

**City of Atlanta Board of Ethics Meeting
Minutes of January 17, 2019**

The monthly meeting of the City of Atlanta Board of Ethics was called to order by Board Chair Kate Wasch at 6:01 p.m. in Committee Room 1, 55 Trinity Avenue, Atlanta, Georgia 30303. Attending the meeting were board members Todd Gray, Nichola Hines, Gerry Neumark and Wesley Tharpe. Ethics Officer Jabu M. Sengova and staff members Sherry H. Dawson, Janet Keene, Ibidapo Onabanjo, Carlos R. Santiago and Contract Investigator Larry Mason also attended. Board Vice Chair Jessica Stern was absent.

MINUTES

1. Ms. Hines moved to approve the minutes of the November 15, 2018 board meeting. The motion was seconded by Dr. Neumark and unanimously approved by the Board.
2. Dr. Neumark moved to approve the minutes of the December 15, 2018 board retreat. The motion was seconded by Mr. Tharpe and unanimously approved by the Board.

FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE

3. **Motion to Vacate – FD-18-014: In the Matter of Leanne Patterson**
Mr. Santiago recommended that the Board vacate the Final Order in this case. Mr. Santiago stated that on January 2, 2019, after the Final Order of the Board was issued, the Respondent brought to the attention of the Ethics Office that her last month of service on the Atlanta Planning Advisory Board was December 2016. Therefore, the Respondent was inadvertently included on the list provided to the Ethics Office of Board Members who served in 2017 and should not have been required to file the 2018 Financial Disclosure Statement. Mr. Tharpe made a motion to adopt Mr. Santiago's recommendation to vacate the Final Order and Public Reprimand in this case which was seconded by Ms. Hines. The Board unanimously approved the motion.
4. **Motion to Vacate – FD-18-025: In the Matter of Savannah Benton**
Mr. Santiago recommended that the Board vacate the Final Order in this case. Mr. Santiago stated that on November 26, 2018, after the Final Order of the Board was issued, it came to the attention of the Ethics Office that the Respondent had been out of the country during the 2018 filing period. Documents provided to the Ethics Office showed that the Respondent left city service in October 2017 and was in Spain from October 2017 until July 2018. Upon receiving the Final Order of the Board and earlier notices, the Respondent immediately contacted the Ethics Office and filed her 2018 Statement. Dr. Neumark made a motion to adopt Mr. Santiago's recommendation to vacate the Final Order and Public Reprimand in this case which was seconded by Ms. Hines. The Board unanimously approved the motion.

FORMAL ADVISORY OPINION

5. FAO 2019-1 Spouses and Domestic Partners of City Officials and Employees Doing Business with the City

Ms. Onabanjo presented FAO 2019-1 which seeks to provide guidance to city officials and employees who have a spouse or domestic partner doing or seeking to do business with the City. Ms. Onabanjo stated that the opinion recognizes it may be difficult for an official or employee to see that a conflict of interest or appearance of impropriety exists when that conflict or appearance involves a spouse or domestic partner. Ms. Onabanjo presented this opinion on behalf of the Ethics Office to provide clear guidance to avoid such situations and, in the event such a situation is unavoidable, the opinion provides procedures for disclosure and recusal. Following a brief discussion, Ms. Hines made a motion to adopt the opinion and Mr. Tharpe seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

ETHICS OFFICER'S REPORT

6. 2018 Annual Ethics Report

Mr. Santiago presented the 2018 Ethics Office Annual Report. He reported on the highlights in the following areas: Advice, Financial Disclosure, Investigations and Enforcement, Operations, Public Education and Outreach, Training, and the Integrity Line. Mr. Santiago stated that the Report on Advice includes trends for the past five years. The top two subjects for advice were Gifts and Gratuities and Conflicts of Interest.

7. Status Report on Activities Performed Under the Work Plan

Ms. Sengova reported on activities that support the Ethics Office Work Plan in the following areas: operations, training, advice, public education and outreach, investigation and enforcement actions, and financial disclosure.

8. FY19 Budget Report

Ms. Sengova reported that the Ethics Office was spending as budgeted for fiscal year 2019.

9. 2019 Board Meeting Schedule

Ms. Sengova reviewed the planned dates for the 2019 Ethics Board Meetings and Board Retreats.

Having no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:32 p.m.

Jabu M. Sengova, Ethics Officer
Approved February 21, 2019