

ST. MARY'S COUNTY ETHICS COMMISSION MINUTES OF DECEMBER 15, 2003

Rm. 14, St. Mary's County Governmental Center

Present:

Martha M. Neal, Ph.D., Chair
David Deaderick, Vice Chair
George Baroniak, Member
Zora Siemasko, Member
Shirley Baldwin, Executive Secretary
Absent: Viola Gardner, Member

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Neal at 2:04 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

None.

REVIEW/APPROVE MINUTES

Minutes of December 1, 2003 Mr. Baroniak made the motion to approve the minutes as submitted, seconded by Mr. Deaderick Motion carried.

FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE STATEMENTS

- Status 2002 Outstanding. No change in the status of 2002. There are still three outstanding, two of whom are no longer serving and one serving on the Plumbing Board. Mr. Norris was going to follow up to determine the status of that one. No response received from Mr. Norris. Dr. Neal will send Mr. Norris an e-mail to follow up.
- Review Session. Two financial disclosure statements were reviewed. One was approved and one was held pending further information.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- Memo from County Attorney re Verizon Wireless. Memorandum received from County Attorney's office advising the State contract with Verizon for the Mobile Wireless Communications Equipment & Services expired on November 30, 2003. The issue of Verizon offering discounted plans for State and County employees has now become a moot point. This issue is now closed.
- Plaque for John Dixon: The plaque to Mr. Dixon was mailed to him at his home address provided by Mr. Deaderick on December 2, 2003.
- Schedule for 2003 Financial Disclosure Statement: The following schedule was agreed to by the Committee members:

- o January 30, 2004 – mail out financial disclosure statements, with a due date to return by February 27.
- o March 15, send out first reminder letters.
- o April 5, send out second reminder letters.
- o April 19, send Cease and Desist letters

Because Dr. Neal will be out the last meeting of January and return the first meeting in April, it is imperative that the Committee have a quorum to handle these matters. Dr. Neal will speak to Mr. Forrest and send an e-mail to the BOCC regarding the appointment of an alternate

Because the Board of Education copies and distributes the financial disclosure statement at their meetings, it was decided to give Shirley Baldwin the discretion to change the schedule for them in order to fit their schedule if needed.

The motion was made by Ms. Siemasko and seconded by Mr. Baroniak to approve the above schedule. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

· School Board: Dr. Neal and Mr. Deaderick received phone calls from Clare Whitbeck reporting that there are a couple of people serving on the school board who have close relatives serving in the school system and questioned whether or not their decisions at the Board of Education affect the family members who are employed by the school system.

Ms. Siemasko felt her previous status as a teacher and principal with the Board of Education and the fact that she currently is employed by the Board under a State grant, could be perceived as a conflict of interest. She recused herself from any discussion of these issues in order to avoid any perception of a conflict of interest.

After some discussion, Mr. Deaderick agreed to contact Ms. Whitbeck and recommend to her that she request an advisory opinion from the Ethics Commission in writing on this matter, at which time the Ethics Commission will respond.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Baroniak made the motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Deaderick. Meeting adjourned at 3:50 p.m.