

Ethics Board

Minutes

Minutes of the Ethics Board held on June 8, 1999.

Meeting called to order by Chairman Lee Sisson at 11:02 AM. Present were members Stan Smith and Mike Neuens. Also present were Secretary Bill Bowers and Tom Horton.

The board congratulated Smith on his reappointment.

Minutes

Motion by Smith to approve the minutes of the March 3, 1999 meeting. Seconded by Neuens and carried unanimously.

Alternate Board Member Selection

The Board reviewed the applicants data sheets and discussed each candidate.

Motion by Smith to appoint Tom Horton as the Alternate Ethics Board Member with an expiration date of April 29, 2002. Seconded by Neuens and carried unanimously.

Bowers will send Horton a copy of the Ethics Code.

Complaint Review

No complaints had been received by any Board Member.

Open Meetings/Open Records Laws

Bowers reviewed the Open Meetings and Open Records Laws with the Board.

Perks Discussion (Banquets/Outings)

Sisson reviewed his communication of October 21, 1997.

Items can be divided into four (4) areas: Legal, Political, Administrative, and Ethical. When an issue comes to the Board they first decide if it is an Ethical concern. If not it is referred to the proper authority.

Two (2) issues caused this communication. First of all the City Clerk received an anonymous donation for legal fees that he incurred while fighting Election Complaints.

Secondly an Alderman received a door prize from attending a Time Warner event. Both came to the Ethics Board for opinions. Because of this the Board made the following decisions:

- 1) Contributions where the Donor was identified. These must be returned to avoid the appearance of impropriety. This is what the Alderman did.
- 2) Contributions where the Donor was unknown. The Clerk was allowed to keep the donation because the donor was not known and could not expect anything in return.
- 3) Raffles. These are usually done by Churches or Schools and the Board felt that these are not a concern.
- 4) Gaming/Lottery. Like raffles, these are not a concern of the Board.
- 5) Drawing or Door Prizes. This is what happened with Time Warner. These need to be addressed by the Board as they occur depending on the value of the prize and the relationship of the person who won it and the person/organization who provided the prize.
- 6) Free Banquets, Outings, etc. provided by Lobbying Organizations. This is the last item to be reviewed. All agreed that the timing may appear to be suspect but that this process was started in 1997.

All agreed that this fit into the Ethical Category and should be addressed by the Board. State law allows this if accepted and provided for the purpose of gathering data and information to be used in making decisions. The Board agreed that, although completely legal and not in violation of the City Ethics Code, there was an appearance of impropriety. The consensus was that the City should pay all expenses for these fact finding missions. Bowers stated that he had conversations with several employees who make trips like this during their normal course of business. For example, when the new Tumbleweeds Restaurant wanted to come to town, the Director of Planning and Community Development and members of his staff went to see an existing site in another city to gather information so he could make a recommendation to the Plan Commission. He sometimes does this with the potential businesses knowledge and sometimes without it. This way he can be sure he gets an accurate idea of how they do business.

The Board decided that a modification to the Code was necessary. Neuens will provide Bowers with ideas he used while the Police Chief since the department members are not allowed to accept anything. Bowers will then draft language to be discussed at the next meeting.

Police Lecture at the Milwaukee Police Department (MPD)

Neuens received a communication from Police Chief Chuck Schroeder regarding training at MPD. While Neuens was Chief Schroeder (and others) started a company to provide training that was not available elsewhere. In 1998 Neuens asked permission to send officers to this training which was sponsored by WCTC. This is the same program and the current Chief would like to send officers to this again and it is being sponsored by MPD.

Motion by Neuens that the Chief of Police be authorized to send officers to this, and any future, training until similar training is available through another source and as long as there is a sponsoring organization. Seconded by Smith and carried unanimously.

The next meeting will be on September 14, 1999 at 11 AM.

Motion to adjourn by Neuens at 12:00. Seconded by Smith and carried unanimously.

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