

PUTNAM COUNTY BOARD OF ETHICS

OFFICIAL MINUTES

Meeting of February 21, 2014

Members Present: Bob Bickford, Al Lotrecchiano, and Paul Eldridge

Absent: Kathleen Delamere

Staff: Jan Miller

The meeting began at 10:15 am in the large conference room of the County Personnel Department. The delay was caused by Mr. Bickford's having had a minor incident while driving in the snow. Roll call was taken. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. The meeting was then adjourned while a hearing was held.

Hearing

Mr. Andrew Elio, a member of the Board of Electrical Examiners, appeared before the Board in response to the Notice of Hearing that had been sent to him and other persons who were delinquent in filing their annual disclosure statements for 2012 which had been due in 2013. No other recipients of the Notice appeared. Mr. Elio began by requesting a postponement of the hearing in order to file a FOIL request for information as to all those required to file. He stated that he objected to the relevance of his personal information to the Ethics Board. Upon receiving an explanation of the Code requirements, Mr. Elio withdrew his request for a postponement and his FOIL request, and indicated that he would comply by filing his 2012 statement not later than March 31, 2014. Mr. Elio was excused and the hearing was adjourned at approximately 10:30.

Meeting

Upon recommencement of the meeting, the Board was advised that four others had responded to the Notice of Hearing either in writing or in a phone call. The Board removed their names, as well as Mr. Elio's, from the list of delinquent filers included in the Board's annual report to be submitted to the Legislature, and directed that they be given a 30-day notice of extension of time for filing. The Chair requested that staff, prior to March 15th, send a letter of notice to each person who had failed to respond to the Notice of Hearing advising them that their names have been forwarded to the County Legislature together with the Board's recommendation that the Legislature impose a civil penalty of \$100 for their non-compliance.

An election of officers resulted in the following:

- Chair – Robert Bickford.
- Vice Chair –Alphonso Lotrecchiano
- Secretary –Paul Eldridge.

Minutes of the November 22, 2013 meeting were reviewed and approved.

Under Old Business the Chair reported that there has not yet been a response from the Law Department to the draft rule of procedure relating to violations of §55-7D, failure to file true and accurate annual financial disclosure forms, which had been submitted for their review and comment prior to adoption by the Board. Paul reported that he met Attorney Redding at a conference recently and there has been no legal progress on the outstanding complaint. As for appointments to the Board, it was noted that reappointment of Al Lotrecchiano to the Board has been forwarded to the Rules Committee by the County Executive for approval. There has been no appointment made yet to fill the vacancy of Ms. Santamorena's seat. Also, due to a lack of action by the Legislature in 2012 to approve the County Executive's reappointment of Kathleen Delamere, that

approval is also before the Rules Committee.

Under New Business, a discussion of possible nominees for replacement of Mrs. Santamarena on the Board did not render any candidates at present. All members were asked to continue thinking of candidates, particularly retirees in towns not currently represented on the Board. It was brought to the attention of the Board that a F.O.I.L. request was filed in January, 2014 by Mr. Lee Higgins of The Journal News, seeking financial disclosure information for the last 10 years from 3 elected officials and one staff member of the District Attorney's office. Said request was forwarded to the Law Department, and a response dated February 6th to Mr. Higgins indicated that, due to the scope of his request, a final response would be sent by the Law Department on or about March 14, 2014.

The Board moved to executive session at 10:54 to review 2014 financial disclosure forms. Sixty-seven forms were reviewed; 55 were accepted and 12 will be returned for additions or corrections.

At 12:10 pm the Board resumed the public session, and adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Paul Eldridge, Secretary