

**CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND ETHICS COMMISSION
MINUTES**

Thursday, July 20, 2023, 6:00 p.m. on Zoom

Attendees: Keli Cochran, Mark Samburg, Michael Lezaja, Michael Mulé, Patricia Murphy, and Jessie Carpenter (City Clerk)

Agenda Items

1. Call to Order: The meeting started at 6:02pm. This Zoom session was recorded.
2. Minutes: The February 28, 2023 meeting minutes, taken by Patricia, are located [here in Google Drive](#) (Drive). Those minutes were adopted, 1st Michael L., 2nd Keli.
3. Open Meetings Act Training and Annual Certification:
 - (a) Three commissioners (Mark, Patricia, and Mike M.) completed the open meetings training and sent their training certifications to Jessie.
 - (b) Since three commissioners have completed the training, Keli can submit the annual ethics certification form, located in [this Drive folder](#), to the state ethics commission before the October 1, 2023 deadline.
4. CY 2022 Financial Disclosure Forms: We reviewed the 7 disclosure forms from the City Council members and the Mayor in [this Drive folder](#) and set a deadline for revised forms.
 - (a) Dyballa- On page 3, she chose “No” for Schedule C but did not provide an answer on page 12, Schedule D. Since there is no conflict between the answer on page 3 and page 12, we will accept the form and will not ask her for clarification.
 - (b) Fulcher- We accepted the form.
 - (c) [Gibson](#)- On page 3, he chose “Yes” for Schedule H, but on page 16, Schedule H, he answered “No.” We need him to clarify his Schedule H answers on page 3 and page 16. Did he select the wrong box on page 3? Is an immediate family member employed?
 - (d) Honzak- On page 3, she chose “No” for Schedule C but did not provide an answer on page 10, Schedule C. Since there is no conflict between the answer on page 3 and page 10, we will accept the form and will not ask her for clarification.
 - (e) Seamens- We accepted the form.
 - (f) [Searcy](#)-
 - (i) On page 3, she provided no response for Schedule I, but on page 18, Schedule I, she chose “Yes.” On page 18, Schedule I, she also noted “Provide full list of stocks owned as FYI,” but a list of stocks was not attached to the form. We need her to clarify her Schedule I answers on page 3 and page 18. Should the stocks be listed under Schedule B or Schedule C?
 - (ii) We did not understand the answer to the question on page 5, Schedule A, Question 10. Question 10 asks what consideration was given, for example the price paid or the fair market value if it was a gift, when the property identified on page 4, Schedule A, Question 1 was acquired.

- (g) [Small](#)-
 - (i) On page 4, Schedule A, he chose “Yes” but the answer to Question 1 does not include the complete address of the property.
 - (ii) On page 4, Schedule A, Question 2, he did not choose whether the property is improved or unimproved.
 - (iii) On page 5, Schedule A, Question 6, he did not provide an answer.
 - (iv) On page 5, Schedule A, Question 9, he did not provide an answer.
- (h) Jessie will send Gibson, Small and Mayor Searcy an email with the questions the Ethics Commission had about their forms and will give them until Thursday, August 3rd at 5pm to submit revised forms.
- (i) We will meet on Thursday, August 10th at 6pm to review the revised forms.

5. New Business

- (a) Commission Vacancies: We have two vacancies on the Ethics Commission.
- (b) Meet with Board of Elections: In advance of the November 2023 elections, the Ethics Commission should have a joint meeting with the Takoma Park Board of Elections.
- (c) Agenda for September 26, 2023 Meeting
 - (i) Compare the [current state ethics law](#) to the [current Takoma Park ethics ordinance](#) and then complete the [annual certification form](#).
 - (ii) Do we want to make any amendments to the current ethics ordinance?
 - (iii) What guidance can we create based on the ethics ordinance?
 - (iv) What plain language materials can we make based on the ethics ordinance?
 - (v) Should we do a workshop for candidates that includes an ethics session?
 - (vi) Should we make a frequently asked questions (FAQ) document that would be accessible to the public and constituents and no more than 3 pages?

6. Next Meetings:

- (a) Thursday, August 10, 2023, at 6:00 PM.
- (b) Tuesday, September 26, 2023, at 6:00 PM

7. Sharing Draft Minutes: After each meeting, draft minutes will be sent to all commissioners and Jessie by email and will be placed in [the corresponding Drive subfolder](#).

8. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 7:32 PM. 1st Patricia, 2nd Keli.

Notes submitted by Michael Mulé on July 22, 2023.