

ST. MARY'S COUNTY ETHICS COMMISSION

MINUTES OF April 24, 2006

St. Mary's County Governmental Center

Members Present: **George E. Baroniak, Vice Chair**
 Joseph Bush, Member
 Arthur Goeller, Member
 Warren Kunz, Member
 Viola M. Gardner, Alternate
 Susan J. Wolfe, Executive Secretary

Others Present: **Thomas A. Mattingly, Sr., Commissioner**
 Christy Holt Chesser, County Attorney

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Baroniak at 2:00 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mr. Deaderick was unable to attend the meeting.

Business Cards. Business cards with a pointer to the Commission URL were distributed to members.

Next Meeting. The next meeting will be held on May 1, 2006.

REVIEW/APPROVE MINUTES:

Minutes of April 3, 2006. A motion was made by Mr. Bush to approve the minutes as corrected. The motion was seconded and carried.

FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE STATEMENTS:

To date, 240 statements have been reviewed. Reminder letters were sent to all individuals who did not yet submit their Financial Disclosure Statements for calendar year 2005, noting that statements are due no later than April 30 as required by the Ethics Ordinance.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Revised Ethics Ordinance; Maryland State Ethics Commission Advisory Opinion Re Acceptance of Tickets to College and Professional Sporting Events. Mr. Deaderick sent the revised draft to the County Attorney for review. Ms. Chesser said that she would review the draft as soon as possible. The revised Ordinance will then be sent to the State Ethics Commission for review of the specific language regarding acceptance of tickets to collegiate and professional sporting events. After approval by the State Ethics Commission, the Ordinance will be presented to the Board of County Commissioners and then proceed through the public hearing process.

Request for an Advisory Opinion from St. Mary's County Employees Association. At the request of commission members, Ms. Chesser will review this issue and provide her advice at the May 1 meeting.

Request for an Advisory Opinion as to Whether a Candidate for County Commissioner Can Continue Serving as a Volunteer on a County Board/Commission. Mr. Bush moved that the advisory opinion be approved. The motion was seconded and carried. The advisory opinion will be sent to the original requestor and posted on the County website.

Request for Information as to Whether a County Commissioner Who is a Member of a County Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad May Vote on Budget Matters Pertaining to the Fire Department. Commissioner Mattingly asked for written advisory opinions on two issues. Mr. Mattingly asked if, as a participant in the Leonardtown Volunteer Fire Department's length of service retirement program, he should recuse himself from any discussions or voting on this program as brought before the Board of County Commissioners. Members agreed that the commissioner should recuse himself from any discussion or voting concerning the retirement program. An advisory opinion will be drafted.

He also asked if it is a conflict of interest for him, as a member of the Leonardtown Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad, to participate in discussions and vote on a proposed fire tax increase in Leonardtown as brought before the Board of County Commissioners. He advised that the fire tax will not be proposed until next year. Members agreed that this issue should be brought before the commission at least 90 days before it is presented next year. Mr. Bush will draft an advisory memorandum in response to the request.

NEW BUSINESS:

Ms. Wolfe advised members that she is in contact with a member of a county committee who questions whether he has to provide information on Schedule A of the Financial Disclosure Statement (FDS). After discussion and review of the Ethics Ordinance and current FDS form, it was decided that this individual should be advised that, as a member of the Procurement Policy Committee, he is not required to disclose information on Schedule A. This issue will be clarified as members prepare the calendar year 2006 FDS form.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Bush moved to adjourn at 3:20 p.m. The motion was seconded and carried.