



**STATE OF NEVADA
COMMISSION ON ETHICS**
<http://ethics.nv.gov>

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

The Commission on Ethics held a public meeting on
Thursday, December 8, 2022, at 10:30 a.m.
at the following location:

**State Bar of Nevada
9456 Double R Boulevard, Suite B
Reno, NV 89521**

Zoom Meeting Information

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85242955791?pwd=eGYxNG0raFFxMm5WWnpOd3MvTHhhdz09>

Zoom Meeting Telephone Number: 720-707-2699 *

Meeting ID: 852 4295 5791

Passcode: 214987

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 and on the Commission's YouTube channel.

1. Call to Order and Roll Call.

Chair Kim Wallin, CPA, CMA, CFM appeared in-person at the State Bar of Nevada in Reno and called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. Also appearing in-person were Vice-Chair Brian Duffrin and Commissioners Barbara Gruenewald, Esq. and Thoran Towler, Esq. Commissioners Teresa Lowry, Esq. and James Oscarson appeared via videoconference. Commissioner Amanda Yen, Esq. was excused. Commissioner Damian Sheets, Esq. was absent. Present for Commission staff in Reno were Executive Director Ross E. Armstrong, Esq., Commission Counsel Tracy L. Chase, Esq., Senior Legal Researcher Darci Hayden, Investigator Erron Terry, and Executive Assistant Kari Pedroza. Associate Counsel Elizabeth J. Bassett, Esq. appeared via videoconference.

2. Public Comment.

There was no public comment.

3. Approval of Minutes of the November 16, 2022, Commission Meeting.

Chair Wallin stated that all Commissioners were present for the November Commission Meeting, except for Commissioners Lowry and Sheets who were not present and would abstain from participating on this item.

Commissioner Towler moved to approve the November 16, 2022, Commission Meeting Minutes as presented. Vice-Chair Duffrin seconded the motion. The Motion was put to a vote and carried as follows:

| | |
|--------------------------|----------|
| Chair Wallin: | Aye. |
| Vice-Chair Duffrin: | Aye. |
| Commissioner Gruenewald: | Aye. |
| Commissioner Lowry: | Abstain. |
| Commissioner Oscarson: | Aye. |
| Commissioner Towler: | Aye. |

4. Recognition of Commission Counsel Tracy Chase, Esq., for her years of dedicated and outstanding service to the Commission.

Chair Wallin introduced the Item and expressed her gratitude for the guidance and assistance Commission Counsel Chase provided to her initially as a commissioner and later in her role as Commission Chair. She thanked Commission Counsel Chase for helping her understand the Ethics Law and her efforts to ensure the Commission consistently did the right thing. Chair Wallin stated that the next Commission Counsel incumbent has large shoes to fill, and the Commission will have a hard time replacing her. She added that she would really miss Tracy Chase.

Chair Wallin outlined that in-person Commissioners would comment next, followed by Commissioners in attendance via videoconference, members of the public and Commission staff.

Vice-Chair Duffrin thanked Tracy for her experience, knowledge, good judgement, competence, professionalism, wisdom, consistency, reliability, trustworthiness, dedication, guidance, and integrity and acknowledged finding all those traits in a representative is extremely rare. He stated that Commission Counsel Chase represented herself, the Commission, and the citizens of Nevada at the highest level of excellence. Vice-Chair Duffrin shared that Commission Counsel Chase's Advisory Opinions were thoroughly researched and written with the needs of the requestor in mind and consistent with opinion precedent and applicable statutes including legislative intent in line with the Commission's guiding principle number six. Vice-Chair Duffrin recognized Commission Counsel Chase for filling in as the Interim Executive Director when needed and representing the Commission during Legislative Sessions. He wished her all the best in her new role as a retiree and asked that she stay in touch with the Commission.

Commissioner Towler commented that he had known Tracy Chase for a long time through his wife Julie, who was an attorney Tracy had hired with the Reno City Attorney's Office. He stated Julie had told him many times about the excellent legal advice given by Tracy and shared an anecdote about the best advice being a referral to a housecleaner. He acknowledged that lawyers provide great legal advice, but Tracy went above and beyond with her guidance. He commended her for her supervisory skills and capability as an attorney and a leader.

Commission Counsel Chase thanked Commissioner Towler for his comments and stated that Julie was special, and she really enjoyed working with her.

Commissioner Gruenewald shared on a personal note that she would come to meetings with questions about gardening and Tracy would give her advice about what to do with the problems Commissioner Gruenewald had and enjoyed Tracy's feedback on what she did correctly. She further expressed her appreciation that Commission Counsel Chase always delivered advice with a smile.

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Chair Wallin acknowledged that Commissioner Yen could not attend the meeting but had provided written comment to recognize Tracy Chase. Chair Wallin read Commissioner Yen's comments into the record. Please see attached written comments.

Chair Wallin read former Chair Lau's written comments for the record. Please see attached written comments.

Commissioner Lowry shared that Commission Counsel Chase is incredibly talented, has a great legal mind and a tremendous work ethic and can take pride in the fact that during her career she left Nevada communities better than she found them. She stated that Commission Counsel Chase made a difference in the integrity of government and the way state and local governments do business. Commissioner Lowry commented that it had been an honor to work with Commission Counsel Chase highlighting her admiration for Tracy's interactions with opposing counsel and her professionalism and knowledge in representing the Commission. She thanked Commission Counsel Chase for always making the Commission look good and doing a tremendous job. She echoed her fellow Commissioners in that Commission Counsel Chase will be greatly missed.

Commissioner Oscarson agreed with his fellow Commissioners' comments in recognition of Commission Counsel Chase. He stated that receiving complimentary feedback about Commission Counsel Chase from opposing counsel in litigation circumstances was notable. Commissioner Oscarson thanked Commission Counsel Chase for the professionalism she exhibited and efficiency in leading the charge for Commission staff. He acknowledged that Commission Counsel Chase was always prepared to offer legal advice with a smile and composed demeanor. Commissioner Oscarson expressed his extreme gratitude to Commission Counsel Chase for her guidance to and excellent care of the Commissioners.

Former Vice-Chair Weaver shared that he whole-heartedly echoed the preceding comments and thanked Commission Counsel Chase for her friendship, skill, and guidance during his time as a commissioner. He expressed his gratitude to Commission Counsel Chase for her infallible judgement and legal advice. Former Vice-Chair Weaver extended his best wishes to Tracy in her retirement.

Former Executive Director Nevarez-Goodson thanked the Commission for the opportunity to share in recognizing Tracy Chase. She emphasized her appreciation for Commission Counsel Chase's experience, quality, and collaborative effort put forth by Commission Counsel Chase during a challenging time at the Commission. Former Executive Director Nevarez-Goodson acknowledged that Commission Counsel Chase's unique and unrelenting integrity was the cornerstone of the Commission's mission. She expressed her gratitude to Commission Counsel Chase for her partnership and friendship. Former Executive Director Nevarez-Goodson highlighted Commission Counsel Chase's accomplishments and successes on behalf of the Commission and Nevada stakeholders during her tenure as Commission Counsel. She shared a few anecdotal experiences with Commission Counsel Chase traveling to COGEL conferences, representing the Commission before the Supreme Court and reformation efforts at the Nevada State Legislature. Former Executive Director Nevarez-Goodson thanked Commission Counsel Chase for her immeasurable contributions to the Commission and the State of Nevada.

Senior Legal Researcher Hayden thanked Commission Counsel Chase for her mentorship and guidance. She shared what a pleasure it had been working so closely with Tracy for many years and that she would be missed.

Executive Assistant Pedroza expressed her gratitude to Commission Counsel Chase for being the calm and consistent during recent transitions at the Commission and thanked Tracy for supporting her personally and professionally the last 5 years.

Investigator Terry shared his appreciation for the opportunity to work with Commission Counsel Chase and stated her presence would be missed in the office.

Executive Director Armstrong stated that while Nevada's legal community is small, Nevada's civil public attorney's community is even smaller, and recognized that Tracy Chase is one of Nevada civil public attorney's legends. He shared what a privilege it had been to have the opportunity to work with Commission Counsel Chase. Executive Director Armstrong commented that the Commission will hire a new Commission Counsel but will not replace Tracy Chase because she is irreplaceable.

Associate Counsel Bassett stated it had been an absolute pleasure working with Commission Counsel Chase and thanked Tracy for taking her under Tracy's wing when she started in her position as Associate Counsel. She expressed her gratitude to Commission Counsel Chase for her mentorship and support. Associate Counsel Bassett reiterated that Commission Counsel Chase will be missed.

Executive Director Armstrong read written comments provided in recognition of Tracy Chase by Greg Gilbert, Esq. of Holland and Hart Law Firm. Please see attached written comments.

Commission Counsel Chase shared it had been her distinct pleasure to be a public servant and the Commission is the epitome of what is right in public service. She expressed her appreciation to the Commissioners for their communication, thoughtfulness, and judgement and making her job as Commission Counsel easier. Commission Counsel Chase thanked her colleagues for their collaborative efforts and encouraged them to continue to work as a team. She commented how proud she was to have worked with the Commissioners and Commission staff. Commission Counsel Chase thanked everyone for their kind words and well wishes.

Chair Wallin presented the Recognition Plaque prepared for Commission Counsel Chase and read the inscription "Tracy L. Chase, Esq., Commission Counsel, Nevada Commission on Ethics, In Recognition and Appreciation of your Outstanding Leadership and Dedicated service to the Commission and the State, 2015 – 2022".

5. Report by Executive Director on agency status and operations, and possible direction thereon. Items to be discussed include, without limitation:
 - a. Education and Outreach
 - b. Update from COGEL
 - c. Legislative Session Update
 - d. Commission Counsel Hiring Update
 - e. 2023 Commission Work Preview

a. Education and Outreach: Executive Director Armstrong reported that social media posts will be targeting the topic of gifts in December and the cooling off provisions of the Ethics Law in January.

Executive Director Armstrong provided information on recent trainings conducted and upcoming trainings scheduled including presentations to Lander County, Golconda Water Board, Washoe County, and the City of Las Vegas. He shared that he would be conducting introductory sessions for newly elected or appointed government officials.

Executive Director Armstrong reported that the Commission's Online Learning System Request for Proposal paperwork was in final review stages.

- b. Update from COGEL: Executive Director Armstrong shared that he and Associate Counsel Bassett had just returned from the Council on Governmental Ethics Law (COGEL) conference held in Montreal Canada. He highlighted key take aways from the conference for the Commissioners.
- c. Legislative Session Update: Executive Director Armstrong referenced the Legislative Session Report provided in the meeting materials and outlined the bill tracking and analysis process.
- d. Commission Counsel Hiring Update: Executive Director Armstrong confirmed that the Commission Counsel job posting would be announced again on December 15 and recruitment would be opened to statewide candidates.

Executive Director Armstrong stated that the Commission has requested assistance from the Attorney General's office in the interim and will be meeting with representatives from the AG's office after the meeting to coordinate Commission Counsel duties.

- e. 2023 Commission Work Preview: Executive Director Armstrong referenced the 2023 Commission Work preview outline provided in the meeting materials. He provided information on upcoming meeting dates and potential locations.

Commissioner Gruenewald moved to accept the Executive Director's agency status report as presented. Commissioner Towler seconded the motion. The motion was put to a vote and carried unanimously.

- 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 Wallin reiterated that the Commission would miss Tracy Chase as the Commission Counsel.

- 7. Public Comment.

There was no public comment.

- 8. Adjournment.

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

The meeting adjourned at 11:26 a.m.

Minutes prepared by:

/s/ Kari Pedroza

Kari Pedroza
Executive Assistant

/s/ Ross Armstrong

Ross Armstrong, Esq.
Executive Director

Minutes approved January 18, 2023:

/s/ Kim Wallin

Kim Wallin, CPA, CMA, CFM
Chair

/s/ Brian Duffrin

Brian Duffrin
Vice-Chair

December 8, 2022
Commission Meeting Minutes
Attachment

Item 4 - Written Comment provided by Commissioner Yen

Commission Counsel Chase, my apologies for not being able to appear in person to thank you for your outstanding work. Your legal acumen and work ethic cannot be matched. I will miss your calm presence, skill, even-temper and depth of knowledge of the Ethics law and procedures. You are the highest example of the best in Nevada, and we have been lucky to have you as our Commission Counsel. Thank you for your service and dedication. You will be greatly missed, Commissioner Yen.

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Kari Anne Pedroza](mailto:kari.pedroza@ethics.nv.gov)
Subject: Fw: Remarks for 12/8/22
Date: Wednesday, December 7, 2022 4:35:02 PM

WARNING - This email originated from outside the State of Nevada. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Hi Kari

Thanks for your call. I'm forwarding what I sent you a few days ago. Let me know if you receive this. Thank you!

Cheryl

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: [REDACTED]
To: "k.pedroza@ethics.nv.gov" <k.pedroza@ethics.nv.gov>
Sent: Thursday, December 1, 2022, 08:11:47 AM PST
Subject: Remarks for 12/8/22

Hi Kari:

I hope you had a great Thanksgiving and are looking forward to the holidays.

I unfortunately will not be able to be with all of you on Dec 8 for the Commission meeting in Reno; however, would you take my comments below regarding Tracy and have them read at the appropriate time at the meeting?

Thank you Kari.

Cheryl

Tracy Chase is an extraordinary Commission Counsel. Her contribution on complaint cases, opinions, and other legal matters is impressive and immeasurable. Tracy always demonstrated fantastic initiative and creativity, and helped the Commission achieve its goals. Moreover, she helped protect Nevada citizens by interpreting and enforcing the provisions of the ethics laws.

Thank you Tracy for all the good work that you have done. We will miss you very much.

Nevada Commission on Ethics
704 West Nye Lane, Suite 204
Carson City, Nevada 89703
Attn: Executive Director Ross Armstrong

Re: Congratulatory Letter on Behalf of Commission Counsel Tracy Chase, Esq.

November 28, 2022

Honorable Members of the Nevada Ethics Commission,

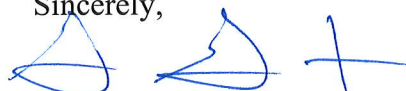
Holland & Hart LLP is pleased to submit this letter of recognition on behalf of Commission Counsel Tracy L. Chase, upon the special occasion of her retirement. Tracy's decision to embark upon the next chapter of her career marks yet another milestone in distinguished public service to the Nevada Ethics Commission and to the State of Nevada.

Tracy began her career in public service as a Washoe County Deputy District Attorney, before transitioning to Hale, Lane, Peek, Dennison, and Howard, where Tracy practiced law with distinction for nearly a decade before the firm merged with Holland & Hart. Following her tenure in private practice, Tracy returned to public service in the City of Reno City Attorney's Office where she attained the position of Chief Civil Deputy City Attorney, before accepting a position as Counsel to the Nevada Ethics Commission. Throughout her career, Tracy has been recognized for her dedication to community service and her civic leadership, earning the James M. Bartley Distinguished Public Lawyer Award and numerous commendations from philanthropic boards and commissions.

As many of her colleagues will attest, Tracy has devoted her time and considerable talent as a legal practitioner and advocate to making the State of Nevada a better place. Her dedication to the Nevada Ethics Commission, in particular, has helped to advance the Commission's objectives of enhancing the public's faith and confidence in government and upholding the principles of fairness and equal treatment under the law.

Holland & Hart is proud to join Tracy's friends, loved ones, and colleagues past and present in celebrating this special occasion. We extend our gratitude to Tracy for her dedicated public service to the State of Nevada, and we wish Tracy the very best.

Sincerely,



Greg Gilbert, Esq.
Partner