

ST. MARY’S COUNTY ETHICS COMMISSION
St. Mary’s County Chesapeake Building
Minutes of April 3, 2023

MEMBERS PRESENT David Willenborg, Chair
 Joseph Russell, Vice Chair
 Larry Crabtree
 Dr. Joseph DeVitis
 Kathleen McClernan-Walz
 Robert McGann (alternate)
 Joe Densford, Counsel for the Ethics Commission
 Diane Gleissner, Recorder

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Willenborg at 6:00 p.m.

NEW BUSINESS

Election Board Question & Answer Session

Wendy Atkins and Tae Frere from the St. Mary’s County Board of Elections (BOE) spoke to the commission and answered their questions about the process of filing for candidacy, specifically the filing of Financial Disclosure Statements (FDS). The BOE isn’t allowed to check FDS forms for content or accuracy which falls to the Ethics Commission. The Commission discussed options to try and have the candidate filing the FDS forms to do so directly with the county attorney’s office so that they could check for accuracy before candidates’ names go on the ballot.

A motion was made by Ms. McClernan-Walz and seconded by Mr. Russell, to direct Mr. Densford to move forward with amending the Ethics Ordinance to remove the ability of a candidate to file a FDS form with the BOE, and to require a receipt from the Ethics Commission. This should include language to incorporate what the State Ethic’s Commission does to notify the local BOE that a candidate is in compliance. More information to follow. Vote passed 5-0.

OLD BUSINESS

Advisory Opinion #23-01

A motion was made by Ms. McClernan-Walz and seconded by Dr. DeVitis, to approve the advisory opinion as drafted, and to direct the chair to sign the letter. Vote passed 5 – 0.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Mr. Crabtree and seconded by Mr. Russell, to adjourn the meeting. The St. Mary’s County Ethics Commission meeting was adjourned at 7:48 p.m. Vote passed 5-0.