



ETHICS REVIEW COMMISSION MINUTES

**REGULAR MEETING
April 17, 2012**

The Ethics Review Commission convened in a regular meeting on Tuesday, April 17, 2012, at 6:00 p.m. at Austin City Hall, 301 W. 2nd Street, Room 1027, in Austin, Texas.

Chair Henson called the Commission meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Board members in Attendance:

Chair Jim Henson, Austin Kaplan, Donna Beth McCormick, Vice Chair Velva Price, James Sassin, Peter Einhorn, and James Ruiz (6:05).

There were no speakers for agenda item 1 (Citizen Communication).

Regarding agenda item 2 (Approval of Minutes), Vice Chair Price made a motion, seconded by Mr. Sassin, to approve the January 17, 2012 meeting minutes with a spelling correction. Motion passed on a vote of 6-0 (Ruiz not yet present).

Regarding agenda item 3.A. (Introduction of new Commission members), Chair Henson welcomed new member Peter Einhorn, and Mr. Einhorn introduced himself.

Regarding agenda item 3.B. (Update on 2012 Charter Revision Committee recommendations re: the Ethics Review Commission and related Council action), staff Sabine Romero provided the ERC with an update on the Council action regarding revisions by ordinance to the ERC's jurisdiction. The group then discussed the suggestions made by a working group of members Mr. Kaplan, Mr. Sassin, and Chair Henson, regarding additional possible changes to the ERC's jurisdiction. The group reviewed a memo prepared by Mr. Kaplan, and agreed they would like language in Council's ordinance:

1. allowing the ERC to specify which member of a political committee is to be held responsible for complaints against political committees
2. defining complainant and respondent
3. allowing the ERC to draft and publish a letter of notification, letter of admonition, reprimand, letter of censure, or referral to the city attorney for ERC findings of a violation of City campaign finance code Chapter 2-2, based on the ERC's findings regarding the violation's severity, frequency, or intentional nature.

The group also agreed that they do not wish to see a change in 2-2-16(B) which currently does not involve the ERC in the campaign contract violation process. There was a motion and second to approve Mr. Kaplan's memo as revised and to communicate these recommendations to Council and staff working with Council in this area via appropriate means; motion passed 7-0.

Regarding agenda item 3.C. (Update on 2012 candidate forum planning), Chair Henson provided an update on the candidate forums.

Regarding agenda item 3.D. (Review of and possible recommendations regarding the City Statement of Financial Information form), the ERC discussed the need to include on the SFI the boxed phrase, “The person completing this form must provide the information requested below for themselves and their spouse/domestic partner.” The phrase is to appear immediately above question number one, in either the printed or electronic version of the PSI, effective May 1, 2012. Motion by Einhorn, 2nd by Vice Chair Price; motion carried 7-0.

Regarding agenda item 4 (Housekeeping Matters), the ERC decided to meet next on July 24, and include on the agenda a final report on the candidate forums and further discussion of the City’s Statement of Financial Information form compared to the state form.

Motion by Mr. Sassin, seconded by Ms. McCormick to adjourn, motion passed 7-0, at 7:20 p.m.

DRAFT