

LOUISIANA BOARD OF ETHICS  
MINUTES  
October 25, 2024

The Board of Ethics met on October 25, 2024 at 9:07 a.m. in the LaBelle Room on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the LaSalle Building located at 617 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, Louisiana with Board Members Baños, Bryant, Colomb, Couvillon, Ellis, Grimley, Roberts and Scott present. Board Members Grand, Lavastida and Speer were absent. Also present were the Ethics Administrator, Kathleen Allen; Executive Secretary, Carolyn Abadie Landry; and Counsel Tracy Barker, David Bordelon, Mallory Guillot, Jessica Meiners, Suzanne Mooney and Charles Reeves.

Mr. Gray Sexton and Ms. Alesia Ardoin, attorneys for Adam Cutrer, an unsuccessful candidate for Councilman District 5, Livingston Parish, in the March 25, 2023 election, appeared before the Board in Docket No. 24-521 regarding a \$1,000 late fee assessed for failing to file his 2023 Supplemental campaign finance disclosure report. After listening to Ms. Ardoin and in its capacity as the Supervisory Committee on Campaign Finance Disclosure, on motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the Board rescinded the late fee.

Mr. Gray Sexton and Ms. Alesia Ardoin, attorneys representing D. E. Shaw Renewable Investment, LLC, appeared before the Board in Docket No. 24-571 regarding an advisory opinion request as to whether certain members of the St. James Parish Planning and Zoning Commission and the St. James Parish Council may participate in the approval of a permit. After listening to Mr. Sexton and Ms. Ardoin, on motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the Board declined to render an advisory opinion.

The Board took no action on GS1 Docket No. 22-304 and GS2 Docket No. 24-109.

The Board considered an advisory opinion request in Docket No. 24-589 regarding

whether the Code of Governmental Ethics prohibits Pride Opportunity Development LLC from applying for grants from the Northway Economic Development District (“District”) at a time when Pride Opportunity Development LLC, has a cooperative endeavor agreement with the District. On motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the Board concluded that Pride Opportunity Development LLC is not prohibited from applying for grant funding from the District provided the project will not be reviewed by Pride Opportunity Development LLC, as part of the cooperative endeavor agreement.

The Board considered an advisory opinion request in Docket No. 24-706 regarding whether the Code of Governmental Ethics permits Chris Guidry to work for GEC, Inc. on the Calcasieu River Bridge Owner Verification Project after retiring from the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development. On motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the Board deferred the matter.

The Board considered the 2025 proposed calendar meeting dates of the Board of Ethics. On motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the Board approved the 2025 Meeting Calendar.

On motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the Board agreed to take action on items G1-G14 en globo subject to any items being removed from the en globo listing for further discussion.

On motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the Board adopted the staff recommendations on items G1-G14, excluding item G1 and G13, taking the following action:

The Board considered a request for approval of a disqualification plan in Docket No. 24-591 regarding Dr. Luciana Soares and Mr. James Alexander, a married couple employed by Nicholls State University in the Department of Music within the College of Liberal Arts. On

motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the Board approved the proposed disqualification plan since it meets the requirements of the Rules of the Board of Ethics pursuant to Louisiana Administrative Code Title 52, Chapter 14, Section 1402.

The Board considered an advisory opinion request in Docket No. 24-600 regarding whether the Code of Governmental Ethics permits Christopher Huddleston to work part-time as an Assistant District Attorney for Lafourche Parish while also serving as the Town Attorney and Prosecutor for the Town of Lockport. On motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the Board concluded that Mr. Huddleston's employment with both the Town of Lockport and the Lafourche Parish District Attorney's Office does not pose an issue under the Code of Governmental Ethics. The Board advised staff to inform Mr. Huddleston the opinion request may present an issue associated with the Louisiana Dual Office-Holding laws, which is under the jurisdiction of the Attorney General and to suggest that he contact that office regarding the application of those laws and to inform him that a copy of his request, along with the Board's opinion will be forwarded to the Attorney General's Office.

The Board considered an advisory opinion request in Docket No. 24-601 regarding the application of the post-employment restrictions to Catherine M. Coker, a former employee of the Lafayette Consolidated Government ("LCG"). On motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the Board concluded that the Code of Governmental Ethics prohibits Ms. Coker from working for Preferred Mechanical on the water system pressure monitors contract with LCG until February 1, 2026, since the contract involves her former agency where she was the head of that agency.

The Board considered an advisory opinion request in Docket No. 24-602 submitted by Nicholas V. Cressy regarding whether the Code of Governmental Ethics prohibits "ex parte

communication” by City of Mandeville Planning and Zoning Commission members. On motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the Board concluded the opinion request presents no issues under the Code of Governmental Ethics. The Board instructed staff to advise Mr. Cressy that questions regarding “open meeting law” are under the jurisdiction of the Attorney General and to suggest that he contact that office regarding the application of those laws and to inform him that a copy of his request along with the Board’s opinion will be forwarded to the Attorney General’s Office.

The Board considered an advisory opinion request in Docket No. 24-611 submitted by Kenneth E. Campbell, on behalf of the DeSoto Parish Waterworks District #1 (“District”) as to whether the Code of Governmental Ethics permits the District to hire an immediate family member of employees of the District as the District Administrator. On motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the Board concluded that the Code of Governmental Ethics does not prohibit the continued employment of Josh Ryals, Mr. Flores and Mr. Vines upon hiring David Ryals as Administrator of the District. The Board also concluded that David Ryals is prohibited from participating in matters in which Josh Ryals, Mr. Flores and Mr. Vines have a substantial economic interest and the District may submit a disqualification plan.

The Board considered an advisory opinion request and disqualification plans in Docket No. 24-618 submitted by Gregory Belfour regarding whether the Code of Governmental Ethics permits immediate family members of Dr. Jason VanMetre to be promoted. On motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the Board concluded that the three immediate family members of Superintendent Jason VanMetre, Amanda VanMetre, Julie McCardle, and Tony McCardle, are eligible for normal promotional advancement to positions that would usually report directly to the Superintendent, assuming they meet eligibility requirements the position of

Chief Academic Officer or the position of Chief Operating Officer. Additionally, the disqualification plans submitted on behalf of Superintendent VanMetre meets the requirements of the Rules for the Board of Ethics pursuant to Louisiana Administrative Code Title 52. Chapter 14. Section 1402.

The Board considered an advisory opinion request in Docket No. 24-619 submitted by Julie Reed Dupuis regarding whether the Code of Governmental Ethics prohibits her from being a Commissioner for the Red River, Atchafalaya, and Bayou Bouef Levee District (“RRABB”) Board while also being employed with the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (“DOTD”). On motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the Board concluded that being a Commissioner for the RRABB Board and being a state employee for DOTD District 2 does not pose an issue under the Code of Governmental Ethics. The Board instructed staff to advise Ms. Dupuis that her advisory opinion request may present an issue associated with the Louisiana Dual Office-Holding laws, which is under the jurisdiction of the Attorney General and to suggest that she contact that office regarding the application of those laws and to inform her that a copy of her request, along with the Board’s opinion will be forwarded to the Attorney General’s Office.

The Board considered an advisory opinion request in Docket No. 24-620 from Lynn Hebert on behalf of the Terrebonne Parish Department of Planning & Zoning (“Planning Department”) as to whether the Code of Governmental Ethics prohibits employees from accepting a gift from a contractor. On motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the Board concluded that the Code of Governmental Ethics does not prohibit the Planning Department employees from accepting promotional tumbler cups from ARES Construction.

The Board considered an advisory opinion request in Docket No. 24-624 from the 18<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Attorney's Office (the "JDA"), as to whether Ms. Nadia Jenkins, a member of the Iberville Parish Council, may serve as an employee of the JDA. On motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the Board concluded that the Code of Governmental Ethics does not prohibit Ms. Jenkins from being employed by the JDA while serving as a member of the Parish Council but does prohibit Ms. Jenkins, in her capacity as a member of the Parish Council, from participating in matters in which she has a substantial economic interest. The Board instructed staff to advise Ms. Jenkins that her advisory opinion request may present an issue associated with the Louisiana Dual Office-Holding laws, which is under the jurisdiction of the Attorney General and to suggest that she contact that office regarding the application of those laws and to inform her that a copy of her request, along with the Board's opinion will be forwarded to the Attorney General's Office.

The Board considered a disqualification plan in Docket No. 24-627 from the East Baton Rouge Finance Department regarding the employment of Christy Hadley and her sister, Angela Sloan. On motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the Board approved the proposed disqualification plan since it meets the requirements of the Rules for the Board of Ethics pursuant to Louisiana Administrative Code Title 52, Chapter 14, Section 1402.

The Board considered an advisory opinion request in Docket No. 24-628 from Mark Kerry, an elected member of the Natchitoches Parish Council, regarding his service as an appointed member of the Board of Commissioners for the Natchitoches Parish Fire District No. 1. On motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the Board concluded that Section 1113A(1)(a) of the Code of Governmental Ethics does not prohibit Mr. Kerry's continued service as an appointed member of the Fire District Board through his current term. However,

Section 1113A(1)(a) of the Code of Governmental Ethics does prohibit Mr. Kerry from being reappointed to the Fire District Board by the Natchitoches Parish Council, as such reappointment will result in a prohibited transaction under the supervision or jurisdiction of his agency, the Natchitoches Parish Government. The Board also instructed staff to advise Mr. Kerry that his advisory opinion request may present an issue associated with the Louisiana Dual Office-Holding laws, which is under the jurisdiction of the Attorney General and to suggest that he contact that office regarding the application of those laws and to inform him that a copy of his request along with the Board's opinion will be forwarded to the Attorney General's Office.

The Board considered an advisory opinion request in Docket No. 24-669 submitted on behalf of McNeese State University College of Business ("College of Business") for the approval of a disqualification plan under the Code of Governmental Ethics regarding the employment of Lonnie Turpin and Morgan Turpin. On motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the Board concluded that the Code of Governmental Ethics does not prohibit Lonnie Turpin from remaining employed by the College of Business. Furthermore, the Board approved the proposed disqualification since it meets the requirements of the Rules for the Board of Ethics pursuant to Louisiana Administrative Code Title 52, Chapter 14, Section 1402.

The Board considered an advisory opinion request in Docket No. 24-573 submitted by Dane S. Ciolino on behalf of his client, Mr. Stephen Landry, as to whether the Code of Governmental Ethics permits Stephen Landry to own race horses while serving as the Executive Director of the Louisiana State Racing Commission. On motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the Board concluded that the Code of Governmental Ethics prohibits Mr. Landry from entering into any contract, subcontract, or other transaction under the jurisdiction or supervision of the Louisiana Racing Commission.

The Board considered an advisory opinion request in Docket No. 24-666 submitted by Ashley Aime, an employee of Livingston Parish School Board (“School Board”), as to whether she may receive compensation from the School Board for providing notarial services. On motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the Board concluded that the Code of Governmental Ethics prohibits Ms. Aime from entering into a transaction with the School Board in which she would be compensated for providing notarial services but would not prohibit the School Board from compensating her for services that are part of her employment duties.

The Board considered the following general business agenda items:

On motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the Board approved the minutes of the September 5<sup>th</sup> and September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024 meetings.

The Board considered a consent opinion in Docket No. 23-389 regarding Francis Breaux and Priscilla Breaux, former members of the Lafourche Parish Sewerage District No. 7 Board of Commissioners. Francis and Priscilla Breaux have signed the consent opinion and paid the civil penalty. On motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the Board adopted for publication the consent opinion and authorized staff to dismiss the charges before the Ethics Adjudicatory Board.

The Board considered a consent opinion in Docket No. 23-659 regarding a board member of the GEO Academies East Baton Rouge Charter School Board being paid by GEO Foundation for services rendered to the charter school. GEO Foundation signed the Consent Opinion and paid the civil penalty. On motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the Board adopted for publication the consent opinion.

The Board considered consent opinions in Docket No. 23-661 regarding Robert McGarner, a board member of GEO Academies EBR Charter School Board, providing services



to GEO Academies within two years following the termination of his term on the charter school board. GEO Foundation and Robert McGarner have signed the consent opinions and paid their respective civil penalties. On motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the Board adopted for publication the consent opinions.

The Board considered a consent opinion in Docket No. 23-688 regarding Darrin Dixon was appointed to a position on the Caddo Parish School Board by the Caddo Parish School Board within six months of the end of his term on the Caddo Parish School Board. Darrin Dixon signed the consent opinion admitting to an R.S. 42:1121 violation and paid the \$4,000 civil penalty. On motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the Board adopted for publication the consent opinion.

The Board considered an advisory opinion request in Docket No. 24-394 submitted by Dr. Curtis Penrod with the School of Business at Northwestern State University regarding Dr. Eddie Horton providing compensated services to CompTIA. On motion made, seconded, and unanimously passed, the Board determined that Dr. Eddie Horton is not acting as a consultant and that an advisory opinion should be drafted accordingly to present at the November meeting.

In its capacity as the Supervisory Committee on Campaign Finance Disclosure, the Board unanimously agreed to take action on the requests for “good cause” waivers of late fees assessed against candidates and committees included in item G21, en globo, subject to any items being removed from the en globo listing for further discussion.

On motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the Board adopted the staff recommendations on the items in G21, excluding Docket Nos. 24-521, taking the following action:

In its capacity as the Supervisory Committee on Campaign Finance Disclosure, the Board unanimously declined to waive the campaign finance late fees assessed against the following:

Docket No. 24-203 from Natural Resources Management Association Political Action Committee, August 2023 Monthly report of a \$1,400 late fee; and,  
Docket No. 24-562 from Patricia “Patty” McCarty, 2023 SUPP of a \$1,000 late fee.

In its capacity as the Supervisory Committee on Campaign Finance Disclosure, the Board unanimously reduced to \$400 based on Section 1205C of the Rules for the Board of Ethics and declined to waive the campaign finance late fee assessed against the following:

Docket No. 24-256 from Kacie Stewart, 2022 SUPP of a \$1,000 late fee.

In its capacity as the Supervisory Committee on Campaign Finance Disclosure, the Board unanimously reduced to \$600 based on Section 1205C of the Rules for the Board of Ethics and declined to waive the campaign finance late fee assessed against the following:

Docket No. 24-317 from Patrice Sentino, 2022 SUPP of a \$2,000 late fee;  
Docket No. 24-563 from Randy S. Nunez, 2023 SUPP of a \$2,000 late fee;  
Docket No. 24-593 from Gloria R. Robertson, 10-G of a \$2,000 late fee; and,  
Docket No. 24-594 from Lori Brown, 2023 SUPP of a \$1,1400 late fee.

In its capacity as the Supervisory Committee on Campaign Finance Disclosure, the Board unanimously suspended all but \$100 based on future compliance with the reporting requirements in the Campaign Finance Disclosure Act against the following:

Docket No. 24-560 from Herman R. Love, Jr., 2023 SUPP of a \$480 late fee.

In its capacity as the Supervisory Committee on Campaign Finance Disclosure, the Board unanimously reduced to \$1,000 based on Section 1205C of the Rules for the Board of Ethics and declined to waive the campaign finance late fee assessed against the following:

Docket No. 24-561 Melanie Newkome Jones, 2023 SUPP of a \$1,100 late fee.

The Board unanimously agreed to take action on the requests for “good cause” waivers of Lobbying late fees assessed against individuals contained in item G22 en globo subject to any items being removed from the en globo listing for further discussion.

On motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the Board adopted the staff recommendations on items in G22, taking the following action:

The Board unanimously declined to waive the fee assessed against the following:

Docket No. 24-592 Benjamin Clapper, May 2024 Lobbying Exp. Report of a \$50 late fee;  
and,  
Docket No. 24-629 Ethan Melancon, May 2024 Lobbying Exp. Report of a \$1,050 late fee.

The Board unanimously waived the late fee assessed against the following:

Docket No. 24-630 Caleb Malone, April 2024 Lobbying Exp. Report of a \$50 late fee.

The Board unanimously agreed to take action on the requests for “good cause” waivers of personal financial disclosure late fees assessed against individuals contained in item G23 en globo subject to any items being removed from the en globo listing for further discussion.

On motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the Board adopted the staff recommendations on items in G23, taking the following action:

The Board unanimously declined to waive the personal financial disclosure late fees for the following:

Docket 24-538 Abby Pugh, 2021 Tier 3, 470 days late of a \$500 late fee;  
Docket 24-539 Mattie Sampson, 2022 Tier 3, 264 days late of a \$500 late fee;  
Docket 24-540 Raymond Todd Riley, Sr., 2022 Tier 3, 252 days late of a \$500 late fee;  
Docket 24-543 Christopher “Tipper” Esponge, 2021 Tier 3, 482 days late of a \$500 late fee;  
Docket 24-544 Brian Deane Andrews, 2022 Tier 3, 245 days late of a \$500 late fee;  
Docket 24-545 Travis Ross Beaty, 2021 Tier 2.1, 201 days late of a \$1,500 late fee;  
Docket 24-547 Albert Peyton Bush, IV, 2021 Tier 3, 463 days late of a \$500 late fee;  
Docket 24-548 Alan L. Kirkpatrick, 2022 Tier 2.1, 14 days late of a \$700 late fee;  
Docket 24-550 Rex McCarthy, 2022 Tier 3, 98 days late of a \$275 late fee;  
Docket 24-565 Andrew “Rabbit” Lamonte Henderson, 2022 Tier 3, 323 days late of a \$500 late fee;  
Docket 24-566 Brent Charles Morales, 2022 Tier 2.1, 282 days late of a \$1,500 late fee;  
Docket 24-567 Charlene Trusclair, 2022 Tier 2.1, 56 days late of a \$1,500 late fee;  
Docket 24-568 Joel Patrick McSpadden, 2021 Tier 2.1, 425 days late of a \$1,500 late fee;  
Docket 24-569 Mark M. “Aubrey” Cole, 2022 Tier 2.1, 90 days late of a \$1,500 late fee;  
Docket 24-596 Kristi Miller Copeland, 2022 Tier 2.1, 9 days late of a \$450 late fee;  
Docket 24-597 Jonathan Kurt Reynolds, 2021 Tier 2.1, 10 days late of a \$500 late fee;  
Docket 24-599 Amanda Jane LaFleur, 2022 Tier 2.1, 169 days late of a \$1,500 late fee;  
Docket 24-615 Steven “Ike” Sagraera, II, 2022 Tier 3, 225 days late of a \$500 late fee;  
Docket 24-617 Vince Almond, 2022 Tier 3, 279 days late of a \$500 late fee; and,  
Docket 24-656 Anicia Banks, 2022 Tier 2.1, 13 days late of a \$650 late fee.

The Board unanimously suspended all of the personal financial disclosure late fees based on future compliance for the following:

Docket 24-542 Matthew “Matt” Steven Faulkner, 2022 Tier 3, 19 days late of a \$475 late fee;

Docket 24-598 Roger D. Boudreaux, 2022 Tier 2.1, 22 days late of a \$1,100 late fee;  
Docket 24-612 James R. LeLeux, Sr., 2022 Tier 2.1, 238 days late of a \$1,500 late fee;  
Docket 24-613 David Ryan Daigle, 2022 Tier 2.1, 43 days of a \$1,500 late fee;  
Docket 24-614 Jason T. Nolde, 2022 Tier 2.1, 47 days late of a \$1,500 late fee;  
Docket 24-616 Jucynthia Jessie, 2022 Tier 3, 245 days late of a \$500 late fee;  
Docket 24-655 Ronnie Carter Gregoire, 2022 Tier 3, N/A days late of a \$500 late fee; and,  
Docket 24-657 Ralph Edwin Woodall, 2022 Tier 3, 55 days late of a \$500 late fee.

In its capacity as the Supervisory Committee on Campaign Finance Disclosure, the Board considered a timely waiver request in Docket No. 24-564 submitted by Terence Vinson, an unsuccessful candidate for Member of School Board, District 3, Caddo Parish in the November 6, 2018 election whose 2023 Supplemental campaign finance disclosure report was filed 12 days late of a \$480 late fee. On motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the Board reduced to \$400 based on Rule 1205C and declined to waive.

In its capacity as the Supervisory Committee on Campaign Finance Disclosure, the Board unanimously declined to consider all untimely waiver requests in Docket 24-564.

In its capacity as the Supervisory Committee on Campaign Finance Disclosure, the Board unanimously agreed to take action on the requests for waiver request reconsiderations of late fees assessed against candidates and committees included in item G25, en globo, subject to any items being removed from the en globo listing for further discussion.

On motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the Board adopted the staff recommendations on the items in G25, taking the following action:

In its capacity as the Supervisory Committee on Campaign Finance Disclosure, the Board considered a reconsideration waiver request in Docket No. 24-254 regarding its decision to decline to waive the \$540 campaign finance late fee assessed against Danil Faust, an unsuccessful candidate for State Representative, 93<sup>rd</sup> Representative District in the March 24, 2018 election, whose 10-G campaign finance disclosure report was filed 9 days late. On motion

made, seconded and unanimously passed, the Board affirmed the prior decision to decline to waive the late fee.

In its capacity as the Supervisory Committee on Campaign Finance Disclosure, the Board considered a reconsideration waiver request in Docket No. 24-259 regarding its decision to decline to waive the \$300 and \$120 campaign finance late fees (\$420 total) assessed against Vincent Milligan, Jr., an unsuccessful candidate for Council Member, District C, Orleans Parish, in the November 13, 2021 election, whose 30-P and 10-G campaign finance disclosure reports were filed 5 and 2 days late, respectively. On motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the Board affirmed the prior decision to decline to waive the late fees.

The Board considered a reconsideration waiver request in Docket No. 24-400 regarding its decision to decline to waive a \$550 late fee submitted by John B. "Trey" Harris, Louisiana Strawberry Marketing Board, for filing his 2022 Tier 2.1 annual personal financial disclosure 11 days late. On motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the Board affirmed the prior decision to decline to waive the \$550 late fee.

The Board considered a reconsideration waiver request in Docket No. 24-402 regarding its decision to decline to waive a \$500 late fee assessed against William Keith Dennis, Madisonville Town Council / St. Tammany Parish, for filing his amended 2021 Tier 3 annual personal financial disclosure 34 days late. On motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the Board affirmed the prior decision to decline to waive the \$500 late fee.

On motion made, seconded, and unanimously passed, the Board exited out of General Session at 10:42 a.m.

The Board took a 10-minute recess.

The Board unanimously resolved into executive session to consider complaints and other matters deemed confidential pursuant to Section 1141 of the Code of Governmental Ethics and discuss other matters pursuant to La. R.S. 42:17

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**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

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Board Member Ellis left the meeting at 12:15 p.m., and the quorum was lost.

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Secretary

APPROVED:

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Chairwoman