



MONTGOMERY COUNTY ETHICS COMMISSION

Public Meeting of February 26, 2020

Minutes

IN ATTENDANCE:

Commissioners: Rahul Goel, Chair
Susan Beard, Vice-Chair (By Phone)
Kenita Barrow
Bruce Romer
Steven Rosen

Staff Members: Robert W. Cobb, Chief Counsel
Erin Chu, Program Manager

Item 1. The meeting was called to order at 7:20 p.m.

Item 2. The Commission approved the minutes from the January 22, 2020, meeting as presented.

Item 3. Mr. Cobb reviewed the decision reflected in the County Executive's proposed FY21 Budget to remove the open position/FTE from the Commission's budget and add it to a new shared services organization instead.

Item 4. Mr. Cobb reviewed a State House Bill (1544) that would confer responsibility on the County's Ethics Commission for management and enforcement of prohibitions and disclosure requirements associated with political contributions from persons with land use applications. Mr. Cobb provided to the Commission his email comments that had been provided to County legislative liaisons suggesting that the proposed law was not well adapted to practices in Montgomery County.

Item 5. Pursuant to GP Art. 3-305, at 7:50 p.m. the Commission voted unanimously to close the meeting to the public to discuss legal advice and confidential matters.

- a. The Commission considered matters concerning an allegation under the ethics law.
- b. The Commission considered an informal anonymous complaint.
- c. The Commission considered a formal complaint.
- d. The Commission considered an outside employment request implicating a regulatory restriction.
- e. The Commission considered an outside employment request implicating regulatory and statutory questions.

- f. Mr. Cobb briefed the Commission on some questions that Mr. Cobb had advised employees on. The Commission opined on the meaning of a statutory provision. In particular, the Commission advised that a gift reported to the Commission and returned in accordance with 19A-16(f) does not have to be disclosed on a financial disclosure report.
- g. The Commission considered and approved outside employment requests.

The meeting reopened at 9:10.

Item 8. The Commission set its next meeting for March 25, 2020.

The Public Meeting adjourned at 9:15.

Respectfully Submitted,

Robert W. Cobb
Chief Counsel