

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY OFFICE OF ETHICS AND ACCOUNTABILITY
BOARD OF ETHICS**

Board Meeting Minutes

January 12, 2018

Present: Covette Rooney, Board Chair (teleconference)
Sharon Theodore-Lewis, Board Member (teleconference)
Cassandra Burckhalter, Board Member (teleconference)
Curtis Eugene, Board Member (teleconference)

Robin Barnes-Shell, Esq., Executive Director
LaShanda Whaley, Legal Counsel (teleconference)
Roslyn Walker, Compliance Officer

Next meeting: Friday, February 09, 2018 at 5:00 pm
9201 Basil Court, Suite 155
Largo, Maryland 20774

OPEN SESSION

I. OPENING OF MEETING

The Board of Ethics Chair, Covette Rooney, opened the meeting at approximately 5:03 pm and welcomed all in attendance. There was a quorum present with three (4) Board Members. The meeting was held at the Office of Ethics and Accountability (OEA) located at 9201 Basil Court, Suite 155, Largo, Maryland.

At 5:06 pm a motion was made by Board Member Cassandra Buckhalter to nominate Covette Rooney for Board Chair. Sharon Theodore Lewis seconded the motion and the Board elected (4:0) Covette Rooney as chair. Covette Rooney accepted the nomination.

The Board approved the following minutes:

5/12/17 – Approved with changes (4:0)

11/3/17 – Approved (3:0); Board Member Curtis Eugene abstained as he was not in attendance at the meeting

11/17/17 – Approved (3:0); Board Member Covette Rooney abstained as she was not in attendance at the meeting

12/21/17 – Approved with changes (4:0)

Robin Barnes-Shell advised that the Office of Ethics and Accountability (OEA) had its first budget meeting with the Office of Management and Budget. Additionally, OEA is requesting an additional Administrative Aide and a Paralegal, as well as funding for outreach and education for ethics and statutorily-mandated audit. The Board was advised that the new mandatory ethics training compliance period will commence in February with a updated training module and new assessment questions. The Board was provided ethics advice tables for November and December, which summarized the informal ethics advice provided by the Office of Ethics and Accountability.

At 5:20 pm a caller entered the meeting without announcing themselves. The meeting continued after several attempts to recognize the participant.

II. Reading of Written Statement for Closing Meeting Under the Open Meeting Act

At 5:31 pm, Board Chair Covette Rooney moved and Board Member Cassandra Burckhalter seconded to close the open portion of the meeting to comply with a specific constitutional, statutory or judicially imposed requirement that prevents public disclosures about a particular proceeding or matter and to consult with legal counsel. The statement was read by the Board Chair Covette Rooney. The motion was approved by a vote of 4-0. The reason for closing the meeting, and the topics discussed with legal counsel involved a request for a Formal Advisory Opinion and investigation of alleged ethics violation by an employee, in accordance with the State Government Article, §10-508(a). Those in attendance were as follows:

Covette Rooney, Board Chair (teleconference)

Sharon Theodore-Lewis, Board Member (teleconference)

Cassandra Burckhalter, Board Member (teleconference)

Curtis Eugene, Board Member (teleconference)

Robin Barnes-Shell, Esq., Executive Director

LaShanda Whaley, Legal Counsel (teleconference)

Roslyn Walker, Compliance Officer

CLOSED SESSION

Board Referral 18-0020e

The Board was provided an Executive Summary on the investigation of alleged solicitation of bribes by a County employee. The Board voted 4-0 that there are insufficient facts upon which to base a determination and dismissed the complaint.

Board Referral 18-0200e

The Board was notified of an investigation of alleged misuse of County resources by a County employee.

Board Referral 17-0213e

The Board was updated on the pending matter involving a conflict of interest by a County official.

Ethics Advice 18-0049 and 18-0132

The Board was updated on the denial of secondary employment requests by agency that is pending an appeal to the Board.

At the conclusion of all business, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting. The motion was approved 4-0. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 5:43 pm.