



**STATE OF NEVADA  
COMMISSION ON ETHICS**

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**MINUTES  
of the meeting of the  
NEVADA COMMISSION ON ETHICS**

The Commission on Ethics held a public meeting on  
Wednesday, March 18, 2020, at 9:30 a.m.  
at the following location:

**Ethics Commission Office  
704 W. Nye Lane  
Suite 204  
Carson City, NV 89703**

These minutes constitute a summary of the above proceedings of the Nevada Commission on Ethics. A recording of the meeting is available for public inspection at the Commission's office.

1. Call to Order and Roll Call.

Chair Cheryl A. Lau, Esq. appeared telephonically and called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. Also appearing telephonically were Vice-Chair Kim Wallin, CPA, CMA, CFM and Commissioners Brian Duffrin, Barbara Gruenewald, Esq., Teresa Lowry, Esq., Philip K. (P.K.) O'Neill, Damian R. Sheets, Esq. and Amanda Yen, Esq. Present for Commission staff in Carson City were Executive Director Yvonne M. Nevarez-Goodson, Esq., Commission Counsel Tracy L. Chase, Esq. and Executive Assistant Kari Pedroza. Associate Counsel Casey Gilham, Esq. and Senior Legal Researcher Darci Hayden appeared telephonically.

The pledge of allegiance was conducted.

2. Public Comment.

There was no public comment.

3. Approval of Minutes of the February 19, 2020 Commission Meeting.

Chair Lau stated that all Commissioners were present for the February meeting except Commissioner Lowry who was excused from that meeting and would abstain from participating on this item.

Commissioner Gruenewald moved to approve the February 19, 2020 Minutes as presented. Vice-Chair Wallin seconded the motion. The Motion was put to a vote and carried as follows:

|                    |      |
|--------------------|------|
| Chair Lau:         | Aye. |
| Vice-Chair Wallin: | Aye. |

|                          |          |
|--------------------------|----------|
| Commissioner Duffrin:    | Aye      |
| Commissioner Gruenewald: | Aye.     |
| Commissioner Lowry:      | Abstain. |
| Commissioner O'Neill:    | Aye.     |
| Commissioner Sheets:     | Aye.     |
| Commissioner Yen:        | Aye.     |

4. Appointment of a Subcommittee of the Nevada Commission on Ethics to Develop the 2021 Commission Bill Draft Request.

Executive Director Nevarez-Goodson informed the Commission that Executive Branch Agencies received instructions from the Governor's office regarding building the next Biennium Budget and deadlines for proposed Legislation for the 2021 Legislative Session. She noted that the deadline to submit the Bill Draft Request (BDR) proposal to the Governor's office will be May 20, 2020 and recommended that the Commission appoint a subcommittee to develop a recommendation for the Commission's next BDR proposal. She outlined that due to the time restraints, the Subcommittee would likely meet in April and early May in order to have the recommendation ready for the Commission during its May 20, 2020 Meeting. Executive Director Nevarez-Goodson shared that Vice Chair Wallin and Commissioners Duffrin and Gruenewald had expressed interest in serving on the BDR Subcommittee.

Commissioner Yen moved to appoint Vice-Chair Wallin and Commissioners Duffrin and Gruenewald to the BDR Subcommittee. Commissioner O'Neill seconded the Motion. The Motion was put to a vote and carried unanimously.

5. Report by Executive Director on agency status and operations and possible direction thereon. Items to be discussed include, without limitation:

- FY20 Budget Status
- Request for possible Interim Resources to Address Increased Caseload
- Budget and Legislative (BDR) Deadlines and Planning for 2021 Legislative Session
- Update on Coronavirus Protocols
- Education and Outreach

FY20 Budget Status: Executive Director Nevarez-Goodson acknowledged that the Commission was slated to expend the majority of current Fiscal Year expenses, however Governor Sisolak has issued a directive to halt in-state and out-of-state travel to all State Agencies and therefore travel funds will not be utilized and will revert back to the State General fund and to the Local Government agencies through future credits. She offered that she may do a work program to move some of the travel funds into court reporting to transcribe interviews given the investigatory backlog.

Request for possible Interim Resources to Address Increased Caseload: Executive Director Nevarez-Goodson informed the Commission that the Governor's Finance Office (GFO) would support the Commission's pursuit of an Interim contract attorney position to address the Commission's increased investigatory backlog and caseload. However, she opined the support for such resources would likely change considering the current COVID-19 pandemic and the projected budgetary issues resulting from the pandemic.

Executive Director Nevarez-Goodson stated her plan and the direction provided by GFO was to prepare a formal memorandum for BOE and IFC, including the justification and caseload statistics. She referenced the caseload statistics provided to the Commission in the meeting materials and welcomed feedback on the statistics from Vice-Chair Wallin, who has expertise in numerical presentations and experience with State budget in her service as State Controller.

Executive Director Nevarez-Goodson informed the Commission that the Governor's office had also issued a hiring freeze for State agencies. She commented that she expects that the Commission may not ultimately obtain the resources to hire a contract attorney next fiscal year but instead would seek to incorporate this request into the upcoming Biennial Budget.

Budget and Legislative (BDR) Deadlines and Planning for 2021 Legislative Session: Executive Director Nevarez-Goodson reiterated that the Executive Branch Agencies received instructions for building the next Biennium Budget and provided the Budget submittal deadline is September 1, 2020. She explained that she would provide draft enhancement requests to the Commission for approval prior to submittal. She also provided an overview of the previous enhancements requested last budget cycle that will be reconsidered for the next Biennium. Executive Director Nevarez-Goodson further thanked the staff with Enterprise IT Services (EITS) for their assistance in staff's ability to work remotely.

Update on Coronavirus Protocols: Executive Director Nevarez-Goodson provided that she has directed the Commission office to be closed to the public consistent with Governor Sisolak's direction to close State offices to the public which are not considered to provide essential services. In response to the demand, she issued a Press Release via electronic mail and posted it on the Commission's website. She explained that staff is already working remotely and will monitor the Commission's general electronic mailbox. For urgent issues, the public can call the Executive Director's direct line which forwards to her cell phone. Internally, staff can be reached during normal business hours of Monday through Thursday from 7:00am to 5:30pm.

Education and Outreach: Executive Director Nevarez-Goodson informed the Commission that in response to the Governor's order to cease travel, all currently scheduled trainings for next few months have been cancelled or rescheduled. She provided that we continue to research online training options to alleviate the need to travel to present Ethics training.

Commissioner Gruenewald moved to accept the Executive Director's agency status report as presented. Commission Duffrin seconded the motion. The Motion was put to a vote and carried as follows:

|                          |      |
|--------------------------|------|
| Chair Lau:               | Aye. |
| Vice-Chair Wallin:       | Aye. |
| Commissioner Duffrin:    | Aye. |
| Commissioner Gruenewald: | Aye. |
| Commissioner Lowry:      | Aye. |
| Commissioner O'Neill:    | Aye. |
| Commissioner Sheets:     | Aye. |
| Commissioner Yen:        | Aye. |

6. Commissioner Comments on matters including, without limitation, identification of future agenda items, upcoming meeting dates and meeting procedures. No action will be taken under this agenda item.

Chair Lau expressed her gratitude to Commissioners and Commission staff in working remotely during this difficult time and applauded the media communication provided by Executive Director Nevarez-Goodson regarding Commission office accessibility.

Commissioner O'Neill announced that he has filed for Assembly District 40 seat and has contacted the Governor's office for guidance on how this may affect his Commission appointment. Commission Counsel Chase confirmed that the Governor's office will provide direction on Commissioner O'Neill's appointment, and she will advise the Commission and Commissioner O'Neill regarding any necessary legal implications involving his candidacy for individual matters that may come before the Commission.

7. Public Comment.

No public comment.

8. Adjournment.

Vice-Chair Wallin made a motion to adjourn the public meeting. Commissioner Sheets seconded the motion. The Motion was put to a vote and carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 9:55 a.m.

Minutes prepared by:

/s/ Kari Pedroza

Kari Pedroza  
Executive Assistant

/s/ Yvonne M. Nevarez-Goodson

Yvonne M. Nevarez-Goodson, Esq.  
Executive Director

Minutes approved April 15, 2020:

/s/ Cheryl A. Lau

Cheryl A. Lau, Esq.  
Chair

/s/ Kim Wallin

Kim Wallin, CPA, CMA, CFM  
Vice-Chair