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 4:07 p.m. Commissioners Slattery, Snorgrass, Zawacki and Castro were present.

Introduction of New Legislative Auditor:

Tom Wiss, the newly appointed Legislative Auditor was present at the start of the meeting upon invitation by the Ethics Administrator to introduce anyone who didn’t know him and to say congratulations.

Old Business:

Minutes of the June 5, 2008 meeting were reviewed. A Motion to Approve the Minutes as corrected was made by Commissioner Snorgrass with a second by Commissioner Slattery. The motion passed unanimously. There was discussion with respect to the posting of the Minutes on the web site and a suggestion that old minutes be put in an
Administrator Benien reviewed the monthly report with the Commission which outlined the training provided in May, 2008 and the nature of the ethics opinions rendered and complaints received. The Administrator advised that she has been unable to locate any position within the UG that is the equivalent of an ombudsman position. The Administrator’s Office will start to inquire and keep track of new complaints and how they are being routed to the Ethics Administrator and the Commission. In reviewing outstanding and resolved matters it was suggested that a numbering system be adopted for each complaint. Such a system will be adopted using the year and complaint number system, i.e. 2008-0001.

A one-on-one Continuing Basic Ethics training session for an employee needing reasonable accommodation for medical reasons was completed on May 15, 2008. 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. Three new verbal complaints were received. One was handled over the phone and contact made with the agency involved on the other. Four complaints are pending awaiting information or investigation. Two are concluded but held open by the Administrator’s office should further contact be made. Two verbal opinions were provided. Two complaints, new or outstanding, were resolved and will be closed. With respect to one pending complaint it was moved by Commissioner Zawacki and seconded by Commissioner Snorgrass that the Administrator be directed to investigate the complaint to determine who gave out what under what circumstances. Motion carried unanimously. The status categories the Administrator’s Office will use with respect to complaints are open, pending and resolved. With amendments as per discussion, Commissioner Slattery moved and Commissioner Castro seconded a Motion for approval of the Monthly Report. Motion carried unanimously. A request was made that a copy of the quarterly report of the Legislative Auditor’s office with the Ethics Commission statistics be obtained and forwarded to each of the Commissioners.

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 she is still awaiting receipt of prior memorandums prepared by the administration with respect to distribution of a memorandum with respect to political and casino activities. She advised that when she most recently spoke with the Administration, however, they were not as concerned with the August primary, but rather the fall filings and election campaigns for the UG that will start up then.
Administrator Benien advised she had made inquiry into the ability to create ethics e-mail accounts for each of the Commissioners. She was originally routed to the IT department of the UG but did not need to be on its server. She is back working with the in house IT staff. Administrator Benien advised she still needs photographs and any update to the biographies for updating the website. If there is a problem with getting a current photograph she will check to see if the UG has a photographer they could send.

Administrator Benien advised that the Budget proposals had been submitted but that the budget process was still ongoing so no report had been received back. The budget process is going into its final stages.

**New Business:**

Administrator Benien reviewed the current set up of the hotline and website monitoring system and it was agreed the current system should continue to be used.

Discussion was held on the need to have a public comment time period on the Agenda. It was moved by Commissioner Snorgrass and seconded by Commissioner Slattery that such start being included on the Agenda. Motion passed unanimously.

With some recent moves and address changes for some of the Commissioners, Administrator Benien was asked to send updated addresses and e-mails for the Commissioners.

A Certificate of Appreciation was produced by Administrator Benien for the Commissioners to each sign and then have framed and presented to the outgoing auditor, Tom Standish.

The issue of a potential ten year review of the consolidation process was raised and it was discussed whether if it occurs, the Ethics Commission wanted to be involved, show support, etc. One suggestion was to write a letter offering support or willingness to meet with any members of such a review board. UG Commissioner DeSuere is one person involved in the potential ten year review. The review may not take place so no further action was taken.

It was moved by Commissioner Zawacki and seconded by Commissioner Slattery that due to the impending absence of at least one Commissioner if held on its regular date, the August meeting date will be moved to August 14, 2008. Motion passed unanimously.

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

**Adjournment:**

Motion for adjournment by Commissioner Castro.

Seconded by Commissioner Zawacki
Passed Unanimously.

Meeting Adjourned at 5:47 p.m.

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

Respectfully Submitted,

s/Ruth M. Benien

Ruth M. Benien
Ethics Administrator