

LOUISIANA BOARD OF ETHICS
MINUTES
March 8, 2024

The Board of Ethics met on March 8, 2024 at 9:00 a.m. in the LaBelle Room on the first floor of the LaSalle Building located at 617 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, Louisiana with Board Members Baños, Colomb, Grand, Grimley, Roberts, and Speer present. Board Members Bryant, Couvillon, Ellis, Lavastida and Scott were absent. Also present were the Ethics Administrator, Kathleen Allen; the Executive Secretary, Carolyn Abadie Landry; and Counsel Tracy Barker, David Bordelon, Mallory Guillot, Jessica Meiners, and Charles Reeves.

Chairwoman Roberts announced that Board Member Lavastida was unable to make the meeting this morning since he is serving in the United States Military in Virginia. Chairwoman Roberts mentioned that Board Member Lavastida stated in a text that he was sorry that he was unable to make the meeting and he wishes us well.

Kathleen Allen asked that the Board consider the charges issued to Keteral Ducote in Docket No. 21-726 with a staff recommendation to dismiss the charges. On motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the Board dismissed the charges.

The Board considered Docket No. 21-591 regarding a consent opinion for Shelta Richardson, a former member of the St. Tammany Parish School Board, related to violation of Section 1111C(2)(d) of the Code of Governmental Ethics. Dr. Richardson signed a consent opinion for violation of Section 1111C(2)(d) and paid the civil penalty. On motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the Board adopted for publication the consent opinion and dismissed the charges pending before the Ethics Adjudicatory Board.

Alesia Ardoin, attorney representing Jefferson Parish Fire Fighters Association – Local 1374 – International Association of Fire Fighters (“Union”), appeared before the Board

regarding the adoption and publication for the Declaratory Opinion in Docket No. 23-435.

Alesia Ardoin did not receive a copy of the opinion so the Board has deferred Docket 23-435 and Docket 23-596 to give Ms. Ardoin time to review the proposed opinion.

Governor John Bel Edwards and Dane S. Ciolino appeared before the Board in Docket No. 23-1076 regarding an advisory opinion request as to the propriety of Governor John Bel Edwards serving as “special counsel” for the law firm Fishman Haygood LLP after leaving public office. On motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the Board concluded the following advisory opinion: 1) With respect to La. R.S. 42:1121A(1), the Board declined to render an opinion that any particular work will or will not violate the post-employment provisions of the Code of Governmental Ethics. 2) After considering the proposed contract between Governor John Bel Edwards and Fishman Haygood, the Board determined that Governor Edwards is not an officer, director, trustee, partner, or employee of Fishman Haygood for the specific purpose of La. R.S. 42:1121C. Accordingly, the Board determined that based on these specific facts, La. R.S. 42:1121C does not prohibit Fishman Haygood from assisting clients in transactions involving the executive branch of the State of Louisiana. Also, the Board concluded that La. R.S. 42:1121D prohibits Governor Edwards from sharing in any compensation received by Fishman Haygood for transactions involving the executive branch, when La. R.S. 42:1121A(1) prohibits him from providing such assistance or services. 3) Since, Governor Edwards will have no ownership interest in Fishman Haygood, La. R.S. 42:1113D(3) does not prohibit Fishman Haygood from entering into contracts with the State of Louisiana within the one year following the end of Governor Edwards’s term of office.

The Board considered the following item on the General Supplemental Agenda.

Governor John Bel Edwards and Dane S. Ciolino appeared before the Board in Docket No. 24-161 regarding an advisory opinion request submitted on behalf of Governor John Bel Edwards concerning the law firm of Fishman Haygood, LLP entering into a subcontract and contracts that involve the State of Louisiana. On motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the Board concluded that, since Governor Edwards has no ownership in Fishman Haygood, the Code of Governmental Ethics does not prohibit Fishman Haygood from entering into contracts with Office of Community Development (“OCD”) or the Department of Revenue. Also, since he will not share in any compensation received by Fishman Haygood in connection with the subcontracts or contracts between the State of Louisiana and Fishman Haygood and HGA, Fishman Haygood, and no Code of Governmental Ethics issues are named in connection with Fishman Haygood providing services to HGA.

Stacey King, a former member of the West Feliciana Parish Tourist Commission, appeared before the Board to consider an untimely waiver request in Docket No. 24-043 regarding a \$1050 late fee assessed for filing her 2021 Tier 2.1 Annual personal financial disclosure 21 days late. On motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the Board considered the untimely waiver request. After hearing from Ms. King, on motion made, seconded passed by a vote of 5 yeas by Board Members Baños, Grand, Grimley, Roberts, and Speer, and 1 nay by Board Member Colomb, the Board declined to waive.

Alesia Ardoin, the attorney representing Jefferson Parish Fire Fighters Association – Local 1374 – International Association of Fire Fighters (“Union”), appeared before the Board regarding the adoption and publication for the Declaratory Opinion in Docket No. 23-435. On motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the Board adopted for publication the Declaratory Opinion.

Alesia Ardoin, the attorney representing Douglas K. Williams, a former member of the Louisiana Trucking Research and Education Council, appeared before the Board in Docket No. 23-596 regarding a waiver request for the \$1500 late fee assessed for filing his 2020 Tier 2.1 Annual personal financial disclosure 384 days late. On motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the Board declined to waive.

Sibil Richardson, a candidate for State Representative/93rd Representative District in the February 18, 2023 election, appeared before the Board in Docket No. 23-514 regarding a personal financial disclosure answer that she submitted in response to a request to amend her 2022 Tier 2 Candidate personal financial disclosure. After hearing from Ms. Richardson, on motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the Board instructed staff to advise Ms. Richardson of her requirements to file the amendment within 7 business days from receipt of its letter.

Roy Lee Albritton, an unsuccessful candidate for Sheriff in the October 14, 2023 election, appeared before the Board in Docket No. 24-010 regarding a waiver request for the \$2,000 and \$960 campaign finance late fees assessed against Mr. Albritton whose 30-P and 10-P campaign finance disclosure reports were filed 36 and 16 days late, respectively. After hearing from Mr. Albritton, on motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the Board suspended all but \$250 of each (total \$500) based on future compliance.

Carlos Luis Zervigon, a member of School Board/District 6/Orleans Parish, appeared before the Board in Docket No. 23-957 regarding a waiver request for two \$2,500 late fees assessed for filing his amended 2021 Tier 2 Annual personal financial disclosure 34 days late and 2022 Tier 2 Annual personal financial disclosure 47days late. After hearing from Mr. Zervigon, on motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the Board suspended all of the

\$2,500 late fee based on future compliance for the amended 2021 Tier 2 and declined to waive the 2022 Tier 2 \$2,500 late fee.

Lisa L. Tropez-Arceneaux appeared before the Board in Docket No. 23-958 regarding a waiver request for the \$500 late fee assessed for filing her 2020 Tier 3 Annual personal financial disclosure 466 days late. After hearing from Ms. Tropez-Arceneaux, on motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the Board suspended all of the late fee based on future compliance.

William E “Bill” Willson, Sr., Monroe City School Board member, appeared before the Board in Docket No. 23-956 regarding a waiver request of the \$650 late fee assessed for filing his 2023 School Board Disclosure 13 days late. After hearing from Mr. Willson, on motion made, seconded and passed by a vote of 4 yeas by Board Members Colomb, Grand, Grimley and Roberts, and 2 nays by Board Members Baños and Speer, the Board suspended all of the late fee based on future compliance.

The Board considered the following item on the General Supplemental Agenda.

Patrick Ottinger, Henry C. “Hank” Perret, and William Koffman appeared before the Board in Docket 23-1067 regarding an advisory opinion request regarding Mr. Ottinger’s appointment as City-Parish Attorney for Lafayette Consolidated Government, as well as his appointment of assistant city-parish attorneys who are employed at Ottinger Hebert LLC. On motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the Board deferred the advisory opinion until the April meeting.

In its capacity as the Supervisory Committee on Campaign Finance Disclosure, the Board considered an advisory opinion request in Docket 24-159 regarding the ability of CenterPoint Energy to make a matching contribution to a charitable organization if its employees make a contribution to a political committee. On motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the

Board concluded that the Campaign Finance Disclosure Act does not prohibit CenterPoint Energy from making a matching contribution to a 501c(3) organization when its employee makes a contribution to a political committee.

The Board considered an advisory opinion request in Docket No. 24-056 from Alesia Ardoin, on behalf of Jennifer Brady, the former Director of the Finance Department for Livingston Parish Government (“LPG”), related to the post-employment restrictions. On motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, based on the facts presented, the Board concluded that the Code of Governmental Ethics does not prohibit Ms. Brady from providing compensated services to ELOS Environmental, LLC (“ELOS”), provided that she does not assist ELOS in matters involving the LPG Department of Finance.

Board Member Baños left the meeting at 11:35 a.m.

Since the Board no longer had a quorum, the remaining agenda items will be moved to the April Meeting.

The Board meeting adjourned at 11:37 a.m.

Secretary

APPROVED:

Chairwoman