

MINUTES OF NORWICH ETHICS COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING  
January 19, 2017

MEMBERS PRESENT

Robert Ballard  
Christopher Dixon  
Kathryn Lord  
Carol Menard  
Gregory Schlough

MEMBERS ABSENT

None

ALTERNATES PRESENT

Anthony Black

OTHERS PRESENT

Attorney Michael Driscoll  
Attorney Paul R. McCary  
Attorney Jeffrey Londregan  
City Clerk Betsy Barrett  
Respondent John Bilda  
Respondent Diana Boisclair  
Respondent Robert Groner  
Respondent Mayor Debercy Hinchey  
Respondent Steven Sinko  
Recording Secretary Melinda Wilson

1. Call to order: Carol Menard, Chair, called the January 19, 2017 public meeting to order at 6:00 PM.
2. Determination of Quorum: It was determined a quorum was present.
3. Public Hearing: Cases 2016-2, 2016-3, 2016-4, 2016-5, 2016-6, 2016-9

Chair Carol Menard opened the hearing with a brief history of the Norwich Ethics Commission and the cases currently before the commission at this public hearing. The cases relate to the respondents' participation in a junket sponsored by the Connecticut Municipal Electric Energy Cooperative to the Kentucky Derby in May, 2016. The complainants for these cases suggest violation of the Norwich Ethics Ordinance Section 2-54(c) "Gifts and Favors: No officer, official or employee shall accept or solicit any gift from any person who, to his or her knowledge, is interested, directly or indirectly, in any manner whatsoever, in business dealings with the city, or which gift may tend to influence him or her in the discharge of official duties or in granting any improper favor, service or thing of value."

Carol continued with an overview of the proceedings for the hearing, which will include sworn testimony of the respondents and statements by their attorneys. She introduced the members of the Ethics Commission. The agenda did not include a public comment period.

Attorney Paul McCary spoke while representing John Bilda, Diana Boisclair, Robert Groner and Steven Sinko. He alleged multiple procedural violations in the cases before the Ethics Commission. He objects to all four cases based on the Chair's signature on the complaint of Steven Sinko, filed on behalf of the Ethics Commission.

Attorney Jeffrey Londregan spoke representing Mayor Debercy Hinchey. He agreed with Attorney McCary on the violations.

City Clerk Betsy Barrett administered the oath to the five respondents. Each raised their right hand and took the oath.

Respondent Diana Boisclair was called to answer questions from the Ethics Commission. Attorney McCary provided written responses to the Ethics Commission. Carol Menard presented questions. Ms. Boisclair answered several questions and gave a prepared statement as an answer to a question from Attorney McCary to end her testimony.

[Diana Boisclair Statement](#)

Respondent Robert Groner was called to answer questions from the Ethics Commission. Attorney McCary provided written responses to the Ethics Commission. Carol Menard and Robert Ballard presented questions. Mr. Groner answered several questions from the commission and gave a prepared statement as an answer to a question from Attorney McCary to end his testimony.

[Robert Groner Statement](#)

Respondent Steven Sinko was called to answer questions from the Ethics Commission. Attorney McCary provided written responses to the Ethics Commission. Carol Menard, Robert Ballard, Chris Dixon and Gregory Schlough presented questions. Mr. Sinko answered several questions from the commission and gave a prepared statement as an answer to a question presented by Attorney McCary.

[Steven Sinko Statement](#)

Respondent John Bilda was called to answer questions from the Ethics Commission. Attorney McCary provided written responses to the Ethics Commission. Carol Menard, Robert Ballard, Kathryn Lord and Gregory Schlough presented questions. Attorney Londregan questioned Mr. Bilda with regard to Mayor Hinchey's invitation to participate in the junket.

[John Bilda Statement](#)

At 7:16 PM a break was taken in the proceedings.

Respondent Mayor Debercy Hinchey was called to answer questions from the Ethics Commission. Carol Menard, Robert Ballard and Greg Schlough presented questions. Attorney Londregan noted that Ms. Hinchey would not answer certain questions due to an ongoing, related

investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Attorney Londregan questioned Ms. Hinchey. Ms. Hinchey read a prepared statement in response to a question from Attorney Londregan.

Attorney McCary asked to make a closing statement. Chair Carol Menard allowed the statement.

Attorney Londregan also made a closing statement referencing Respondent Hinchey.

Chair Carol Menard thanked the respondents. She noted that the Ethics Commission will reconvene at a later Ethics Commission meeting to review the cases.

4. Adjournment: On a motion to adjourn by Greg Schlough, seconded by Kathryn Lord, the Ethics Commission adjourned the public hearing at 8:08 PM.