

**Seattle Ethics and Elections Commission Regular Meeting
October 5, 2011**

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Seattle Ethics and Elections Commission convened on October 5, 2011 in Room 4080 of the Seattle Municipal Tower, 700 Fifth Avenue. Commission Chair Robert Mahon called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. Vice-Chair Bill Sherman, Commissioners Tarik Burney, Rich Cohan, Lynne Iglitzin and David Mendoza were all present. Commissioner Amit Ranade joined the meeting at 5:00 p.m. Executive Director Wayne Barnett and staff members Anthony Adams, Kate Flack, Gary Keese and Chris Thomas were present. Seattle City Attorney Jeff Slayton was also in attendance.

1) Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Action Items

2) Approval of September 7, 2011 meeting minutes

Commissioner Burney made a motion to approve the minutes, which Commissioner Iglitzin seconded. The minutes from the September 7, 2011 meeting were adopted unanimously.

a) Naikia Howard Settlement

The Director introduced the settlement, telling the Commissioners that Mr. Howard had acknowledged taking Parks Department equipment into his personal possession, not being truthful with staff in his interview, and asking a fellow City employee to tell the Commission's investigator that the items were in a Parks Department safe when they were not. The Director also told the Commission that the Parks Department had demoted Mr. Howard from his Community Center position to a job as a general laborer in the department. The Director urged the Commission to approve the settlement, under which Mr. Howard would pay \$1,500 for

violating the Ethics Code. He told the Commission that the fine was consistent with the penalty levied by the Commission against Teri Woods earlier in the year.

Commissioner Cohan moved to approve the settlement and Commissioner Mendoza seconded the motion. Several commissioners expressed their displeasure that Mr. Howard had been demoted and not terminated by his department. Commissioner Sherman noted that at a time when so many people are seeking work, to keep someone like Mr. Howard employed seemed wrong.

Following the discussion, the six Commissioners in attendance voted to approve the settlement. (Commissioner Ranade was not present for the vote.)

Discussion Items

3) City officers and employees soliciting gift to the City or others

The Director introduced the Mayor's Counsel, Carl Marquardt, and two staffmembers from the Mayor's office, Ainsley Close and Michele Scoleri, who joined the meeting to discuss the application of the Ethics Code to the Mayor's participation in a campaign to get kids to attend school. The Director invited the Commission to discuss whether, and if so under what ground rules, should City officials be permitted to solicit contributions to a City-sponsored effort from people or businesses that have dealings with the City.

On the whole, commissioners were comfortable with staff soliciting contributions to City programs from local businesses. But some commissioners raised concerns about officials soliciting people with specific matters pending before City government.

The Commissioners all agreed that the discussion would benefit from a draft opinion from the Executive Director, that could form the basis of a more focused discussion of the issue.

The Executive Director told the Commission that he would return with a draft opinion in the coming months.

4) Late-filing penalty for Elect Dian Ferguson (\$150)

The Director summarized the basis for the penalty and reported that the committee had paid the fine.

5) Late-filing penalty for Classen for Seattle Committee (\$50) and Whiting (\$150)

The Director summarized the basis for the penalty and reported that the committee had paid the fine but Ms. Whiting had not.

6) Late-filing penalty for The People for Forch (\$50)

The Director summarized the basis for the penalty and reported that the committee had paid the fine.

7) Executive Director's report

The Executive Director shared the draft changes to the Seattle Public Schools' ethics policy and a draft agreement between the SEEC and the City of Kirkland with the Commission, and encouraged commissioners to contact him with any suggested changes to either document. He reported on his meeting with the School Board's Executive Committee on September 14 at which he had introduced his proposed changes to the Board.

The Executive Director also reported that the Voters' Pamphlet was at the printer, and that several candidates had taken advantage of the rule change permitting them to discuss their opponent.

The October 5, 2011 Seattle Ethics and Elections Commission Regular Meeting adjourned at 5:48 P.M.