

**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**

**September 9, 2021**

**Regular Meeting:**

**Roll Call:**

- X Member Patty Orth
- X Member Emily Cisneros
- X Member Ian Tomasic
- 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 4:06 p.m. in the Law Library Conference Room of the Wyandotte Courthouse. Commissioners Cisneros, Tomasic, Partridge and Bragg were in attendance. Administrator Benien was present.

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

**Old Business:**

**a). Approval of Minutes:**

The Minutes of the August 12, 2021 meeting were reviewed and approved. Commissioner Cisneros moved for approval with a second by Commissioner Partridge with corrections noted. The Motion passed unanimously.

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

Administrator Benien provided the individual monthly report for the time period from August 1, 2021 through August 31, 2021 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 UG Basic Ethics training was held by Zoom on May 26, 2021 for the sheriff's deputies by Zoom. A Basic Ethics training was held by Zoom on June 30, 2021. An in person Basic Ethics training was held on July 15, 2021 at the Police Academy. A UG Ethics Continuing Education training was held by Zoom on August 26, 2021. A UG Ethics Continuing Education training is scheduled by Zoom on September 15, 2021. A UG Ethics Basic training is scheduled by Zoom for September 22, 2021. Any new Ethics Commissioners available to attend this training are invited to do so.

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.

An email request was received on December 31, 2019 regarding provision of Basic Ethics training for the newly elected UG Commissioner. The same will be scheduled as allowable with the COVID restrictions. That training will be coordinated for the newly elected UG Commissioners, if any, from the November election.

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

Nine new complaints, one by hotline and eight by email were received. Five complaints are pending awaiting additional information, referral or review. Nine complaints were closed for no jurisdiction and referred and one for no follow up. Two new advisory opinion requests were received, one by email and one by phone. Two advisory opinion requests were pending as of the end of August, 2021. Eight advisory opinions were provided or closed, four because of no follow up, three with opinion of no violation, one with referral.

#### **Requests for Information:**

Two new Requests for Information were received. Two were closed, one with information provided, one with no jurisdiction over information requested.

#### **New Business:**

All Ethics Commissioners were again asked to continually review and make notes for additional changes or improvement to the UG Ethics Web Site. A Zoom meeting was held on May 26, 2021 between the UG Ethics Administrator and UG IT staff to upgrade and revise the UG Ethics website. Additions will be made to the website to include photographs and biographical information for the new UG Ethics Commissioners.

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 dealt with the background and layout of the UG Ethics Code and the various materials for the benefit of the new commissioners and obtaining of badges.

A review of the UG Ethics Code will continue with UG Ethics Code Sec. 2-258 through Sec. 2-259 and Sec. 2-260 through Sec. 2-261 and Sec. 264 through Sec. 265 to be reviewed and notes made for ultimate changes or action. It was agreed, without a vote, to go forward with the process from where it currently is and to hold over any review at this meeting until the next meeting. A copy of the 2014 proposed amendments has been provided to the new UG Ethics Commissioners. All new commissioners have been provided with a hard copy of the current UG Ethics Code.

Arrangements will be made for the new UG Ethics Commissioners to obtain entrance badges.

The next monthly meeting on October 14, 2021 will be in person.

**Executive Session:**

No Executive Session was held.

Adjournment:

Motion for adjournment by Commissioner Tomasic

Seconded by Commissioner Cisneros

Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting Adjourned at 5:24 p.m.

Next Meeting is October 14, 2021 at 4:00 p.m. in person.

Respectfully Submitted,

s/Ruth M. Benien  
Ruth M. Benien  
UG Ethics Administrator