



City of Tacoma

Board of Ethics Minutes

Tacoma Municipal Building North
733 Market Street

City Clerk's Conference Room 12

January 9, 2019

6:30 PM

1. Call to Order

City Clerk Doris Sorum called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m.

Ms. Sorum explained that both the Chair and Vice Chair were absent. All present Board Members agreed that Ohad Lowy would conduct the meeting.

Board Members Present: 4 – Linda Batway, Marie Bruin, Ohad Lowy, and James McCarty

Board Members Absent: 1 – Katie Baird

Staff Members Present: 4 – Martha Lantz, Deputy City Attorney; Charles Lee, Deputy City Attorney; Doris Sorum, City Clerk; and Susan Haigh, Records Management Supervisor

2. Election of a Chair

Ms. Sorum explained the process to elect a Chair and Vice Chair, and noted that Ms. Baird expressed interest in serving as Chair.

MOTION: Ms. Bruin moved to elect Katie Baird as Chair of the Board of Ethics.

SECONDED BY: Ms. Batway.

ACTION: Voice vote was taken and carried. The motion was declared adopted.

Ayes: 4 – Batway, Bruin, Lowy, and McCarty.

Absent: 1 – Chair Baird

Discussion ensued regarding the position of Vice Chair.

MOTION: Ms. Batway moved to elect Ohad Lowy as Vice Chair of the Board of Ethics.

SECONDED BY: Mr. McCarty.

ACTION: Voice vote was taken and carried. The motion was declared adopted.

Ayes: 4 – Batway, Bruin, Lowy, and McCarty.

Absent: 1 – Chair Baird

3. Board Member and Staff Introductions

Ms. Lantz introduced Mr. Lee, who will serve as the new advisor to the Board for Board of Ethics meetings. Board Members and staff members provided introductions about their background and experience.

4. Opinion requested by Deputy Mayor Ibsen regarding detached accessory dwelling units.

At approximately 6:42 p.m., Ms. Lantz and Mr. Lee outlined the background and details for the request regarding a potential conflict of interest related to potential detached accessory dwelling unit legislation.

Discussion ensued regarding the limited facts available, Code of Ethics language related to remote interests, options available to the Board, the Board's authority, impacts of issuing an opinion or having no opinion, and differences between an advisory opinion and a decision with an explanation.

MOTION: Mr. McCarty moved to issue a high-level advisory opinion.

SECONDED BY: Ms. Bruin.

ACTION: Voice vote was taken and carried. The motion was declared adopted.

Ayes: 4 – Batway, Bruin, Lowy, and McCarty.

Absent: 1 – Chair Baird

Discussion continued regarding whether to issue a general opinion or a response to Deputy Mayor Ibsen directly, administrative procedures for advisory opinions, and possible language for the opinion.

MOTION: Mr. McCarty moved to draft the advisory letter and address it to Deputy Mayor Ibsen.

SECONDED BY: Ms. Batway.

ACTION: Voice vote was taken and carried. The motion was declared adopted.

Ayes: 4 – Batway, Bruin, Lowy, and McCarty.

Absent: 1 – Chair Baird

Discussion ensued regarding the available facts, the procedure to prepare an opinion, whether an additional meeting is needed, and draft language for the opinion.

Board consensus was for Mr. Lowy and Mr. Lee to draft an opinion, and for Ms. Sorum to work with Board members to determine whether another meeting is needed once the opinion is prepared.

5. Other Business


Ms. Sorum stated the next regularly scheduled Board of Ethics meeting will be held on April 10, 2019.

6. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.



Katie Baird, Chair



Doris Sorum, City Clerk