

**Minutes of the Cook County
Board of Ethics – Open Session
March 28, 2024, at 2:00pm**

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Location: 69 W. Washington St., Chicago, IL 60602
Conference Room A

Attendance:

Present: Chair Tom Szromba, Dr. Susan Gaffney (Quorum of Board physically present voted to allow to attend virtually due to medical exception), Antara Nath Rivera, Hon. Marcus Salone, DHRE Staff, members of the public.

Absent: None.

Open Session

A. Call to Order

Chair Tom Szromba called the meeting to order at 2:05 pm.

B. Motion to allow Board Member Dr. Susan Gaffney to attend virtually due to medical exception of the Illinois Open Meetings Act.

- a. **Ayes:** Chair Tom Szromba, Antara Nath Rivera, and Hon. Marcus Salone.
- b. **Nays:** None.

C. Agenda Approval

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Antara Nath Rivera, and seconded by Board Member, Hon. Marcus Salone. The motion was carried by the following vote:

- **Ayes:** Chair Tom Szromba, Antara Nath Rivera, and Dr. Susan Gaffney, and Hon. Marcus Salone.
- **Nays:** None.

D. Statements by the General Public

T. Thielmann: "I would like the following written comment read aloud at the BOE meeting: My name is Todd Thielmann and I am unable to attend the Board of Ethics meeting today but would like to state the following: 1. Campaign contributions to Cook County officials by members of this Board is a conflict of interest and although legal, should not be allowed by rule. 2. Cook County Board of Review Chief Clerk Allen Manuel has falsified his County Statement of Economic Interest which is a dismissible offense. According to the Illinois Board of Election campaign expenditure records, he had received over \$115,000.00 in 2023 while working full-time for the Board of Review. His Dual Employment form also confirms his outside work. Since a large majority of his compensation is from the Cook County Board of Review Commissioner Larry Rogers, his direct supervisor, this Board shall hold a complete investigation into whether County time

was stolen. As part of the investigation, Board member Salone shall recuse himself as he has long contributed to the campaign coffers of Larry Rogers. 3. Why is First Cousin not a part of the familiar list on the vendor disclosure form? Thank you for your time and be sure we will be at the next meeting.”

E. Welcome DHRE Investigator Rebecca Donnelly

F. December 14, 2023, Regular Meeting Open Minutes – Board Review and Approval

A motion to approve the December 14, 2023, Regular Meeting Open Minutes was made by Board Member, Hon. Marcus Salone, and seconded by Antara Nath Rivera. The motion was carried by the following vote:

- **Ayes:** Chair Tom Szromba, Antara Nath Rivera, Dr. Susan Gaffney, Hon. Marcus Salone
- **Nays:** None

G. FY 2023 Ethics Annual Report – Board Review and Approval

A motion to approve and publish the FY 2023 Ethics Annual Report was made by Board Member, Hon. Marcus Salone, and seconded by Antara Nath Rivera. The motion was carried by the following vote:

- **Ayes:** Chair Tom Szromba, Antara Nath Rivera, Dr. Susan Gaffney, Hon. Marcus Salone
- **Nays:** None

H. Director’s Report

Interim Director King reviewed the number of open investigations, audits, trainings, and advisory opinions issued.

Closed Session

At 2:17 p.m., a motion to move into Closed Session was made by Board Member, Antara Nath Rivera, seconded by Board Member, Hon. Marcus Salone.

Open Session

At 3:17 p.m., the Board reconvened to Open Session.

M. Voting Regarding Executive Session Items, if any

I. December 14, 2023 Regular Meeting Closed Minutes – Board Vote

A motion to approve the December 14, 2023, Regular Meeting Closed Minutes was made by Board Member, Hon. Marcus Salone, and seconded by Board Member, Antara Nath Rivera. The motion was carried by the following vote:

- **Ayes:** Chair Tom Szromba, Antara Nath Rivera, and Dr. Susan Gaffney, and Hon. Marcus Salone

- **Nays:** None

II. 22I004 Notice of Determination – Board Vote

A motion to approve the 22I004 Notice of Determination, as edited, was made by Board Member, Dr. Susan Gaffney, and seconded by Board Member, Antara Nath Rivera. The motion was carried by the following vote:

- **Ayes:** Chair Tom Szromba, Antara Nath Rivera, and Dr. Susan Gaffney, and Hon. Marcus Salone
- **Nays:** None

III. 24A001 Advisory Opinion – Board Vote

A motion to approve advisory opinion 24A001 was made by Hon. Marcus Salone, and seconded by Board Member, Dr. Susan Gaffney. Board Member Antara Nath Rivera recused herself from discussion of this matter.

- **Ayes:** Chair Tom Szromba, Dr. Susan Gaffney, and Hon. Marcus Salone
- **Nays:** None

IV. Request to Open Investigation - Board Vote

A motion to open an investigation on matters No. 24I001 and No. 24I002 was carried by unanimous vote of 3 Board Members. * Board Member Antara Nath Rivera abstained from voting on these matters. The motion was carried by the following vote:

- **Ayes:** Chair Tom Szromba, Dr. Susan Gaffney, and Hon. Marcus Salone
- **Nays:** None

V. Ethics Case Pending Report - Board Vote

A motion approve the Ethics Case Pending Report was made by Board Member, Dr. Susan Gaffney and seconded by Board Member, Hon. Marcus Salone.

- **Ayes:** Chair Tom Szromba, Dr. Susan Gaffney, and Hon. Marcus Salone
- **Nays:** None

*Board Member Antara Nath Rivera recused herself from part of the discussion in the report.

N. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made at 3:21 pm by Board Member, Hon. Marcus Salone, seconded by Board Member, Antara Nath Rivera. The motion was carried by a unanimous vote.

Minutes submitted by DHRE Staff.

A complete recording of this meeting is available at <https://cook-county.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>.