



**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  
Wednesday, June 15, 2022, at 9:30 a.m.  
at the following location:

**Nevada State Capitol Building  
Guinn Room  
101 N. Carson Street, Second Floor  
Carson City, NV 89701**

**Zoom Meeting Information**

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87947628267?pwd=aG4wNFVldXZTdWgxc3I0dWJaMDVPUT09>

Zoom Meeting Telephone Number: 720-707-2699 \*

Meeting ID: 879 4762 8267

Passcode: 967863

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 Kim Wallin, CPA, CMA, CFM appeared in-person in the Guinn Room in Carson City and called the meeting to order at 9:36 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 Amanda Yen, Esq. appeared via videoconference. Commissioners James Oscarson and Damian Sheets, Esq. were excused. Present for Commission staff in Carson City were Executive Director Ross E. Armstrong, Esq., Commission Counsel Tracy L. Chase, Esq., Associate Counsel Elizabeth J. Bassett, Esq., Senior Legal Researcher Darci Hayden, Investigator Erron Terry and Executive Assistant Kari Pedroza.

2. Public Comment.

There was no public comment.

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3. Approval of Minutes of the May 18, 2022 Commission Meeting.

Chair Wallin stated that all Commissioners were present for the May Commission Meeting and could consider the minutes.

Commissioner Towler moved to approve the May 18, 2022 Commission Meeting Minutes as presented. Vice-Chair Duffrin seconded the motion. The Motion was put to a vote and carried unanimously.

4. Discussion and approval of a Proposed Stipulation concerning Ethics Complaint No. 20-064C regarding Steve Alford, Head Men's Basketball Coach, University of Nevada, Reno, State of Nevada.

Chair Wallin stated for the record that Vice-Chair Duffrin and Commissioners Gruenewald and Oscarson served as members of the Review Panel and would be precluded from participating in this item pursuant to NRS 281A.220(4).

Commissioner Yen disclosed that she is a partner at the law firm of McDonald Carano, which represents the University of Nevada, Reno, who employs the Subject and after consultation with Commission Counsel Chase, Commission Yen abstained from participation on this item based upon this relationship and application of the Ethics Law and Judicial Canons to the disclosed conflict.

Chair Wallin identified the participating Commissioners for this item as Chair Wallin and Commissioners Lowry and Towler.

Chair Wallin asked the parties to identify themselves for the record. Associate Counsel Elizabeth J. Bassett, Esq. appeared on behalf of Executive Director Armstrong before the Commission in this matter and Chief Deputy Attorney General Greg Ott, Esq. and Senior Deputy Attorney General James Bolotin, Esq. appeared on behalf of Steve Alford ("S. Alford"), who was not in attendance but was provided proper notice of the Agenda Item and understood that the Commission would proceed in his absence.

Associate Counsel Bassett provided an overview of Ethics Complaint Case No. 20-064C (Alford) and the Proposed Stipulation. The Complaint alleged that S. Alford violated NRS 281A.400 subsections (1), (2), (3) and (10) and NRS 281A.420 subsections (1) and (3). On August 18, 2021 the Review Panel consisting of 3 members of the Commission on Ethics determined that just and sufficient cause to refer the Complaint to the full Commission for further proceedings. In lieu of an adjudicatory hearing, the parties agreed to the Proposed Stipulated Agreement submitted for the Commission's approval, a copy of which was provided in the meeting materials.

The Proposed Stipulated Agreement outlined that S. Alford's action constituted a single course of conduct resulting in one violation of the Ethics Law, implicating the provisions of NRS 281A.420(1) and allegations that S. Alford violated NRS 281A.400 subsections (1), (2), (3), and (10) and NRS 281A.420 subsection (3) were dismissed by stipulation of the parties. Based upon the consideration and application of the statutory mitigating criteria set forth in NRS 281A.775, S. Alford's violation would not be deemed a willful violation. The Proposed Stipulated Agreement further outlined that S. Alford agreed to complete Ethics Training within sixty (60) days of the execution of the Stipulated Agreement.

S. Alford's counsel, Chief Deputy Attorney General Greg Ott, Esq. thanked the Commission and Commission staff for their collaborative efforts and stated that the Stipulated Agreement was the right resolution for the matter.

Commissioner Lowry made a motion to accept the terms of the Stipulated Agreement as presented by the parties and direct Commission Counsel to finalize the Stipulation in appropriate form. Commissioner Towler seconded the motion. The Motion was put to a vote and carried as follows:

Chair Wallin:	Aye.
Vice-Chair Duffrin:	Abstain. (Review Panel Member)
Commissioner Gruenewald:	Abstain. (Review Panel Member)
Commissioner Lowry:	Aye.
Commissioner Towler:	Aye.
Commissioner Yen:	Abstain. (Conflict of Interest Disclosure)

5. Discussion and approval of a Proposed Stipulation concerning Ethics Complaint No. 22-038C regarding Kory Alford, Former Director of Player Development, University of Nevada, Reno, State of Nevada.

Chair Wallin introduced the item and confirmed that a Review Panel was not held in this matter and all Commissioners could participate in this item except for Commissioner Yen who provided a disclosure on this matter.

Commissioner Yen disclosed that she is a partner at the law firm of McDonald Carano, which represents the University of Nevada, Reno, who employs the Subject and after consultation with Commission Counsel Chase, Commission Yen abstained from participation on this item based upon this relationship and application of the Ethics Law and Judicial Canons to the disclosed conflict.

Chair Wallin asked the parties to identify themselves for the record. Associate Counsel Elizabeth J. Bassett, Esq. appeared on behalf of Executive Director Armstrong before the Commission in this matter and subject Kory Alford ("K. Alford") appeared via Zoom video conference.

Associate Counsel Bassett provided an overview of Ethics Complaint Case No. 22-038C (Alford) and the Proposed Stipulated Agreement. The Complaint alleged that K. Alford violated NRS 281A.400 subsections (3), (5), (7) and (10) and NRS 281A.420 subsection (1). In lieu of an adjudicatory hearing, the parties agreed to the Proposed Stipulated Agreement submitted for the Commission's approval and provided in the meeting materials.

The Proposed Stipulated Agreement outlined that K. Alford's action constituted a single course of conduct resulting in one violation of the Ethics Law, implicating the provisions of NRS 281A.420 subsection(10) and allegations that K. Alford violated NRS 281A.400 subsections (3), (5), (7), and (10) and NRS 281A.420 subsection (3) were dismissed by the stipulation of the parties. Based upon the consideration and application of the statutory mitigating criteria set forth in NRS 281A.775, K. Alford's violation would not be deemed a willful violation. The Proposed Stipulated Agreement further outlined that K. Alford agreed to complete Ethics Training in Indiana, where he is now employed, within sixty (60) days of the execution of the Stipulated Agreement. Another term included in the Stipulated Agreement is the requirement that K. Alford write a letter to the UNR President and Athletic Director, copied to the Commission, encouraging UNR's Athletic Director to adopt an ethics training program so that other public employees are provided with appropriate training to avoid similar ethics violations in the future.

K. Alford thanked the Commission for its consideration and resolution of this matter.

Vice-Chair Duffrin made a motion to accept the terms of the Stipulated Agreement as presented by the parties and direct Commission Counsel to finalize the Stipulated Agreement in appropriate form. Commissioner Gruenewald 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:	Aye.
Commissioner Towler:	Aye.
Commissioner Yen:	Abstain. (Conflict of Interest Disclosure)

6. Hearing on Dispositive Motions in Case No. 19-088C regarding Bartolo Ramos, Former Public Works Director (current County Manager), Lander County, including providing authority to the Chair of the Commission to prepare and issue the order reflecting the Commission's decision and other matters relating thereto, in consultation with Commission Counsel.

Chair Wallin introduced the item and confirmed that the Review Panel in this matter consisted of herself, and Commissioners Sheets and Oscarson. Pursuant to NRS 281A.220(4) review panel members would be precluded from participating in this item. Consequently, Vice-Chair Duffrin acted as presiding officer for this item.

Vice-Chair Duffrin asked the parties to identify themselves for the record. Associate Counsel Elizabeth J. Bassett, Esq. appeared on behalf of Executive Director Armstrong before the Commission in this matter and Rebecca Bruch, Esq. appeared on behalf of Mr. Bartolo Ramos, who was also in attendance and confirmed that he was provided proper notice of the Hearing.

Associate Counsel Elizabeth J. Bassett, Esq. presented the Executive Director's Motion for Summary Judgment. She argued that the Executive Director determined that two (2) alleged violations of the Ethics Law, specifically NRS 281A.400(3) and NRS 281A.420 (1) were properly brought before the Commission and judgment should be granted by the Commission as the pleadings and evidence demonstrate that no genuine issues of material fact exist in regard to these specific violations.

On behalf of Mr. Bartolo Ramos, Counsel Rebecca Bruch, Esq. presented her client's opposition to the Executive Director's Motion for Summary Judgment and argued the merits of her client's Motion for Summary Judgment before the Commission requesting Summary Judgment be granted by the Commission on the following alleged violations of Ethics Law provisions, NRS 281A.400(1) and (3) and NRS 281A.420(3).

The Commission meeting recessed for a ten (10) minute break.

Associate Counsel Elizabeth J. Bassett, Esq. presented the Executive Director's Reply in Support of Motion for Summary Judgment and the Executive Director's Opposition to Subject Bartolo Ramos' Motion for Summary Judgment.

Counsel Rebecca Bruch, Esq. presented Bartolo Ramos' Reply to Executive Director's Opposition to the Executive Director's Motion for Summary Judgment to the Commission.

The Commissioners asked clarifying questions of Counsel Bruch and Associate Counsel Bassett, and each provided these clarifications.

Commissioner Yen stated that the Commission has reviewed the entire record for this matter and has considered the pending motions and arguments of counsel and moved to grant summary judgment on Executive Director's motion relating to NRS 281A.400(3) and NRS 281A.420(1), that the Commission found 12 violations of NRS 281A.420(1) and that the Commission deny the relief requested by Subject Ramos. Commissioner Gruenewald seconded the motion. The Motion was put to a vote and carried as follows:

Chair Wallin:	Abstain. (Review Panel Member)
Vice-Chair Duffrin:	Aye.
Commissioner Gruenewald:	Aye.
Commissioner Lowry:	Aye.
Commissioner Towler:	Aye.
Commissioner Yen:	Aye.

Commission Counsel Chase indicated that the Commission still needed to consider whether the conduct was willful or non-willful. She recommended that the Commission direct the parties to provide briefs outlining willful or non-willful analysis to be considered at a later meeting.

Vice-Chair Duffrin moved to grant authority to Commission Counsel to create a scheduling order for briefs and to set a date for consideration. Commissioner Gruenewald seconded the Motion. The Motion was put to a vote and carried as follows:

Chair Wallin:	Abstain. (Review Panel Member)
Vice-Chair Duffrin:	Aye.
Commissioner Gruenewald:	Aye.
Commissioner Lowry:	Aye.
Commissioner Towler:	Aye.
Commissioner Yen:	Aye.

7. Delegation of authority to the Chair of the Nevada Commission on Ethics ("Chair") to represent the Nevada Commission on Ethics ("Commission") at the 2023 Legislative Session or any special sessions called, including without limitation, confirmation of authority to direct staff pursuant to NAC 281A.155, on matters relating to the Commission's proposed bill draft to amend NRS Chapter 281A, Nevada's Ethics in Government Law.

Chair Wallin introduced the item and asked Executive Director Armstrong to provide a presentation to the Commission pertaining to the Agenda Item. Executive Director Armstrong explained the intent of the item is to grant authority to the Chair to represent the Commission during the 2023 Legislative Session as it is fast paced. The delegation to the Chair would provide the Commission an opportunity to have a representative at the Legislative meetings and hearings.

Vice-Chair Duffrin moved to delegate authority to the Chair of the Nevada Commission on Ethics to represent the Commission at the 2023 Legislative Session or any special sessions called, including without limitation, confirmation of authority to direct staff pursuant to NAC 281A.155, on matters relating to the Commission's proposed bill draft to amend NRS Chapter 281A. Commissioner Towler seconded the motion. The Motion was put to a vote and carried unanimously.

8. Report by Executive Director on agency status and operations, and possible direction thereon. Items to be discussed include, without limitation:
  - Outreach and Education
  - FY22/23 Budget Status
  - Quarterly Case Log Update
  - Commission Operations
  - Branding Check-in

Outreach and Education: Executive Director Armstrong provided information on recent trainings conducted and upcoming trainings scheduled including presentations to the Nevada Silver State Health Exchange, City of North Las Vegas, Humboldt County General Hospital and the City of Ely in June as well as the Southern Nevada Regional Housing Authority in July and the Nevada Public Civil Attorneys Conference in September.

FY22/23 Budget Status: Executive Director Armstrong presented the year-end projections to wrap up the first fiscal year of the current biennium.

Quarterly Case Log Status: Executive Director Armstrong referenced the Quarterly Case Log provided in the meeting materials emphasizing the decrease in the case backlog.

Commission Operations: Executive Director Armstrong provided that the Commission is set to meet next on August 17 for an adjudicatory hearing.

Branding Check-in: Executive Director Armstrong requested that Commissioners consider how they would like to brand the Commission to its shareholders and shared that this issue would be discussed further at an upcoming Commission meeting.

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

9. 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.

There were no Commissioner Comments.

10. Public Comment.

There was no public comment.

11. Adjournment.

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

The meeting adjourned at 12:28 p.m.

Minutes prepared by:

/s/ Kari Pedroza

Kari Pedroza  
Executive Assistant

/s/ Ross Armstrong

Ross Armstrong, Esq.  
Executive Director

Minutes approved August 17, 2022:

/s/ Kim Wallin

Kim Wallin, CPA, CMA, CFM  
Chair

/s/ Brian Duffin

Brian Duffrin  
Vice-Chair