

## DeKalb County Board of Ethics

Location: Conference Room A, Clark Harrison Building

Date of Meeting: 3/28/2014 Time of Meeting: 12:00pm

### Minutes

#### Members Present:

Isaac Blythers, Acting Chair  
Clara DeLay  
John Ernst  
Edwinett Murphy  
Thelma Grier  
Bobbie Sanford  
Susan Neugent

#### Observers:

Gene Chapman, Ethics Board Counsel  
Trumondia Williams, Staff Support  
Jay Vinicki, Director of Policy Research and Assistant Director of Finance  
Rhea Johnson, Citizen  
James Elliott, Emory University Professor  
Viola Davis, Unhappy Tax Payers  
Barbara Sanders, Clerk to the Commission and CEO  
Natasha Kennedy, Deputy Clerk to the Commission and CEO  
Joe Arrington, Citizen  
Richard Belcher, WSB TV

- I. Call to Order  
The meeting was called to order at 12:20pm by Isaac Blythers, Acting Chair.
- II. Welcome and Introductions
- III. Adoption of the Agenda  
The Agenda was reviewed. Isaac Blythers entertained a motion to approve the agenda. Thelma Grier moved for approval and the motion was seconded by John Ernst. Isaac Blythers called for a vote. All seven members voted and all seven were in favor to approve adopting the agenda.
- IV. Adoption of Minutes  
The Minutes, dated March 7, 2014, were reviewed and accepted as presented. Isaac Blythers entertained a motion to approve the minutes. Susan Neugent moved for approval and the motion was seconded by Clara DeLay. Isaac Blythers called for a vote. All seven members voted and all seven were in favor to approve adopting the minutes from March 7, 2014.
- V. Ethics Board Training

James Elliot from Emory University began training covering the following topics:

- Responsibilities and duties of members
- Areas of Concern
- Perception and Fact
- Limitation on Campaign Contributions and other activities
- Burden of Proof
- Advisory Opinions
- Investigative Procedures
- Ban on Gifts
- Who speaks for the Board?
- Not a Political entity
- Conflicts of Interest
- Use of a Presenter
- Whistleblower Protection
- Civility

**VI. Closing Remarks**

The Board revisited a discussion as to who should speak on behalf of the Board. Isaac Blythers made the request of Staff Support to provide him with a reminder to amend Monday's agenda meeting to ratify the October 28, 2014<sup>3</sup> vote concerning who speaks on behalf of the Board, and ratify the appointment of Ethics Board attorney, Gene Chapman. Isaac Blythers will provide the Board with information as to when the Board entered into a suspended state. Isaac Blythers read over the Preamble that will be read before the start of each meeting. There were a few changes to be made to the document. The Board discussed putting together an outline detailing how each hearing should be conducted going forward. The Board will also revisit the Procedural Rules to make sure they have a clear understanding of the rules. Viola Davis inquired about her 2012 complaint to the Ethics Board concerning cell towers and DeKalb County schools. Ms. Davis did not receive a response advising her that the Ethics Board has no jurisdiction over the DeKalb County School System. Barbara Sanders agreed to look into her case and provide the Board with a copy of the complaint and other information as it pertains to her complaint. Gene Chapman has agreed that if there was not a letter sent out to her noting this, he would send her a response advising her that the Board of Ethics has no jurisdiction over the School Board. It was agreed by the Board to have a better line of communication with the complainants as it relates to cases that have been filed and awaiting a response.

**VII. Adjournment**

There being no further business, the Acting Chair entertained the motion to adjourn. Edwinett Murphy moved for adjournment and Thelma Grier seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote from the seven members. The meeting was adjourned at 2:15pm.

Respectfully submitted,

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Acting Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date