

MINUTES
COMMISSION MEETING
OPEN SESSION

January 15, 2014

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Phillip Florence, Jr., at 9:40 a.m. Other members present were Vice Chair E. Kay Biermann Brohl, Jonathan H. Burnett, Dr. Richard H. Fitzgerald, and G. Carlton Manley.

The news media was duly notified.

Staff present:

Herbert R. Hayden, Jr., Executive Director
Cathy L. Hazelwood, Deputy Director/General Counsel
Daniel F. Choate, Investigator
Jimmy Bagnall, Investigator
Ami Franklin, Assistant Director, Administration
Kristin M. Smith, Administrative Coordinator

Chairman Florence welcomed everyone and reminded the Commissioners to use their microphones when speaking.

MINUTES

Motion was made by Mr. Burnett, seconded by Vice Chair Brohl, to accept the Minutes as presented. Chairman Florence asked for any discussion or opposition. There being none, the motion carried with no opposition to approve the Open and Executive Session Minutes from the November 20, 2013 Commission meeting.

OFFICE OPERATIONS

Budget 2013/2014

Mr. Hayden directed everyone to the green folder for information on the budget for the fiscal year July 1, 2013, through January 14, 2014, noting that everything was in line and nothing different than what is normally presented. Mr. Hayden also noted that staff had their first meeting concerning the budget with the House Ways & Means Subcommittee, highlighting discussions on a proposed increase in personnel and budget if expansion of responsibilities is passed by the legislature; and collection of the \$2.5 million listed on the Debtors List. Discussions ensued. The Budget report was approved as presented.

Compliance Reports

Mr. Hayden presented for information only the Compliance reports for November and December, 2013. Mr. Hayden noted that there was an increase in lobbying registrations over last year. Mr. Burnett asked about the lobbying activity between the first and second year of the legislative sessions. Mr. Hayden and Ms. Hazelwood responded. There being no further discussions, the Compliance reports were approved as presented.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. Hayden noted that the IRS made a change in the mileage rate for travel. It has been reduced from 56.5 cents per mile to 56 cents per mile during 2014.

Mr. Hayden also reminded everyone to file their annual 2014 Statement of Economic Interests reports before the new deadline of March 30, 2014.

Legislation

Mr. Hayden presented the following legislation affecting the State Ethics Commission: S.883, H.3945, H.4373, H4415, and S.405. Dr. Fitzgerald asked for clarification if the Commission is given the task of investigating the House and Senate on probable cause issues. Mr. Hayden responded. Considerable discussion ensued concerning new appointments/reappointments for the Ethics Commission; incentive or development of a better Debtors List (\$2.5 million currently collectable); proposing legislation that candidates certify they don't owe the state any money; and use of the Department of Revenue's GEAR program.

Chairman Florence asked to take a break at this time. There was no opposition.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. Hayden gave an update on the quotes being submitted from contractors for the new security system layout for the front offices at the State Ethics Commission.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made by Mr. Burnett, seconded by Dr. Fitzgerald, to go into Executive Session. The motion carried.

RETURN FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

Upon return from Executive Session, a motion was made by Mr. Manley, seconded by Mr. Burnett, to adopt and ratify actions taken in Executive Session. The motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Florence asked for further discussions. There being none, a motion was made by Mr. Burnett, seconded by Vice Chair Brohl, to adjourn. The motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen A. Wiggins
Administrative Specialist