

CITY OF STAMFORD

Board of Ethics

Stamford Government Center
(Meeting held virtually via Zoom)

August 18, 2021

Draft Minutes

This Meeting was recorded and such audio recording is available from the Board of Ethics and the City of Stamford. Such audio recording is intended to be the official public record of the Meeting and not these minutes, and such recording is incorporated into these minutes by reference and made a part hereof. These minutes summarize the proceedings and are not intended as verbatim notes.

Present Members:

Allan Lang, Chairman
Thomas Hynes, Vice-Chair
Benjamin Folkinshteyn, Member
Myrna Sessa, Member
Monica Smyth, Member
Kevin Quinn, Alternate
Fred Springer, Alternate

Other:

Stephen Conover, Counsel to the Board of Ethics
Kimberly Hawreluk, Acting Secretary - Human Resources Processing Technician
Various members of the public

1. Chairman Lang called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.
2. Chairman Lang noted that Counsel, Stephen Conover's first name was spelled incorrectly in the May 19, 2021 Meeting Draft Minutes of the Board of Ethics and requested a correction. Chairman Lang asked if other members of the Board had any additions or corrections. Pending the edit, Fred Springer moved to accept the minutes. Monica Smyth seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
3. Chairman Lang presented the May 27, 2021 Special Meeting Draft Minutes of the Board of Ethics to the Members in attendance for review and approval. The Special Meeting was held in order to review suggestions for code revisions. Chairman Lang requested if other members of the Board had any additions or corrections. Fred Springer moved to accept the minutes. Vice-Chair Hynes seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

For the record, it is important to note that only the Hearing Board Members who served on the Jacobson v. Figueroa complaint, (received January 13, 2021) can vote on the submitted Draft Minutes. The Hearing Board Members included: Allan Lang, Fred Springer and Christine Dzujna. In attendance tonight are Allan Lang and Fred Springer, which is a sufficient number for a quorum to vote on the following Minutes:

4. Chairman Lang presented the May 24, 2021 Public Hearing Draft Minutes of the Hearing Board of the Board of Ethics regarding the Jacobson v. Figueroa complaint received January 13, 2021. Fred Springer moved to approve the minutes. Chairman Lang seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
5. Chairman Lang presented the May 26, 2021 Public Hearing Draft Minutes of the Hearing Board of the Board of Ethics regarding the Jacobson v. Figueroa complaint received January 13, 2021. Fred Springer moved to approve the minutes. Chairman Lang seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
6. Chairman Lang presented the June 3, 2021 Public Hearing Draft Minutes of the Hearing Board of the Board of Ethics regarding the Jacobson v. Figueroa complaint received January 13, 2021. Fred Springer moved to approve the minutes. Chairman Lang seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
7. Chairman Lang presented the June 24, 2021 Public Hearing Draft Minutes of the Hearing Board of the Board of Ethics regarding the Jacobson v. Figueroa complaint received January 13, 2021. Fred Springer moved to approve the minutes. Chairman Lang seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

For the record, the Agenda now was open to all Board of Ethics Members to discuss and vote on the remaining Agenda items.

8. Chairman Lang put forth a motion to discuss a date change for the September meeting due to it falling on a religious holiday. Monica Smyth seconded the motion. After some discussion, Chairman Lang moved to approve the date change for the September meeting from September 15, 2021 to September 22, 2021. Fred Springer seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

For the record, it is important to note that due to a potential conflict of interest, Member, Myrna Sessa recused herself from the discussion and vote on the below Agenda item.

9. Chairman Lang reviewed the outcome in the Jacobson v. Figueroa complaint received January 13, 2021, which was issued in the Memorandum on July 1, 2021. After which, Chairman Lang reviewed the City of Stamford Code of Ethics (the "Code") Sec 19-15B regarding public reprimand, which according to the Code states:

"...any individual who is found in violation may be issued a public reprimand by the Board of ethics."

At this time, Chairman Lang indicated he would open the floor to entertain a motion to discuss whether the Board of Ethics should issue a public reprimand to Representative Figueroa. Vice-Chair Hynes made a motion. Monica Smyth seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The Board Members, with the exception of Myrna Sessa, considered the issue and deliberated on whether the Board of Ethics should issue a public reprimand to Representative Figueroa. It is important to note that a public reprimand is discretionary and that there is no obligation for the Board of Ethics to issue a public reprimand.

Vice-Chair Hynes made a motion to table the decision on this Agenda item pending more information from the Board of Representatives. Chairman Lang seconded the motion and opened up the matter to a discussion. After deliberation, a rollcall vote was taken with one (1) Member in favor; five (5) Members opposed; motion is not carried.

Thomas Hynes, Vice-Chair – Yes
Fred Springer – No
Monica Smyth – No
Benjamin Folkinshteyn – No
Kevin Quinn – No
Allan Lang, Chairman – No

Fred Springer then made a motion not to issue a public reprimand to Representative Figueroa on the matter of the Jacobson v. Figueroa complaint received January 13, 2021. Monica Smyth seconded the motion and noted for the record that due process was followed and careful consideration of the facts was taken and a violation of the code was found. Chairman Lang took a rollcall vote with five (5) Members in favor; one (1) Member opposed; motion is carried.

Fred Springer – Yes
Monica Smyth – Yes
Benjamin Folkinshteyn – Yes
Kevin Quinn – Yes
Allan Lang, Chairman – Yes
Thomas Hynes, Vice-Chair – No

Upon a motion by Fred Springer to adjourn, which was seconded by Monica Smyth and carried unanimously, the Meeting was adjourned at 8:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly Hawreluk, Acting Secretary