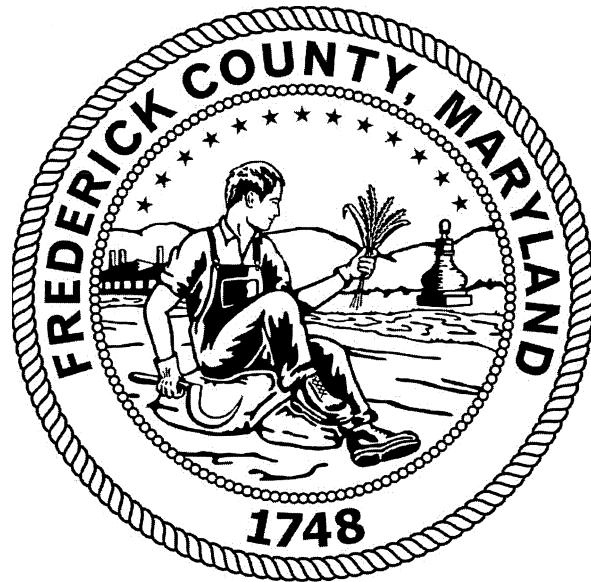


Administration of the
Frederick County Ethics Law
October 2023 – September 2024

Report to the
Frederick County Executive and the
Frederick County Council



Frederick County Ethics Commission
September 30, 2024

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Report on the Administration of the Frederick County Ethics Law

October 2023 – September 2024

This report to the County Executive and the County Council describes the Frederick County Ethics Commission's work to administer the Ethics Law from October 2023 through September 2024. State law requires that this report be provided annually.

I. Ethics Commission meetings

During the reporting period, the Ethics Commission met publicly on November 8, 2023, November 29, 2023, December 13, 2023, January 10, 2024, February 21, 2024, April 10, 2024, May 8, 2024, June 12, 2024, August 14, 2024, and September 11, 2024. In addition, the Commission held an administrative function meeting on September 18, 2024, to discuss a request for approval of outside employment.

Copies of the meeting agendas and the approved minutes for the public meetings are included in Appendix A and Appendix B of this report, respectively. The Commission's agendas and meeting minutes are also posted on the Commission's web page located at <https://frederickcountymd.gov/1519/Ethics-Commission>.

II. Review of financial disclosure statements

A. Financial Disclosures

The Commission staff reviewed the financial disclosure statements filed by those County elected and appointed officials, employees and members of boards and commissions who are subject to the Ethics Law's annual filing requirements. (Financial disclosure statements are due in April of each year. The statements provide information for the previous calendar year.) Once the disclosure statements are received, staff reviewed the statements to identify any incomplete questions or answers that may raise questions about potential conflicts of interest. Such exceptions are then provided to the full Commission for review. Financial disclosure statements that are incomplete or raise questions about potential conflicts of interest are identified and the filers of those statements are contacted to obtain the additional information required for the Commission to determine whether there are conflicts of interest or violations of the Ethics Law. When concerns arise about compliance with the Ethics Law, the Commission provides guidance and direction to the official or employee.

During the period covered by this report, the Ethics Commission completed its review of the financial disclosure statements filed in April 2023 and found no conflicts of interest. At the September 11, 2024 meeting, the Commission completed its review of financial disclosure statements filed in April 2024 and found no conflicts of interest.

B. Advisory Opinions

The Commission received no requests for an advisory opinion during the reporting period.

C. Complaints

The Ethics Commission received two (2) complaints during the reporting period regarding individuals which the complainants alleged should be registered as lobbyists. Each complaint was investigated by the Commission and ultimately dismissed as insufficient to state a violation of the Ethics Law.

D. Changes to Ethics Law

In the spring of 2024, the Ethics Commission formed a sub-committee to review the Ethics Law and make recommendations for changes thereto. The sub-committee completed its review in August 2024, and the Commission expects to finalize its recommendations later this fall.

Attachments:

Appendix A – Ethics Commission Agendas

Appendix B – Ethics Commission Meeting Minutes

Appendix A

Ethics Commission Agendas

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FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT

FREDERICK COUNTY ETHICS COMMISSION

Office of the County Attorney

Douglas P. Jones, Chair

AMENDED

Public Meeting Agenda for

Wednesday, November 8, 2023, at 7:00 p.m.

Meeting location: Winchester Room, 2nd Floor, Winchester Hall

AGENDA:

1. Call to Order / Roll Call;
2. Approval of Minutes from September 13, 2023 meeting;
3. Vote to conduct an administrative function meeting to discuss the review of financial disclosure statements for 2022 and one (1) pending complaint.*

* If Commission votes to conduct an administrative function meeting, the public meeting will be adjourned.

Upcoming 2023 Meeting Dates

December 13



FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT

FREDERICK COUNTY ETHICS COMMISSION

Office of the County Attorney

Douglas P. Jones, Chair

ETHICS COMMISSION

Public Meeting Agenda for

Wednesday, November 29, 2023, at 6:00 p.m.

Virtual Meeting – via Microsoft Teams

Public Call-In Number: 1 667-217-6643

Public Meeting ID: 968 789 917#

AGENDA:

1. Call to Order / Roll Call;
2. Vote to conduct an administrative function meeting to discuss a pending complaint.*

* If Commission votes to conduct an administrative function meeting, the public meeting will be adjourned.

Upcoming 2023 Meeting Dates

December 13



FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT

FREDERICK COUNTY ETHICS COMMISSION

Office of the County Attorney

Douglas P. Jones, Chair

Public Meeting Agenda for

Wednesday, December 13, 2023, at 7:00 p.m.

Meeting location: Winchester Room, 2nd Floor, Winchester Hall

AGENDA:

1. Call to Order / Roll Call;
2. Approval of Minutes from November 8, 2023, meeting;
3. Setting meeting dates for 2024;
4. Vote to conduct an administrative function meeting to discuss the review of financial disclosure statements for 2022 and pending complaints.*

* If Commission votes to conduct an administrative function meeting, the public meeting will be adjourned.



FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT

FREDERICK COUNTY ETHICS COMMISSION Office of the County Attorney

Douglas P. Jones, Chair

Public Meeting Agenda for

Wednesday, January 10, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

Meeting location: Winchester Room, 2nd Floor, Winchester Hall

AGENDA:

1. Call to Order / Roll Call / Establishment of Quorum
2. Approval of Minutes:
 - a. November 29, 2023 meeting
 - b. December 13, 2023 meeting
3. Receipt of Public Ethics Report (July 1 through December 31, 2023).
4. Approval of 2024 Financial Disclosure Forms (Calendar Year 2023).
5. Identification and Discussion of Possible Recommendations re Changes to the County's Ethics Ordinance.
6. Chair's comments.

Upcoming 2024 Meeting Dates

February 21

March 14

April 10

May 8

June 12

July 10

August 14

September 11

October 9

November 13

December 11



FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT

FREDERICK COUNTY ETHICS COMMISSION Office of the County Attorney

Douglas P. Jones, Chair

Public Meeting Agenda for

Wednesday, February 21, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

Meeting location: Winchester Room, 2nd Floor, Winchester Hall

AGENDA:

1. Call to Order / Roll Call / Establishment of Quorum
2. Approval of January 10, 2024 Minutes
3. Presentation on Financial Disclosure System for Calendar Year 2023
4. Review of 2016 Standard Operating Procedures, including, without limitation,
 - a. Forms
 - b. Advisory Opinions and Exemptions
 - c. Complaints
 - d. Public Information Program
 - e. Lobbying Report
 - f. Subpoenas
 - g. Recommendations for Changes to Law
 - h. Policies and Procedures
 - i. Annual Training
5. Discuss issuing informal Advisory Opinion re: Prestige of Office and Gifts
6. Chair's comments.

Upcoming 2024 Meeting Dates

- March 13
- April 10
- May 8
- June 12
- July 10
- August 14
- September 11
- October 9
- November 13
- December 11



FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT

FREDERICK COUNTY ETHICS COMMISSION Office of the County Attorney

Douglas P. Jones, Chair

AMENDED

Public Meeting Agenda for

Wednesday, April 10, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

Meeting location: Winchester Room, 2nd Floor, Winchester Hall

AGENDA:

1. Call to Order / Roll Call / Establishment of Quorum
2. Approval of February 21, 2024 Minutes
3. Update by Staff on Financial Disclosure Statements
4. Updates by Staff on Lobbying Registrations
5. Review of Revised Standard Operating Procedures
- 6. Review of Draft Advisories**
7. Chair's comments.

Upcoming 2024 Meeting Dates

May 8
June 12
July 10
August 14
September 11
October 9
November 13
December 11

Remaining Annual calendar items:

Month	Item
July	Elect Chair and Vice-Chair
August/September	Begin work on annual report to the County Executive and County Council
September	Chair to sign the annual certification to the State Ethics Commission
October	Annual report and annual certification due by October 1



FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT

FREDERICK COUNTY ETHICS COMMISSION Office of the County Attorney

Douglas P. Jones, Chair

Public Meeting Agenda for

Wednesday, May 8, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

Meeting location: Winchester Room, 2nd Floor, Winchester Hall

AGENDA:

1. Call to Order / Roll Call / Establishment of Quorum
2. Approval of April 10, 2024 Minutes
3. Update by Staff on Financial Disclosure Statements
4. Updates by Staff on Lobbying Registrations
5. Adoption of Revised Standard Operating Procedures
6. Chair's comments.

Upcoming 2024 Meeting Dates

June 12
July 10
August 14
September 11
October 9
November 13
December 11

Remaining Annual calendar items:

Month	Item
July	Elect Chair and Vice-Chair
August/September	Begin work on annual report to the County Executive and County Council
September	Chair to sign the annual certification to the State Ethics Commission
October	Annual report and annual certification due by October 1



FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT

FREDERICK COUNTY ETHICS COMMISSION Office of the County Attorney

Douglas P. Jones, Chair

Public Meeting Agenda for

Wednesday, June 12, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

Meeting location: Winchester Room, 2nd Floor, Winchester Hall

AGENDA:

1. Call to Order / Roll Call / Establishment of Quorum
2. Approval of May 8, 2024 Minutes
3. Updates by Staff on Lobbying Registrations
4. Update by Staff on Financial Disclosure Statements
5. Vote to conduct an administrative function meeting to discuss a possible new complaint.*
* If Commission votes to conduct an administrative function meeting, the public meeting will be adjourned.
6. Chair's comments.

Upcoming 2024 Meeting Dates

July 10
August 14
September 11
October 9
November 13
December 11

Remaining Annual calendar items:

Month	Item
July	Elect Chair and Vice-Chair
August/September	Begin work on annual report to the County Executive and County Council
September	Chair to sign the annual certification to the State Ethics Commission
October	Annual report and annual certification due by October 1



FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT

FREDERICK COUNTY ETHICS COMMISSION

Office of the County Attorney

C O R R E C T E D

Public Meeting Agenda for

Wednesday, August 14, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

Meeting location: Winchester Room, 2nd Floor, Winchester Hall

AGENDA:

1. Call to Order / Roll Call / Establishment of Quorum
2. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair
3. Approval of June 12, 2024 Minutes
4. Receipt of Public Ethics Report (January 1, 2024 through June 30, 2024)
5. Update by Staff on Lobbying Registrations (as of August 7, 2024)
6. **Vote to conduct an administrative function meeting to review financial disclosure statements.***
*** If Commission votes to conduct an administrative function meeting, the public meeting will be adjourned.**
7. Chair's comments

Upcoming 2024 Meeting Dates

September 11
October 9
November 13
December 11

Remaining Annual calendar items:

Month	Item
August/September	Begin work on annual report to the County Executive and County Council
September	Chair to sign the annual certification to the State Ethics Commission
October	Annual report and annual certification due by October 1



FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT

FREDERICK COUNTY ETHICS COMMISSION

Office of the County Attorney

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

Wednesday, September 11, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

Meeting Location:

Winchester Room, 2nd Floor, Winchester Hall

AGENDA

1. Call to Order / Roll Call / Establishment of Quorum.
2. Approval of August 14, 2024 Minutes.
3. Acceptance of Revised Public Ethics Report (Section 5-861 of Maryland Public Ethics Law) for the period January 1, 2024 through June 30, 2024.
4. Update by Staff on Lobbying Registrations (as of September 9, 2024).
5. Update on Review of Financial Disclosure Statements.
6. Discussion of Commission's Annual Report to the County Executive and County Council and Annual Certification.
7. Vote to conduct an administrative function meeting to review request for approval of outside employment.*
8. Chair's Comments

** If Commission votes to conduct an administrative function meeting, the public meeting will be adjourned during this portion of the meeting.*

Upcoming 2024 Meeting Dates

October 9
November 13
December 11

Remaining Annual calendar items:

Month	Item
September	Chair to sign the annual certification to the State Ethics Commission
October	Annual report and annual certification due by October 1

Appendix B

Ethics Commission Minutes

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Jessica Fitzwater
County Executive

FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT

FREDERICK COUNTY ETHICS COMMISSION Office of the County Attorney

Douglas P. Jones, Chair

Minutes of the Public Meeting of the Frederick County Ethics Commission Wednesday, November 8, 2023

7:00 P.M.

Present:

Rev. Douglas P. Jones, Chair
Mary Beth Kaslick
Walter Olson
Michael G. Bunitsky
James H. Stanker
Christopher Perry, Alternate Member

Absent:

Deborah L. Lundahl, Vice-Chair
Stephen Larsen

Also in Attendance

Andrew Ford, Secretary

1. Call to Order. Chairperson Jones called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.
2. Approval of Agenda. Commissioner Olson made a motion to approve the agenda, which was seconded by Commissioner Kaslick and approved unanimously.
3. Approval of Minutes. Commissioner Kaslick made a motion to approve the September 13, 2023 minutes, which was seconded by Commissioner Olson and approved unanimously.
4. Vote to Conduct an Administrative Function Meeting. Commissioner Bunitsky moved to enter into an administrative function to discuss review of 2022 financial disclosure statements and one (1) pending complaint. Commissioner Kaslick seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

Required information regarding the administrative function meeting - The Commission entered administrative function at 7:03 p.m. Present were Commissioners Jones, Kaslick, Olson, Bunitsky, Stanker, and Perry.

1. **Financial Disclosure Statements:** Mr. Ford updated the Commissioners on the review of the long-form disclosure statements. Commissioner reviewed the list of exceptions for the short-form disclosure statements. Mr. Ford will follow-up on outstanding long-form and short-form disclosure statements.

Mr. Ford left the meeting at 7:29 p.m. Commissioner Olson assumed the role of Acting Secretary for the remainder of the administrative function meeting.

2. **Pending Complaint 2023-02:** Commissioners discussed the pending complaint. Mr. Ford returned at 7:48 p.m. Mr. Ford discussed arranging a virtual meeting for the Commissioners to meet with outside counsel. Commissioner Bunitsky moved to leave administrative function. Commissioner Kaslick seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously. The Commission resumed the public meeting at 7:50 p.m.

There being no other business before the Commission, Commissioner Olson made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Commissioner Bunitsky and approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

/s/
Andrew J. Ford
Secretary

/s/
Walter Olson
Acting Secretary



Jessica Fitzwater
County Executive

FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT

FREDERICK COUNTY ETHICS COMMISSION Office of the County Attorney

Stephen K. Hess, Chair

**Minutes of the Public Meeting of the
Frederick County Ethics Commission
Wednesday, November 29, 2023
Via Microsoft Teams
6:00 P.M.**

Present:

Rev. Douglas P. Jones, Chair
Deborah L. Lundahl, Vice-Chair
Stephen Larsen
Michael G. Bunitsky
James H. Stanker
Christopher Perry, Alternate Member

Absent:

Mary Beth Kaslick
Walter Olson

Also in Attendance

Timothy Maloney, Esq.

1. Call to Order.

Chairperson Jones called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m.

2. Vote to Conduct an Administrative Function Meeting.

Chairperson Jones called the public meeting to order at 6:07 pm. Commissioner Lundahl moved we adjourn the public meeting and move into an administrative function meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bunitsky, and unanimously approved. The public meeting was adjourned at 6:08 p.m.

Required information regarding the administrative function meeting - The Commission entered administrative function at 6:16 p.m. Present were Commissioners Jones, Lundahl, Larsen, Bunitsky, Stanker, and Perry.

At 6:16 pm, Chairman Jones called to order an administrative function meeting for the Commission to receive a briefing from outside counsel Timothy Maloney, Esq. concerning the complaint and prior action of the Ethics Commission related to matters raised in Complaint 23-02.

The Commissioners were briefed by outside counsel Mr. Maloney on the Complaint. The Commissioners asked questions of Mr. Maloney and discussed the Complaint and the Commission's prior ruling related to the matter. In discussing the Complaint, Mr. Maloney also discussed with the Commissioners potential areas of the Ethics Law that the Commission should consider modifying, and the Commissioners decided to continue such discussion at a future meeting. Commissioner Bunitsky moved, and Commissioner Lundahl seconded the motion that Mr. Maloney draft appropriate language for distribution and approval at an upcoming Commission meeting reaffirming the Commission's prior ruling and dismissing the current complaint.

Being no other business before the Commission, Commissioner Larsen made a motion to close the administrative function meeting. Commissioner Perry seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously. The administrative function meeting adjourned at 6:44 p.m.

3. Adjournment of Meeting.

Commissioner Bunitsky made a motion to adjourn the public meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Larson, and it was approved unanimously. The public meeting was closed and adjourned at 6:45 pm.

/s/
James Stanker
Acting Secretary



FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT

FREDERICK COUNTY ETHICS COMMISSION Office of the County Attorney

Douglas P. Jones, Chair

Minutes of the Public Meeting of the Frederick County Ethics Commission Wednesday, December 13, 2023

7:00 P.M.

Present:

Rev. Douglas P. Jones, Chair
Deborah L. Lundahl, Vice-Chair
Mary Beth Kaslick
Walter Olson
Michael G. Bunitsky
Christopher Perry, Alternate Member

Absent:

Stephen Larsen
James Stanker

Also in Attendance

Andrew Ford, Secretary

1. Call to Order. Chairperson Jones called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. Approval of Agenda. Commissioner Kaslick made a motion to approve the agenda, which was seconded by Commissioner Lundahl and approved unanimously.
3. Approval of November 8, 2023 Minutes. Commissioner Bunitsky made a motion to approve the November 8, 2023 minutes, which was seconded by Commissioner Kaslick and approved unanimously.
4. Meeting Dates for 2024. Staff reviewed meeting dates for 2024 and noted that February 14th was Ash Wednesday. Commission by consensus agreed to continue holding meetings on the second Wednesday of each month with the exception of February, which meeting will be held on third Wednesday.

5. Vote to Conduct an Administrative Function Meeting. Commissioner Lundahl moved to enter into an administrative function to discuss review of 2022 financial disclosure statements and pending complaints. Commissioner Bunitsky seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

Required information regarding the administrative function meeting - The Commission entered administrative function at 7:10 p.m. Present were Commissioners Jones, Lundahl, Kaslick, Olson, Bunitsky and Perry.

1. Financial Disclosure Statements: Mr. Ford updated the Commissioners on the review of the long-form disclosure statements. Commissioner reviewed the list of exceptions for the short-form disclosure statements. Mr. Ford will follow-up on outstanding long-form and short-form disclosure statements.
2. Pending Complaint 2023-01: The Commission's standard operating procedures state that unless the commission finds that the Ethics Law has been violated, the name of individual who was the subject of the complaint will remain confidential and the person's name will not be included in the decision. Previously, the Commission had agreed to enter into a settlement agreement with the subject of the complaint. However, based on the foregoing, the agreement could not be public, and, in any case, a complaint must be sustained or dismissed. The Commission by consensus agreed to have staff draft a notice of dismissal consistent with the terms of the settlement.

Mr. Ford left the meeting at 7:35 p.m. Commissioner Olson assumed the role of Acting Secretary for the remainder of the administrative function meeting.

3. Pending Complaint 2023-02: Commissioners discussed the pending complaint and approved amendments to a proposed notice of dismissal. Commissioner Kaslick moved to approve the notice as amended. Commissioner Bunitsky seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

Commissioners then discussed items for the January agenda.

Commissioner Bunitsky moved to leave administrative function. Commissioner Kaslick seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously. The Commission resumed the public meeting at 7:52 p.m.

There being no other business before the Commission, Commissioner Lundahl made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Commissioner Perry, and approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:53 p.m.

/s/

Andrew J. Ford
Secretary

/s/

Walter Olson
Acting Secretary



Jessica Fitzwater
County Executive

FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT

FREDERICK COUNTY ETHICS COMMISSION Office of the County Attorney

Douglas P. Jones, Chair

Minutes of the Public Meeting of the Frederick County Ethics Commission

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

7:00 P.M.

Present:

Rev. Douglas P. Jones, Chair
Deborah L. Lundahl, Vice-Chair
Mary Beth Kaslick
Walter Olson
Michael G. Bunitsky
Stephen Larsen

Absent:

James Stanker
Christopher Perry, Alternate Member

Also in Attendance

Andrew Ford, Secretary

1. Call to Order; Roll Call; and Establishment of a Quorum. Chairperson Jones called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. Attendance as set forth above. Quorum established.

2. Approval of Minutes. Commissioner Bunitsky made a motion to approve the November 29, 2023 minutes, which was seconded by Commissioner Larsen and approved unanimously.

Commissioner Bunitsky made a motion to approve the December 13, 2023 minutes, which was seconded by Commissioner Kaslick and approved unanimously.

3. Receipt of Public Ethics Report. Staff identified erroneous inclusion of superfluous documents and recommended that the Report be returned to the Chief Administrative Officer's office and reissued without said documents. Commissioners by

consensus agreed and indicated that, upon receipt, the revised Report be deemed received and published to the Commission's website.

4. Approval of 2024 Financial Disclosure Forms. Commissioner Kaslick moved to approve the draft forms. Commissioner Lundahl seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

5. Identification and Discussion of Possible Recommendations re Changes to the County's Ethics Ordinance. Commissioners reviewed the topics previously reviewed in meetings in 2023 and discussed creation of a standing committee to review the suggested changes and make recommendations, as well as explore possibility of issuing of advisory opinions in lieu of changes to the law.

6. Chair's Comments. Chair discussed proceeding with update of the Commission's standard operating procedures which were last updated in 2016. Mr. Ford indicated that he would circulate the mark-up done in 2023 by Commissioners Bunitsky and Larsen and would provide responses to questions and comments made.

There being no other business before the Commission, Commissioner Olson made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Commissioner Bunitsky, and approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:13 p.m.

/s/
Andrew J. Ford
Secretary



Jessica Fitzwater
County Executive

FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT

FREDERICK COUNTY ETHICS COMMISSION Office of the County Attorney

Douglas P. Jones, Chair

Minutes of the Public Meeting of the Frederick County Ethics Commission Wednesday, February 21, 2024

7:00 P.M.

Present:

Rev. Douglas P. Jones, Chair
Deborah L. Lundahl, Vice-Chair
Mary Beth Kaslick
Walter Olson
Michael G. Bunitsky
James Stanker
Christopher Perry, Alternate Member

Absent:

Rev. Stephen Larsen

Also in Attendance

Andrew Ford, Secretary
Caroline Milam

1. Call to Order; Roll Call; and Establishment of a Quorum. Chairperson Jones called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. Attendance noted and quorum established.

2. Presentation on Financial Disclosure System for Calendar Year 2023. Staff from the Interagency Information Technology Division made a presentation of the new system for financial disclosure statements.

3. Approval of Minutes. Commissioner Kaslick made a motion to approve the January 10, 2024 minutes, which was seconded by Commissioner Olson and approved unanimously.

4. Review of 2016 Standard Operating Procedures. Mr. Ford walked through the 2016 Standard Operating Procedures and responded to comments and questions from commissioners. Mr. Ford will turn a revised draft of the procedures for review at the March meeting.

5. Discussion regarding issuing informal Advisory Opinion re: Prestige of Office and Gifts. The Chair discussed concern regarding political endorsements by County officials and possible concerns over violation of the provision of the Ethics Law regarding use of prestige of office. Mr. Ford discussed a past practice of the Commission regarding the issuance of informal advisory opinions reminding officials of certain requirement of the law. Mr. Ford was asked to draft an information advisory regarding use of the prestige of office and gifts.

6. Chair's Comments. The Chair thanked Commissioners Larsen and Bunitsky for their work reviewing the Standard Operating Procedures.

There being no other business before the Commission, Commissioner Bunitsky made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Commissioner Olson, and approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:51 p.m.

/s/
Andrew J. Ford
Secretary



Jessica Fitzwater
County Executive

FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT

FREDERICK COUNTY ETHICS COMMISSION Office of the County Attorney

Douglas P. Jones, Chair

Minutes of the Public Meeting of the Frederick County Ethics Commission Wednesday, April 10, 2024

7:00 P.M.

Present:

Rev. Douglas P. Jones, Chair
Deborah L. Lundahl, Vice-Chair
Michael G. Bunitsky
Mary Beth Kaslick
Rev. Stephen Larsen
Walter Olson
Christopher Perry, Alternate Member

Absent:

James Stanker

Also in Attendance

Andrew Ford, Secretary

1. Call to Order; Roll Call; and Establishment of a Quorum. Chairperson Jones called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Attendance noted and quorum established.

2. Approval of Minutes. Commissioner Kaslick made a motion to approve the February 21, 2024 minutes, which was seconded by Commissioner Lundahl and approved unanimously.

3. Update by Staff on Financial Disclosure Statements. Mr. Ford reported on the rollout of the financial disclosure statements system.

4. Update by Staff on Lobbying Registrations. Commission reviewed list of registrants since January 1, 2024.

5. Review of Revised Standard Operating Procedures. Commission reviewed the current draft of the proposed revision of the Standard Operating Procedures. Mr. Ford will make additional revisions to include adopting regulations and issuance guidance other than by advisory opinion.

6. Review of Draft Advisories. Commission reviewed the draft advisories on gifts and prestige of office. The Commission determined to designate these as guidance to distinguish from advisory opinions issued in response to requests. Motion was made by Commissioner Olson to adopt the guidance on gifts, seconded by Commission Bunitsky and passed unanimously. Motion was made by Commission Bunitsky to adopt the guidance on prestige of office, seconded by Commission Olson and passed unanimously.

7. Chair's Comments. Commissioner asked that subcommittee be formed to review possible changes to the Ethics Law. The subcommittee consists of Commissioner Bunitsky, Kaslick and Olson. Mr. Ford will coordinate with the subcommittee any materials needed.

8. There being no other business before the Commission, Commissioner Lundahl made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Commissioner Kaslick and approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

/s/
Andrew J. Ford
Secretary



Jessica Fitzwater
County Executive

FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT

FREDERICK COUNTY ETHICS COMMISSION Office of the County Attorney

Douglas P. Jones, Chair

Minutes of the Public Meeting of the Frederick County Ethics Commission Wednesday, May 8, 2024

7:00 P.M.

Present:

Rev. Douglas P. Jones, Chair
Deborah L. Lundahl, Vice-Chair
Mary Beth Kaslick
Christopher Perry, Alternate Member

Absent:

James Stanker
Rev. Stephen Larsen
Walter Olson
Michael G. Bunitsky

Also in Attendance

Andrew Ford, Secretary

1. Call to Order; Roll Call; and Establishment of a Quorum. Chairperson Jones called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Attendance noted and quorum established.

2. Approval of Minutes. Commissioner Kaslick made a motion to approve the April 10, 2024 minutes, which was seconded by Commissioner Lundahl and approved unanimously.

3. Update by Staff on Financial Disclosure Statements. Mr. Ford reported on the rollout of the financial disclosure statements system.

4. Update by Staff on Lobbying Registrations. Commission reviewed list of registrants since the April meeting.

5. Adoption of Revised Standard Operating Procedures. Chairman Jones noted a correction on the draft. Commissioner Lundahl made a motion to adopt the revised Standard Operating Procedures, as corrected, which was seconded by Commissioner Perry and approved unanimously.

There being no other business before the Commission, Commissioner Lundahl made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Commissioner Kaslick and approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:19 p.m.

/s/
Andrew J. Ford
Secretary



FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT

FREDERICK COUNTY ETHICS COMMISSION Office of the County Attorney

Douglas P. Jones, Chair

Minutes of the Public Meeting of the Frederick County Ethics Commission Wednesday, June 12, 2024

7:00 P.M.

Present:

Rev. Douglas P. Jones, Chair
Deborah L. Lundahl, Vice-Chair
Michael G. Bunitsky
Rev. Stephen Larsen
Walter Olson
Christopher Perry, Alternate Member

Absent:

James Stanker
Mary Beth Kaslick

Also in Attendance

Catherine Keller, Secretary

1. Call to Order; Roll Call; and Establishment of a Quorum. Chairperson Jones called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Attendance noted and quorum established.

2. Approval of Minutes. Commissioner Bunitsky made a motion to approve the May 8, 2024 minutes, which was seconded by Commissioner Lundahl and approved unanimously.

3. Update by Staff on Lobbying Registrations. Commission reviewed list of registrants since March 18, 2024.

4. Update by Staff on Financial Disclosure Statements. Commission reviewed financial disclosure statements of the Frederick County Elected Officials. Request was made by the Commission for updated information on two financial disclosure statements.

5. Vote to conduct an Administrative Function Meeting to discuss a possible new complaint. Commissioner Olson made a motion to conduct an administrative function meeting to discuss a possible new complaint. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bunitsky and approved unanimously.

Required information regarding the administrative function meeting - The Commission entered into administrative function at 7:21 p.m. All of the Commission members noted above were present. Ms. Keller was also present.

The Commission members discussed a possible new complaint. Specifically, the issue centered around the use of prestige of office. The members agreed unanimously not to treat the issue as a complaint.

Commissioner Larsen moved to leave administrative function. Commissioner Olson seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously. The Commission resumed the public meeting at 7:30 p.m.

6. Chair's Comments. The Chair provided comments.
7. There being no other business before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 7:32 p.m.

/s/
Catherine Keller
Secretary



FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT

FREDERICK COUNTY ETHICS COMMISSION Office of the County Attorney

Douglas P. Jones, Chair

Minutes of the Public Meeting of the Frederick County Ethics Commission

Wednesday, August 14, 2024

7:00 P.M.

Present:

Rev. Douglas P. Jones,
Rev. Stephen Larsen
Michael G. Bunitsky
Mary Beth Kaslick
Walter Olson
Christopher Perry

Absent:

None

Also in Attendance

Andrew J. Ford

1. Call to Order; Roll Call; and Establishment of a Quorum. Mr. Ford, as Secretary, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Attendance noted and quorum established.

2. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair. Commissioner Kaslick nominated Commissioner Jones to be Chair. Commissioner Bunitsky seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously. Commissioner Bunitsky nominated Commissioner Larsen to be Vice-Chair. Commissioner Kaslick seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously. Chairperson Jones chaired the meeting from this point forward.

3. Approval of Minutes. Commissioner Bunitsky made a motion to approve the June 12, 2024 minutes, which was seconded by Commissioner Larsen and approved unanimously.

4. Acknowledge Receipt of the Public Ethics Report for Period January 1, 2024 – June 30, 2024. The Commissioners acknowledged receipt of the Report; however, they noted an incomplete entry and requested Mr. Ford follow-up with the CAO's office for a correction.

5. Update by Staff on Lobbying Registrations. Commission reviewed list of registrants since the June meeting.

6. Update by Staff on Financial Disclosure Statements. Commissioner Kaslick made a motion to conduct an administrative function meeting to review financial disclosures statements. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Olson and approved unanimously.

Required information regarding the administrative function meeting - The Commission entered into administrative function at 7:17 p.m. All of the Commission members noted above were present. Mr. Ford was also present.

Commission reviewed the remainder of long-form disclosure statements. Mr. Ford would separately provide access to short-form exceptions for individual review by commissioners prior to the next meeting.

Commissioner Larsen moved to leave administrative function. Commissioner Perry seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously. The Commission resumed the public meeting at 8:22 p.m.

7. Chair's Comments. The Chair requested formal guidance from the County Attorney's Office on whether a member of the FCPS's Ethics Commission could also serve on the County's Ethics Commission.

8. There being no other business before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 8:31 p.m.

/s/
Andrew J. Ford
Secretary



FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT

FREDERICK COUNTY ETHICS COMMISSION Office of the County Attorney

Douglas P. Jones, Chair

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Minutes of the Public Meeting of the Frederick County Ethics Commission

Wednesday, September 11, 2024

7:00 P.M.

Present:

Rev. Douglas P. Jones,
Michael G. Bunitsky
Mary Beth Kaslick
Walter Olson
Christopher Perry

Absent:

Rev. Stephen Larsen
Hayden Duke

Also in Attendance

Andrew J. Ford

1. Call to Order; Roll Call; and Establishment of a Quorum. Mr. Ford, as Secretary, called the meeting to order at 7:09 p.m. Attendance noted and quorum established.

2. Approval of Minutes. Commissioner Olson made a motion to approve the August 14, 2024 minutes, which was seconded by Commissioner Kaslick and approved unanimously.

3. Acknowledge Receipt of the Revised Public Ethics Report for Period January 1, 2024 – June 30, 2024. The Commissioners acknowledged receipt of the Report.

4. Update by Staff on Lobbying Registrations. Commission reviewed the list of registrants which was updated by staff to show changes since the August meeting.

5. Update by Staff on Financial Disclosure Statements. Mr. Ford updated the Commission on the short-form exceptions list. The review of statements for 2023, which were filed in April, is now complete.

6. Discussion of Commission's Annual Report and the Annual Certification. Mr. Ford reviewed the draft annual report. Based on discussion, Mr. Ford will revise the draft to address (i) completion of the review of financial disclosure statement, (ii) resolution of complaints received and (iii) discussion of Commission's efforts to make recommendations for changes to the Ethics Law

7. Vote to conduct an administrative function meeting to review request for approval of outside employment.* Commissioner Perry made a motion to conduct an administrative function meeting to review a request for approval of outside employment. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bunitsky and approved unanimously.

*** Required information regarding the administrative function meeting -** The Commission entered into administrative function at 7:27 p.m. All of the Commission members noted above were present. Mr. Ford was also present.

After entering into administrative function, the Commission considered a request for approval of outside employment. Initial concerns about the potential for a conflict were mostly allayed; however to ensure that there were no conflict of interests or potential appearance of a conflict of interests Mr. Ford was directed to set up a conference call with Mr. Kunkel and Commissioners Kaslick and Olson to learn more about the nature of the outside employment.”

Motion to exit Administrative function was made by Commissioner Bunitsky, seconded by Commissioner Olson and unanimously approved at 7:43 p.m.

8. Chair's Comments. Discussion regarding upcoming meeting agenda.

There being no other business before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 7:51p.m.

/s/
Andrew J. Ford
Secretary