

City of Atlanta Board of Ethics Meeting Minutes of March 20, 2008

The monthly meeting of the City of Atlanta Board of Ethics was called to order by Chair John Lewis Jr. at 6:16 p.m. in City Council Committee Room 2, 55 Trinity Avenue, Atlanta, Georgia 30303. Attending the meeting were board members Cathy Daniels, MaryAnne Gaunt, and Jacquee Minor. Also present were staff members Ginny Looney and Nasceas Timms. Board member Susan Housen was absent.

MINUTES

1. The Board approved the minutes of the February 21, 2008 meeting on a motion by Ms. Daniels and a second by Ms. Gaunt.

AWARDS CEREMONY

2. The Board held the Financial Disclosure Awards Ceremony to honor departments with the best filing records. Ms. Daniels moved for the adoption of a resolution on the Transparent Diamond Award recognizing the following recipients: Department of Corrections, Department of Law, Department of Parks, Recreation & Cultural Affairs, Department of Watershed Management, Executive Offices, and Municipal Court. Ms. Gaunt seconded the motion, which the Board adopted unanimously.

FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE

3. Ms. Looney delivered the annual report to the Board on persons required to file an annual financial disclosure statement, those who complied with the filing requirements, those who filed late, and those who failed to file in 2008 as required by law. Ms. Looney noted that ninety-nine percent of city officials and employees have filed their 2008 City Financial Disclosure Statement.
4. The Board next considered the Roll of Delinquent Filers that lists 10 persons who have not filed a 2008 City Financial Disclosure Statement and one late filer who filed after the end of the March 3 grace period without reasonable cause. Concerning the two nonfilers who are current employees, Ms. Daniel made a motion that the Board issue a letter of reprimand and that the letter go into the employees' personnel file and be taken into consideration during their performance review. Ms. Gaunt seconded the motion, which the Board adopted unanimously.
5. Regarding seven former city employees who have not filed, Ms. Looney recommended that the nonfiling employees be named to the Roll of Delinquent Filers, they be required to pay a fine when they do file, and the Board send a letter of reprimand to their former department and the Department of Human Resources recommending that they be considered ineligible for rehiring for one year and must comply with the financial disclosure law before being considered for another job. Ms. Gaunt moved to adopt the recommendations for the seven former employees, Ms. Daniels seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.
6. For the one board member who did not file, Ms. Gaunt moved that he be named to the Roll of Delinquent Filers, the Board impose no further financial penalties, and the Board issue a letter of reprimand that the board is disappointed and the City should consider him ineligible for future service on a city board. Ms. Daniel seconded the motion, all members voted in favor, and the motion carried.

7. With respect to the late filer, Ms. Minor moved that the current board member be issued a letter of reprimand for being a delinquent filer and that the ethics officer send copies of the letter to the board chair and the appointing authority. Ms. Gaunt seconded the motion, and the the Board adopted it unanimously.

FORMAL ADVISORY OPINIONS

8. Ms. Daniels moved to adopt proposed Formal Advisory Opinion 2008-3 on gifts of travel from prohibited sources to the City. Ms. Gaunt seconded the motion, which the Board adopted unanimously. The opinion concludes: "The City may accept gifts of travel from prohibited sources when the gift is donated to the City or one of its agencies, the travel is done in an official capacity on official city business, the travel is approved in advance, the expenses are reasonable, the agency receiving the gift discloses it on an online Gift to the City Report, and officials and employees disclose any travel financed under the travel gift program on an online Expense Reimbursement Report."
9. Ms. Gaunt moved to adopt, with a second by Ms. Minor, Formal Advisory Opinion 2008-4 on use of city property for election campaigns for city pension boards. The opinion states: "City employees may not use city property to advocate the candidacy of any individual to serve on the city's three pension boards. Under the exception for official city business, the City of Atlanta, its agencies, and employees may use city property to conduct the elections of the pension board members under policies and procedures that give all candidates equal access to the property." The Board adopted the opinion unanimously.

REQUEST FOR OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

10. Ms. Daniels moved to approve a request for outside employment from Fire Chief Kelvin Cochran to conduct leadership training to fire departments in other cities. The Board agreed that he should have the ability to fulfill the commitments that were made prior to his employment by the City. Ms. Minor seconded the motion, which the Board approved unanimously.

RECOGNITION OF BOARD MEMBER'S SERVICE

11. The Board adopted a resolution honoring Jacquee Minor for her board service the past three years as a representative of the Atlanta Business League.

Having no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.



Ginny Looney, Ethics Officer
Approved May 15, 2008