

ST. MARY'S COUNTY ETHICS COMMISSION

MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 22, 2003

Room 14, Commissioner's Hearing Room

Present: Martha M. Neal, Ph.D., Chair
David Deaderick, Vice Chair
Zora Siemasko, Member
Shirley Baldwin, Executive Secretary

Absent: George Baroniak, Member
Viola Gardner, Member

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Neal at 2:15 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Dr. Neal will not be present for the first meeting in October.

REVIEW/APPROVE MINUTES

Minutes of September 8, 2003. Mr. Deaderick made the motion to approve the minutes as submitted, seconded by Ms. Siemasko. Motion carried.

FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE STATEMENTS

- Status 2001 Outstanding. No change in the status of 2001.
- Status 2002 Outstanding. Letter sent to Board of County Commissioners regarding three individuals who have not filed for 2002. Letter also included information regarding two individuals who did not file for 2001.
- Review Session. None received for review.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- Education Program: No new requests received.
- State Ethics Commission Conference: On October 23, 2003, the State Ethics Commission will host a one-day statewide local government ethics conference in Annapolis. Mr. Baroniak, Mr. Deaderick and Ms. Siemasko plan to attend the conference, and Dr. Neal tentatively plans to attend. Four Work Group Sessions are being held in the morning and then repeated in the afternoon. It was suggested that they each attend a different Work Session in the morning and then in the afternoon attend a different session in order to get multiple perspective and to share their views. Shirley Baldwin will register all Ethics Commission members. Final plans will be made at the October 20 meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

- E-Mail from Public Information Officer: Dr. Neal received an e-mail requesting a response to a teacher who contacted the PIO to find out if donating to her child's school two-thirds of the proceeds of a fundraiser that she would initiate through her personal Creative Memories consultant endeavor would create a conflict of interest. Dr. Neal advised her that since it would not benefit her or her daughter, it was going directly to the PTA and they would disperse the funds, she saw no conflict of interest. The members of the Ethics Commission agreed with that opinion. The teacher was advised to disclose this on the FDS when filed for 2002.
- Request for Advisory Opinion: A memo was received from Mr. John B. Norris, III, County Attorney requesting an opinion regarding the voting participation of the Director of Recreation and Parks and the Golf Course Manager on the Wicomico Shore Golf Course Advisory Board. The Advisory Board is proposed to be appointed by the County Commissioners to provide oversight and make recommendations regarding the operation and planning for the future of the Golf Course. It is proposed that the Director of Recreation & Parks and the Wicomico Shores Golf Course Manager serve as *ex officio* members. It was felt that some clarification was needed regarding the Board's powers and duties regarding land, zoning or acquisition.

Mr. Norris' office was contacted to see if he was available to come to the meeting and clarify some items. Mr. Norris was able to attend the meeting. As this is a new charter, the Ethics Commission will be looking at the charter ahead of time. Mr. Norris said the Advisory Board would be making recommendations for the purchase of equipment for the Golf Course, golf carts, range balls, etc. The acquisitions would be made through the County Procurement Office. Mr. Norris also stated that because of the ambiguity and the possibility that it is unknown what they may recommend, the Board of County Commissioners has asked that Financial Disclosure Statements be filed by all members on the Board. Since all members of the Advisory Board will be submitting Financial Disclosure Statements, the Ethics Commission sees no conflict of interest with everyone voting. A memo in response to this will be sent to Mr. Norris.

During discussion, Mr. Norris noted the Ethics Commission should look at updating the Ethics Ordinance. This will be put on the agenda for future meetings.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Siemasko made the motion to adjourn at 3:10 p.m. seconded by Mr. Deaderick. Motion carried.