MINUTES OF THE
MACOMB COUNTY ETHICS BOARD
Wednesday, March 20, 2018

A meeting of the Macomb County Ethics Board was held Wednesday, March 20, 2018, at 8:45 a.m., in the Conference Room, on the Second Floor of the Talmer Building, 120 North Main Street, Mount Clemens, Michigan.

CALL TO ORDER
Chair Amboyer called the meeting to order at 8:45 a.m.

ROLL CALL
The following Members were present:

        Dr. Donald Amboyer, Paddy Laske, Brian Gabriel and Darnell Blackburn
        Dorie Vazquez-Nolan (arrived late)

Michelle LaBelle, Macomb County Finance – Risk & Insurance, prepared/reported the Minutes.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

MOTION
A motion was made by Paddy Laske, supported by Brian Gabriel, to adopt the Agenda as presented. The Motion Carried.

APPROVE MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 21, 2018

MOTION
A motion was made by Darnell Blackburn, supported by Brian Gabriel, to approve the minutes of February 21, 2018. The Motion Carried.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Frank Cusumano spoke regarding his Complaint (CO 1-2018).
CORRESPONDENCE, ADVISORY OPINION, AND COMPLAINT SUBMISSION(S)

The Board of Commissioners sent a request to update the new Ethics Board Member Roster (Darnell Blackburn) on the Website. This has been completed. Macomb Township resident Tom Champion submitted an e-mail request for a summary history of the Macomb County Ethics Board development and implementation. Macomb Township formed an Ethics Committee to explore developing an ethics township committee and ordinance. Chair Amboyer and any other Ethics Board Members are invited to their March 22, 2018, meeting to share experiences and answer questions.

No new Complaints or Advisory Opinions have been received since CO 1-2018.

Complaint #C01-2018 allegations were discussed among Ethics Board Members with Complainant Frank Cusumano and Respondent Jacqueline Ryan in the audience observing. The Board discussed the Complaint, Amendment, and audio recording at last month's meeting. Jackie Ryan's written response to the complaint was received March 16, 2018.

Chair Amboyer said no members of the Ethics Board, to his knowledge, had discussed the complaint and response among themselves prior to this meeting so as to maintain transparency to investigate and reach a conclusion regarding CO 1-2018. He read out loud the Rules of Procedure, Sect. 2.2 Complaints and Answers and Sect. 2.5 Hearings. The Board had no questions regarding the Rules of Procedure and how a potential Ethics Board Hearing would be conducted regarding CO 1-2018.

MOTION
A motion was made by Paddy Laske, supported by Darnell Blackburn, to ask Ms. Ryan and Mr. Cusumano if they want to be represented by legal counsel, at their own expense in accordance with the Ethics Board Rules of Procedure, at an Ethics Hearing.

The Motion Carried.

Frank Cusumano responded, when questioned by Chair Amboyer, that he will be proceeding without counsel and will represent himself during an Ethics Board Hearing of CO 1-2018. Jackie Ryan responded, when questioned by Chair Amboyer, that she has a team of lawyers to represent her. Chair Amboyer said that an Ethics Board Hearing would then be scheduled regarding CO 1-2018 inasmuch as no lawyers were in attendance to represent Jackie Ryan.

Dorie Vazquez-Nolan arrived to the meeting at 9:18 a.m.

MOTION
A motion was made by Paddy Laske, supported by Darnell Blackburn, to schedule a Hearing for Complaint C01-2018 on Monday, April 23, 2018 at 8:45 a.m. and have the monthly meeting at that time also. The Motion Carried. This motion was preceded by comments from Jackie Ryan that she is not a county employee although compensated
by the County of Macomb with full benefits as the Deputy County Clerk/Register of Deeds, accountable only to Clerk Spranger, Governor Snyder and President Trump; Macomb Ethics Ordinance Ordinance is not applicable to her, et cetera.

**CLERK/REGISTER OF DEEDS KAREN SPRANGER PRESENTATION**

Immediately following the Ethics Board Meeting of February 21, 2018, Macomb County Clerk/Register of Deeds Karen Spranger requested to address the Ethics Board at its' next regular meeting on March 20, 2018. Consequently, she spoke about her need to educate the Ethics Board on the laws, statutes, and the legislative branch of government. She stated that the Ethics Board is on notice for "Declaration of Authority," which she said means for the Ethics Board to come with her on an elevator and travel with her up to the suite where President Trump is located. Documents will then be executed to get help for her to defend Jackie Ryan.

Clerk Spranger stated "If my letter gets answered ...in two days the President of the United States will give me staffing authority." She further stated "I'm telling you now as soon as that gets signed, those documents come down, that authority will be executed and you will be subject to what I'm telling you ahead of time." Clerk Spranger repeatedly made lawsuit threats to the Ethics Board that if it ruled against Jackie Ryan relative to the Ethics Complaint (CO 1-2018) submitted by Frank Cusumano, Jr.

Clerk Spranger continued her comments with such statements as "The door is open. You sit down in the chair. And he goes 'Here is your authorization, authority.' You sit down in chairs and he goes - Here's your authorization to take back to Department Heads and the County Executive and these branches are to work together and enforce laws." She said that she will be "forced to file a claim regarding the Open Meetings Act and we will have a war - but she wants to educate the Ethics Board before any mistakes are made."

Clerk Spranger challenged the Charter by stating it is not in compliance with Constitutional Law. She threatened to file lawsuits individually and collectively against Ethics Board Members, "but is willing to talk it out." When Chair Amboyer advised Clerk Spranger to conclude her repeating comments to the Ethics Board, she stated that she is waiting for her letter to get answered from the President of the United States to give her staffing and other authority. Chair Amboyer terminated repeating comments of Clerk Spranger to move the Agenda forward in the interest of time.

**SUGGESTED ORDINANCE REVISIONS**

Chair Amboyer and Dorie Vazquez-Nolan met with Bob Smith, Chair of the Macomb County Board of Commissioners, and Board of Commissioners legal counsel Scott G. Smith regarding proposed changes to the Ethics Ordinance (Enrolled Ordinance No. 2016-03) on February 22, 2018. Chairperson Smith took the suggestions under advisement and there has been no subsequent communication since the meeting.
PENDING MATTERS
None

OTHER BUSINESS
None

NEXT MEETING and CO 1-2018 ETHICS HEARING: APRIL 23, 2018 - 8:45 A.M.
Talmer Building, 120 North Main Street, Mount Clemens, MI

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION
A motion was made by Dorie Vazquez-Nolan, supported by Paddy Laske, to adjourn the meeting at 9:41 a.m. The Motion Carried.

Approved:

[Signatures]

Donald J. Amboyer, Ph.D., Chairperson

Brian Gabriel, Secretary