

# CITY OF JACKSONVILLE

J.J. DIXON  
CHAIR



ERICH FREIBERGER  
VICE CHAIR

ROBYN BLANK  
SUNNY GETTINGER  
LATONYA LIPSCOMB SMITH

WILLIAM MAULE  
JUDGE LINDA MCCALLUM  
LEAH PALESTRANT  
SCOTT SIMPSON

## ETHICS COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES City Hall, First Floor, Don Davis Room Monday, February 12, 2024

The meeting was called to order at 4:04 p.m. by Ms. Dixon. Ethics Commission attendees: Chair J.J. Dixon, Erich Freiburger, William Maule via phone from 4:04 p.m. to 4:25 p.m., Linda McCallum, Scott Simpson, Robyn Blank, and Sunny Gettinger. Excused absence: LaTonya Lipscomb Smith and Leah Palestrant

Others in attendance: Kirby Oberdorfer, Director of the Office of Ethics, Compliance and Oversight (OECO); Paige Johnston, Ethics Attorney (OECO); Sandy Homrighouse, Executive Assistant (OECO); Carla Miller, Senior Ethics Advisor (OECO); Andrea Myers, Program and Training Manager (OECO); and Cherry Shaw Pollock, Office of General Counsel (OGC).

Public In Attendance: Council Member Matt Carlucci, John Nooney, Carnell Oliver, Michele Lewas, Brittany Norris, Cory Armstrong, Hanna Holthaus, Ariel Schiller, News 4 Jax Cameraperson, Tammy Jackson, Althea Mikeh, Jake Stofan, Wanda M. Dixon, Sheri Webber, D.S.W.S. member and Eunice Barnum.

### Confirmation of Quorum:

Ms. Dixon stated the meeting would be a condensed meeting. Some Ethics Commission members must leave at 5:00 p.m. which means a quorum will be lost. Ms. Dixon asked if any Ethics Commission members could not stay until 5:00 p.m. None responded. Six (6) Ethics Commission members were present in-person and a quorum for the meeting was established. Mr. Maule requested to attend the meeting telephonically due to extraordinary circumstances preventing him from attending the meeting in person. Ms. Dixon stated the Ethics Commission needs to determine whether Mr. Maule's inability to attend the meeting in person constitutes an extraordinary circumstance. Ms. Dixon stated Mr. Maule was listening and his reason for being unable to attend the meeting in person due to being out of town on military duty. Judge McCallum made a motion that Mr. Maule be able to attend the meeting telephonically due to his extraordinary circumstances. Dr. Freiburger seconded the motion. With no further discussion, the vote was 6-0 in favor (vote by Ethics Commission members physically present in the room).

**Office of Ethics, Compliance & Oversight**  
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### New Business:

Discussion of Senate Bill 7014/House Bill 1597 and the Potential Impact on Ethics Commissions:

Ms. Oberdorfer gave a history of Senate Bill 7014/House Bill 1597 which will have a negative impact on local Ethics Commissions due to requiring personal knowledge to submit a complaint and a prohibition on local Ethics Commissions' ability to self-initiate a complaint. OECO has been working with various Ethics Offices throughout the State of Florida to educate House members on the impacts of Senate Bill 7014/House Bill 1597.

Ms. Oberdorfer provided data regarding Jacksonville Ethics Commission complaints from 2015-2023 and noted that the majority of the Jacksonville Ethics Commission complaints are informal and anonymous.

Ms. Dixon welcomed Council Member Matt Carlucci. Ms. Dixon stated Council Member Carlucci has been vocal about his opposition to the requirements in Senate Bill 7014 that limit Ethics Commission complaints to only those based upon "personal knowledge and prohibit self-initiation of local Ethics Commission complaint, which were both approved as amendments to Senate Bill 7014 by the Senate during floor debate on February 1, 2024. Council Member Carlucci thanked the Jacksonville Ethics Commission members for donating their time and expressed his opinion about SB 7014. Council Member Carlucci distributed a letter from former Interim General Counsel Bob Rhodes to the Florida Legislature regarding his concerns related to Senate Bill 7014.

A discussion occurred regarding Senate Bill 7014/House Bill 1597. Judge McCallum, Dr. Freiberger, Ms. Gettinger, Mr. Simpson, Ms. Dixon and Ms. Blank voiced opposition to Senate Bill 7014/House Bill 1597.

### Public Comment:

Ms. Dixon requested public comment. Mr. Nooney, Mr. Oliver and Ms. Barnum provided public comment. Ms. Jackson completed a public comment card, but did not wish to speak.

### Continuation of New Business Discussion:

Ms. Dixon referred to the draft press release. Dr. Freiberger made a motion to authorize Ms. Dixon and the Ethics Office to revise the Bob Rhodes letter. Judge McCallum seconded the motion. Ms. Johnston stated this must be done in the Sunshine. A discussion occurred. Dr. Freiberger withdrew his motion. Ms. Oberdorfer stated in the record that no one said the motion was not legal. A new motion was made by Dr. Freiberger to revise the draft press release adding the following changes: (1) Second paragraph from Mr. Rhodes' letter (2) Second to the last sentence from the third paragraph (3) Final paragraph (4) Points from Judge McCallum's letter (5) Move the fifth paragraph to the third paragraph. Mr. Simpson seconded the motion. Public comment was already given earlier in the meeting. With no further discussion, the vote was 6-0 in favor (vote by Ethics Commission members physically present in the room; Mr. Maule had dropped off the call).

Announcements:

There were no announcements.

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 4:56 p.m.

*Sandy Homrighouse*

5-13-24

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Sandy Homrighouse, Executive Assistant, OECO      Date of Approval

This is a summary of the meeting and not a verbatim transcription. A recording of these proceedings is available at <http://www.coj.net/departments/ethics-office/notices,-agendas-minutes>.