

**APPROVED MINUTES**  
**ETHICS COMMISSION OF THE UNIFIED GOVERNMENT**  
**Courtroom No. 18, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Wyandotte County Courthouse**  
**710 N. 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Kansas City, KS 66101**

**February 9, 2023**

**Regular Meeting:**

**Roll Call:**

- X Member Patty Orth
- X Member Emily Cisneros
- X Member Ian Tomasic (By phone)
- X Member Kimberley Partridge
- X Member Ricky Bragg
- X Ruth Benien, Administrator

X (Present) E (Excused) U (Unexcused)

**Call to Order:**

Chairperson Orth called the Meeting to order at 4:12 p.m. Commissioners Cisneros, Tomasic, Bragg and Partridge were present. The meeting was switched from in person to Zoom due to the weather. Administrator Benien was present.

**Public Comment:** No members of the public were present.

**Old Business:**

**a). Approval of Minutes:**

The Minutes of the January 12, 2023 meeting were reviewed and approved with corrections noted. Commissioner Cisneros moved for approval with a second by Commissioner Tomasic. The Motion passed unanimously. No meeting was held in December, 2022.

**b). Monthly Administrator's Report:**

Administrator Benien provided the individual monthly report for the time period from January 1, 2023 through January 31, 2023 which outlined the training provided in the

month and scheduled and the nature of the ethics opinions rendered, and complaints received.

Continuing Ethics training presentations by video have and are being provided by the Human Resources department for the police and fire department and are also used for a section of the sheriff's department and water treatment plant due to the shifts in each department.

A special training session will be scheduled for the newly elected Mayor and UG Commissioners and any remaining UG Ethics Commissioners still needing training. Ethics training will also be scheduled for the newly created citizen's committees created by the Mayor. A Basic Training was held on January 12, 2023, in person, at Human Resources. A Basic Training session is scheduled for the Library Board at its monthly meeting on June 20, 2023.

A request from the UG Legal Department was received to provide UG Ethics training for the Advisory Council on Aging. The same was coordinated and materials provided in advance for review. The training will be rescheduled for a later date after COVID limitations are lifted.

Ethics Administrator Benien is in the process of obtaining lists of individuals appointed to the Mayor's Advisory Boards, Commissions and Committees and training for those groups will be scheduled.

In the coming year a rewrite and update are planned for the UG Ethic's training materials and video.

Three new complaints by email were received. Thirty one complaints are pending awaiting additional information, referral or review. Two complaints were closed for lack of jurisdiction and referred. One closed with a violation but offending posts taken down. Two new email advisory opinion requests were received and one by hotline contact. Ten requests for advisory opinion are pending. Two advisory opinions were provided and closed with no jurisdiction. No new requests for information were received.

**New Business:**

Ethics Administrator Benien will try at each meeting to cover a limited provision of the UG Ethics Code to better help the UG Ethics Commissioners understand its provisions or answer questions they may have. The topic this month and in upcoming months will continue to deal with the UG Ethics Code provisions being considered for review and/or amendment.

Discussion was had with respect to a proposal suggested by the Mayor to eliminate the UG Ethics Commission and send to the state Ethics. Administrator Benien advised that such proposal had been made in the past and was denied and refused by the state commission.

The review of the UG Ethics Code continued and was concluded with UG Ethics Code being reviewed for final review and vote with consideration of points made by the UG legal department. After discussion and review it was unanimously agreed, after final discussions were made, to approve the final draft of the proposed UG Ethics Code changes and forward the same to the UG Legal Department for ultimate provision to the UG Commission for vote and approval. Motion to Approve was made by Commissioner Cisneros. Second by Commissioner Partridge. Motion passed unanimously.

The next monthly meeting will be on March 9, 2023, in person, at the Wyandotte County Courthouse in the Wyandotte County Law Library conference room. Masks may be required for courthouse entry.

**Executive Session:**

No Executive Session was held.

Adjournment:

Motion for adjournment by Commissioner Cisneros

Seconded by Commissioner Tomasic

Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting Adjourned at 4:52 p.m.

Next Meeting is March 9, 2023 at 4:00 p.m. in person.

Respectfully Submitted,

s/Ruth M. Benien

Ruth M. Benien, UG Ethics Administrator