

Seattle Ethics and Elections Commission Regular Meeting

May 4, 2011

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Seattle Ethics and Elections Commission convened on May 4, 2011 in Room 4080 of the Seattle Municipal Tower, 700 Fifth Avenue. Commission Chair Bob Mahon called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m. Vice-Chair Bill Sherman, and Commissioners Rich Cohan, David Mendoza and Amit Ranade were present. Commissioners Tarik Burney and Lynne Iglitzin were absent. Executive Director Wayne Barnett and staff members Anthony Adams, Kate Flack, Polly Grow and Mardie Holden were present, as was Assistant City Attorney Jeff Slayton.

1) Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Action Items

2) In re Kimberlee Archie

On April 27, 2011 the Executive Director charged Kimberlee Archie with an Ethics Code violation in connection with a trip she made to North Carolina shortly before ending her service to the City. The Executive Director and Ms. Archie submitted an agreed-to statement of facts, and both presented arguments to the Commission. Commissioner Ranade moved that Ms. Archie's actions did not violate the Ethics Code, and the Vice-Chair seconded. The Seattle Ethics and Elections Commission voted unanimously that Ms. Archie had not violated the Ethics Code.

3) Approval of minutes of April 6, 2011

The Chair suggested changes to the wording of two sentences. The Vice-Chair made a motion to approve the minutes as amended, which Commissioner Cohan seconded. The minutes were unanimously approved as amended.

4) Request for financial interest reporting modification

Councilmember Bagshaw requested an exemption from the requirement that her financial disclosure form list the customers of a small New Hampshire manufacturing firm in which her husband was a director in 2010. The firm does no business with Seattle or Washington State.

Commissioner Ranade moved to approve this modification, and the Vice-Chair seconded. The request was unanimously approved.

5) Advisory Opinion 11-01E (Political Committee giveaways)

This opinion was revised in response to questions raised by commissioners at the April meeting about whether or not t-shirts could qualify for the exemption for communications with members. Commissioner Ranade made a motion to adopt the advisory opinion, and Commissioner Cohan seconded. The motion to adopt advisory opinion 11-01E was approved unanimously.

6) Advisory Opinion 11-02E (Social Media)

The Executive Director reported that he had circulated the draft opinion to members of the community and to elected officials, and that the revised opinion reflected the input he had collected. The Vice-Chair moved to adopt advisory opinion 11-02E, and Commissioner Ranade seconded. Advisory Opinion 11-02E was unanimously approved.

Discussion Items

7) Interlocal agreement with Seattle Public Schools

The Executive Director described the agreement with the Seattle Public Schools, and asked Commissioners whether they had any comments before the agreement went before the City Council. Commissioner Ranade asked whether \$125,000 would be enough for the staff to take on this new body of work. The Director said that it would be sufficient for the Commission to add another full-time employee, and that if that proved either too much or too little the parties could renegotiate the contract. The Commissioners voiced their support for the agreement.

8) Whistleblower Protection Code review

The Whistleblower Protection Code has not been updated since the early 1990s. This new draft reflects the staff's best efforts to bring Seattle's Code in line with best practices.

The Vice-Chair commended Kate Flack for her work on this project. The Commission directed the staff to work with the Law Department on finalizing a draft, and then to share that draft with stakeholders. After gathering input, staff will report back to the Commission.

9) Executive Director's Report

The Executive Director reported that the Voter's Pamphlet Rules need to be rewritten. The deadlines do not allow sufficient time to prepare the pamphlet for mailing to overseas voters. In response to the Director's inquiry whether the rules should continue to permit candidates to change their statements after the Primary, the Vice-Chair and Commissioner Cohan both voiced their support for making sure that voters get up-to-date information from candidates.

**The May 4, 2011 Seattle Ethics and Elections Commission Regular Meeting
adjourned at 6:17 P.M.**