***City of Scranton***

**Ethics Board**

340 N. Washington Avenue

Scranton, PA 18503

Board Members: Stephanie Bressler, David Falchek,

Kathryn Lafferty-Danner, 2 vacancies

Solicitor: John M. Hart

**Meeting Minutes**

**Wednesday, October 20, 2021 @ 6:00 p.m.**

**Virtual Session Broadcast on ECTV**

1. **Call to Order**

Ethics Board Secretary Stephanie Bressler called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

1. **Welcome and Roll Call**

Secretary Stephanie Bressler, Board Members Dave Falchek and Kate Lafferty-Danner , and Solicitor John Hart were in attendance and answered affirmatively to the roll call. The Board currently has two vacancies.

Secretary Bressler welcomed Kate Lafferty-Danner appointed by the Controller and thanked Dave Falchek who agreed to be re-appointed by City Council for another term.

1. **Reading and Approval of the Minutes of the July 12th meeting**

Board Member Falchek made a motion to suspend the reading of and approve the minutes of the July 12th meeting. Board Member Lafferty-Danner seconded the motion. The motion passed.

1. **Reports**
   1. Solicitor’s Report
      1. Pending Complaint

Solicitor Hart reported that the Investigative Officer of Complaint 20-001 is completing his Findings Report that he expects to submit at the end of the week. Solicitor Hart explained that the report will be the first time the Board will see information on the complaint.

* + 1. Advisory Opinions

Solicitor Hart reviewed his conclusion that Attorney Ryan Campbell presents no conflict in his role as Investigative Officer for Complaint 20-001 as he is not currently engaged in cases against the City of Scranton.

Solicitor Hart explained differences between the complaint process and Advisory Opinion process for new Board Member Lafferty-Danner

* + 1. Additional Updates

There were no additional Solicitor updates.

* 1. Chair’s Report

Secretary Bressler confirmed that former Board Chair Matthew Meyer has resigned. As the remaining Board officer, she offered to convene and conduct meetings until the Board’s organization meeting in January. Solicitor Hart confirmed that the Board does not have to take action on this change.

Secretary Bressler reported on the Board’s two vacancies. According to the City Clerk, Council has advertised its vacancy and Council President Gaughan has announced the vacancy at Council meetings. Mr. Gaughan has encouraged Council members to reach out to see if parties are interested in serving on the Board. To date, there have been no applicants.

According to the City Law Department, Mayor Cognetti’s office was working on a replacement for Andy Heller. Secretary Bressler learned since the meeting that the Mayor’s Office has advertised for residents to apply for various board vacancies, but have received no applicants.

Secretary Bressler encouraged City residents viewing the meeting to consider applying to serve on the Board.

* 1. Finance Report

Secretary Bressler reported that the expenses incurred so far this year were for required legal ads and payment of the Solictor’s invoices. Rental of the Board’s P.O. Box has also been renewed. Secretary Bressler suggested that the IO should be encouraged to submit an invoice for services so payment can be made in the current budget year.

* 1. Gift Subcommittee Report

Secretary Bressler reported that the City Clerk’s Office provided a gift form submitted by Mayor Cognetti for a de minimus gift.

1. **Other Business**
   1. Approval of Times-Tribune Public Notice Invoices

The Board considered invoices for $46.40 and $50.95 for meeting announcements in the Scranton Times. Board Member Falchek made a motion to approve payment of the invoices and Board Member Lafferty-Danner seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Board Member Falchek agreed to sign the vouchers for payment of these expenses at the City Business Administrator’s Office.

* 1. Scranton Code of Ethics: A Quick Guide

Secretary Bressler reported that suggested changes to the Quick Guide were made and the draft is now in a trifold format. Board Member Lafferty-Danner agreed to edit the draft, although the Board does not plan to finalize the Quick Guide until the January meeting.

* 1. Candidates’ Compliance with the Code

Secretary Bressler reported that she visited the City Clerk’s Office and reviewed candidate reports and passed on her findings to the former Board Chair that two candidates had not completely complied. The former Chair planned to have Solicitor Hart draft a letter to candidates. Solicitor Hart will review penalties for noncompliance, but it is likely the Board will not take any action as the Election is two weeks away.

1. **Public Participation**

Secretary Bressler reported that in response to a member of the public’s request at our July meeting, addresses for general inquiries and complaints were clarified on the Quick Guide and updated on the Board’s webpage. Also in response to the public’s request, meeting minutes are now posted on the webpage.

Secretary Bressler also reported that in response to an email, changes to meeting dates and locations are now posted on the webpage in addition to the public notice the Board is required to post.

1. **Next Meeting: Wednesday, November 17, at 6:00 p.m.**

Secretary Bressler confirmed that the next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 17, at 6:00 p.m. The Board plans to meet virtually.

1. **Adjournment**

Board Member Falchek made a motion and Board Member Lafferty-Danner seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:34 p.m. The motion passed.

**Respectfully Submitted Stephanie Bressler Board Secretary**