Regular Meeting:

Roll Call:

X Chair Ms. Rhonda Smiley
X Member Ms. Mary Ann Slattery
X Member Mr. J. Anthony Snorgrass
X Member Mr. John Zawacki
X Member Mr. Gilbert Castro
X Ruth Benien, Administrator

X (Present)
E (Excused)
U (Unexcused)

Call to Order:

Chairperson Rhonda Smiley called the meeting to order at 4:15 p.m. Commissioners Slattery, Snorgrass, Zawacki and Castro were present.

Public Comment: No members of the public appeared for the Public Comment session.

Old Business:

Minutes of the July 10, 2008 meeting were reviewed. A Motion to Approve the Minutes as corrected was made by Commissioner Zawacki with a second by Commissioner Castro. The motion passed unanimously. With respect to the posting of minutes on the web site, the Administrator advised that Sabine Jones was in the process of reviewing all of the minutes and deleting duplicate minutes. She will be working with the web master to try to have all the minutes prior to 2007 archived on the web site. Commissioner Snorgrass suggested a protocol be established by the Administrator’s office of having the Approved Minutes posted on the web site within a week of the meeting which the Administrator agreed to try and start instituting.
Administrator Benien reviewed the monthly report with the Commission which outlined the training provided in July, 2008 and the nature of the ethics opinions rendered and complaints received. The Administrator advised that in the continued search with respect to the existence of an ombudsman position, she had contacted the 311 line and was told they were not routinely giving out the Ethics Administrator’s number for that purpose. They have been told that each department has its own person. The Administrator’s Office has started to inquire and keep track of new complaints and inquiring how they are being routed to the Ethics Administrator and the Commission. A numbering system has been established for Ethics Complaints. The Administrator has also adopted the status categories for any complaints designating them as open, pending or resolved.

There were no training sessions scheduled for July, 2008. Basic Ethics training sessions are set for August 19, 2008 from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. at the Human Resources Center, September 2, 2008 from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Police Academy and for September 23, 2008 from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m for the library board. Continuing Ethics training is set for August 19, 2008 from 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. and on September 24, 2008 from 1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m at the Human Resources Center. Any of the Commissioners in need of training were invited to attend any of these sessions.

One new hotline call complaint was received. It is pending awaiting receipt of the UG contract involved. Two complaints are pending awaiting information or investigation. Two complaints are to be concluded, one with the writing of a follow-up letter and the other with a follow-up telephone call to ensure it was not intended as an ethics complaint. A final complaint was resolved with a report back from the department involved indicating it could not determine what employees may have been using a particular vehicle on a particular date and forwarding of the departmental e-mail routinely sent to its employees about use of government vehicles. One written opinion was provided. With amendments as per discussion, the Report was approved by acclamation.

The status of the updates and revisions to the Ethics Code were reviewed. Administrator Benien is still continuing her review and recommendation of the proposed changes. Administrator Benien advised that she is working on the distribution of a memorandum with respect to political and casino activities so it can be distributed in the fall when filings and election campaigns for the UG commence.

Administrator Benien advised on the status of the creation of ethics e-mail accounts for each of the Commissioners. She was advised by the IT staff that gmail accounts for each Administrator should be able to be created. Commissioner Snorgrass agreed to attempt to create the accounts. Administrator Benien advised she still needs photographs and any update to the biographies for updating the website. An Information Sheet containing the addresses, telephone numbers, e-mails, etc. for all of the Commissioners was distributed and updates provided. Information regarding the Administrator and Sabine Jones will be added to the sheet and distributed to each of the Commissioners.
Administrator Benien advised that the Budget proposals had been submitted and a final overall Budget approved, but no notification had been provided with respect to the final budget for the Ethics Commission or request for additional funds in 2008.

**New Business:**

A first quarter report from the Legislative Auditor’s office with respect to the training, advisory opinions and complaints handled by the Ethics Commission was distributed. The actual UG quarterly report has been requested but is not available for distribution yet.

The Ethics Administrator was requested to obtain an opinion from the UG Legal Department as to the extent, if any, of the subpoena powers of the Ethics Administrator and the Commission.

The Ethics Administrator was requested to find out what information is generated by the police department with respect to criminal activity that is available to the public and if any other information, not available to the general public, is provided to any elected officials, neighborhood groups or associations or private individuals.

**Executive Session:** No Executive Session was held.

**Adjournment:**

Motion for adjournment by Commissioner Snorgrass

Seconded by Commissioner Slattery

Passed Unanimously.

Meeting Adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

Next Meeting is September 4, 2008 at 4:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

s/Ruth M. Benien

Ruth M. Benien
Ethics Administrator