PROPOSED MEETING MINUTES
ETHICS COMMISSION OF THE UNIFIED GOVERNMENT
Courtroom No. 18, 2nd Floor, Wyandotte County Courthouse
710 N. 7th Street, Kansas City, KS 66101
November 6, 2008, 4:00 p.m.

Regular Meeting:

Roll Call:

X Chair Ms. Rhonda Smiley
E 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 4:06 p.m. Commissioners Snorgrass, Zawacki and Castro were present. Commissioner Slattery was absent and excused.

Public Comment: No members of the public appeared for the public comment session. No follow-up information or contact has been received from the individual who appeared at the October, 2008 meeting with respect to issues over the Quindaro ruins.

Old Business:

Minutes of the October 16, 2008 meeting were reviewed. A Motion to Approve the Minutes as corrected was made by Commissioner Snorgrass with a second by Commissioner Zawacki. The motion passed unanimously.
Administrator Benien reviewed the monthly report with the Commission which outlined the training provided in October, 2008 and the nature of the ethics opinions rendered and complaints received.

Two Continuing Ethics training courses were provided on October 30, 2008 from 10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. at the Fleet Center Training Room for the Transit Department Employees. A Continuing Ethics training session is scheduled for the Human Resources Training Room from 1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. on December 11, 2008. A Basic Ethics training session is scheduled for the Human Resources Training Room from 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. on December 11, 2008.

Five new ethics complaints were received on the ethics e-mail hotline. The Ethics Commission had no jurisdiction over one of the complaints. Two were investigated and resolved. Two are open pending investigation and receipt of additional information. One oral advisory opinion over the wearing of uniforms was provided. With corrections or additions as discussed a Motion to approve the Report was made by Commissioner Zawacki and seconded by Commissioner Castro. The Motion to approve was unanimous.

The proposed letter requesting the Legislative Auditor to consider issuing a memorandum of censure was reviewed and approved with the additions requested to be made by the Administrator.

The status of the updates and revisions to the Ethics Code was reviewed. Administrator Benien has provided input and suggestions for revisions to the Code through Sec. 2-202. The Commission discussed several alternatives with reference to presentation of proposed revisions to the Code, i.e. whether to provide an initial proposal addressing primarily rewording and clarity matters versus substantive changes. No decision was made pending provision of the final proposed revisions from the Administrator. The Administrator hopes to have those revisions completed by the December 4, 2008 meeting. Administrator Benien was asked to make inquiry and determine what the process is for presenting and obtaining revisions to the Code.

No further action has been taken by Administrator Benien with respect to preparation of memorandums regarding political activities. The UG elections are not until April, 2009.

The status of the web page updates was discussed and the problems and difficulties with getting the same updated. It was requested that the minutes reflect that the Ethics Commission and the Ethics Administrator are extremely concerned that there is no or limited visibility of the Ethics Commission as it is presently configured on the web site. Administrator Benien was asked to enlist the assistance of the Legislative Auditor’s office in obtaining the necessary updates to the web site so that it accurately represents the current make-up of the Ethics Commission and contains correct information.

In new business the issues of the visibility of the Ethics Commission and its role was discussed in light of recent issues with the BPU. The need to promote and publicize the existence of the Ethics Commission and to encourage the use of its procedures and the
Office of the Ethics Administrator were discussed. It was determined that the first course of action should be to get the web site updated and corrected. The publicity matter is to be included as an action item for the next meeting.

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

Adjournment:

Motion for adjournment by Commissioner Castro.

Seconded by Commissioner Zawacki.

Passed Unanimously.

Meeting Adjourned at 5:55 p.m.

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

Respectfully Submitted,

s/Ruth M. Benien

Ruth M. Benien
Ethics Administrator