deliberations on the goals and strategy for 2024. Each office was equipped with a whiteboard to outline critical goals in collaboration with board members.

### **RETREAT CLOSE**

Closing remarks were offered by Mr. Gray.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

An executive session was held (with the board and Ms. Manigault) to discuss potential litigation.

### **ACTION ITEMS/ PLANNING NEXT STEPS**

- All present board members agreed to develop support letters or in person support for advocacy of both offices' needs and critical issues, including but not limited to budget needs.
- All board members will receive closed reports, if any, generated by each office at an appointed time each month.
- Both offices will hold regular monthly meetings for select members of their executive teams.

Having no further business, the retreat adjourned at 4:22 p.m.

### **Governing Board of the Office of the Inspector General and the Ethics Office**

EXECUTIVE SESSION AFFIDAVIT

CITY OF ATLANTA GOVERNING BOARD OF THE OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL AND THE ETHICS OFFICE

AFFIDAVIT OF CHAIRPERSON NICHOLA HINES

Nichola Hines, Chairperson of the Governing Board of the Office of the Inspector General and the Ethics Office, states under oath that the following is true and accurate to the best of her knowledge and belief:

1.

The City of Atlanta Governing Board of the Office of the Inspector General and the Ethics Office met in a duly advertised retreat on December 9, 2023.

2.

During such retreat, the Board voted to go into executive session.

3.

The executive session was called to order at 4:10 p.m.

4.

The subject matter of the executive session portion of the retreat was devoted to the following matter(s) within the exceptions provided in the open meetings law:

legal matters

This 9<sup>th</sup> day of December 2023.

*Nichola Hines*

Chairperson, City of Atlanta Governing Board of the Office of the Inspector General and the Ethics Office



NOTARY PUBLIC  
DeKalb County, Georgia  
My Commission Expires  
April 30, 2024

Subscribed before me this 9<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2023

*Sherry Halsey Dawson*, Notary Public

My commission expires: April 30, 2024