

PIERCE COUNTY ETHICS COMMISSION

MINUTES of the September 14, 2022 Meeting
Online open public meeting at Wheelock Library & via Zoom

Call to Order: 4:32 PM

Quorum Call

Commission Members Present:

X Rob Batey X Peter Donor X Blake Patton
 X Lisa Petorak X Mike Stewart

If not present, minutes shall note any unexcused absence.

Hearing Officer Present:

X Judge Ron Culpepper

Commission Legal Advisor present:

X Sarah Eaquinto

Approval of Agenda: The Commission approved the agenda as presented.

Approval of Minutes: The Commission approved the minutes of the August 10, 2022 meeting as presented with one correction. The date of the next Commission meeting was incorrectly listed as August 10, 2022.

Welcome New Commission Members: All Commissioners and Advisors briefly introduced themselves and welcomed our newest members.

Old Business:

~ *Report RE: Complaint 2022-02.* The letter of findings sent to the Complainant was significantly delayed. Complainant emailed Hearing Officer who forwarded it to the Chair. Chair emailed the Complainant and extended the time period to appeal the findings. The Complainant acknowledged the extension.

~ *Report from Legal Advisor RE: Complaint 2022-05.* The contracting process is underway for Judge Judy Jasprica. We anticipate contracting to be completed prior to the October 12, 2022 meeting. All documents relating to this complaint have been transferred to the Commission Legal Advisor and are being held until they can be provided to Judge Jasprica.

~ *Report from Judge Culpepper RE: Anonymous complaint received by mail in August.* A letter was sent with information guiding the Complainant to the procedures on the Ethics Commission web page.

New Business:

~ **Mail Received** - Commissioner Donor reported receipt of 2 emails from Complainant and/or potential party to a complaint. The Complainant was informed of the need for Commissioners to maintain impartiality, avoiding engaging in direct contact outside Commission processes with anyone regarding complaints. All emails were forwarded to the Legal Advisor.

~ Hearing Officer Culpepper received two packets addressed to Chair Donor at the Commission Mailbox, which he delivered to Chair Donor. Both packets were subsequently delivered to Legal Advisor.

~ Hearing Officer Culpepper reports receiving a letter of complaint lacking the proper form and many essential details, including the name(s) of County employees or officials involved.

~ **Advisory Opinions** - None requested.

Public Input:

One **Public Comment** from the Ethics Commission Web Page was noted on the Agenda:
Heather Benedict, August 3, 2022: All Commission members should obtain a county e-mail address. While not “illegal” to use personal e-mail, it is “unethical” and could be skirting 42.56 RCW Public Records Act and are not publicly protected as required RCW 42.56.100.

Executive Session: None

Adjournment: 4:57 PM

Next Meeting: October 12, 2022 @ 4:30PM @ **Wheelock** Branch/Tacoma Library + Online Zoom Conference Call.

The public is welcome to engage the Commission for all prescribed activities via the channels described on the web page.