

City of Atlanta Board of Ethics Meeting Minutes of March 16, 2006

Meeting called to order by Chair John Marshall at 6:06 pm. Board members Susan Housen, Jacquee Minor, and Kenyatta Mitchell were present for a quorum, and Leah Janus joined the meeting after the discussion on financial disclosure. Also present was Ginny Looney, the ethics officer.

1. Kenyatta Mitchell made a motion to approve minutes; second by Susan Housen. Minutes were approved.

2. In the update on financial disclosure filings, Ginny Looney informed the board of the number of remaining non-filers by category. The percentage of late filers had increased since the February report, up from 6 percent to 10 percent. The percentage of non-filers has decreased from 15 percent to 11 percent. The Ethics Office engaged extra help to send out non-compliance letters last week.

Ms. Looney suggested, and the Board agreed, that her office would publish a "Roll of Dishonor" as a last resort for those who did not comply. The Chair then proposed, and a motion was offered by Jacquee Minor, that the list be prepared for publication for those who had not responded within two (2) weeks, and presented at next month's Board meeting. It was further proposed that all board chairs and supervisors be informed of board members and employees who had not filed, and be advised of the potential penalties. The motion was seconded by Ms. Housen, and the Board approved.

Ms. Looney then led a discussion regarding amending the City Code for stronger enforcement authority. She offered several proposals to give the Ethics Board power to enforce its rulings. Ms. Mitchell moved to approve the recommendations, Ms. Housen made a second, and the recommendations were approved.

Ms. Looney proposed sending a letter to the Law Department seeking help with drafting the amendments. The Chair asked that the letter be prepared before the Board's meeting with the Mayor. Ms. Looney asked Board members to submit any suggestions they might have for amending the code.

3. In a discussion of the ethics hotline, the Integrity Line, and Integrity Matters Campaign, Ms. Looney advised the Board there had been 23 ethics complaints in the first two years of her office's operations. Seven of the complaints were still pending. She and the City Auditor's office are interviewing potential candidates for the position of investigator, which they hope to have in place when the Integrity Line is announced at the

April 17th press conference. Some suggestions for promoting the Integrity Line included notices in City water bills, Public Service Announcements, posters at MARTA, and the Atlanta Airport. The Board reviewed the campaign materials. Chair Marshall suggested that they include a list of what the Integrity Line is *Not*, and that callers are routed to appropriate departments for assistance.

4. The Board briefly discussed the agenda for meeting with the Mayor, to include instilling a “Culture of Ethics,” requesting the Mayor to voice the PSAs for the Integrity Line, and enforcement of financial disclosure requirements.
5. With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 6:55 p.m.