

CHEROKEE COUNTY BOARD OF ETHICS
First Quarterly Meeting Minutes

Date: January 21, 2016

Meeting Location: Cherokee County Conference Center at The Bluffs; Business Center

Board Members:

Julie Cullins, Chairman	Present	Debra Frieden, Vice-Chairman	Present
Gil Howard, Member	Present	John Seufert, Member	Absent
Phil Dodge, Member	Present	Gaylen Roberts, Member	Present
Natalie Green, Member	Present*		

Others Present:

J. Marshall "Buzz" Wehunt, CCBBoE Attorney of Record
Laura Shoop, CCBBoE Secretary

**Arrived at 6:45 p.m.*

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- **Chairman Cullins called the meeting to order at 6:08 p.m.**
 - **Pledge of Allegiance**
 - **Approval of Minutes from October 22, 2015**
Vice-Chairman Debra Frieden made a motion to accept the minutes as they stood, seconded by Member Gaylen Roberts. Motion passed unanimously.
 - **Public Hearing of Ethics Complaints**
Chairman Cullins opened floor for public hearing/discussion. No issues were brought forward, and no one present had been made aware of any ethics complaints. Member Phil Dodge made a motion to close the floor for ethics complaints, seconded by Member Roberts. Motion passed unanimously.
 - **Discussion Items: Follow up of Flood complaint against Commissioner Poole**
Attorney Wehunt presented the Decision and Advisory Opinion for all members to do a final review and sign. Members signed and discussed where to publish the documents online.

Action Item: It was determined that Secretary Shoop would get together with Member Seufert to get his signature on the documents, notarize them, and return the originals to Attorney Wehunt.

Motion: Member Roberts made a motion that we create two hyperlinks under the meeting to which we would post "Decisions" and "Advisory Opinions." Member Howard seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

It was noted that we need to separate out CCBBoE documents between documents available under the Sunshine Laws and documents which are attorney-client privilege.

Action Item: Member Roberts volunteered to get with Christy Black to get this done.

Action Item: Attorney Wehunt noted that "Sign letter to Mr. Flood" on the Agenda needed to be changed to "Sign Advisory Opinion and Decision Regarding Flood Complaint" because the letter has already been sent to Mr. Flood. Chairman Cullins volunteered to retype the agenda and send it to Christy Black.

▪ **Discussion Items: Cover Letter to Advisory Opinion and Decision**

Attorney Wehunt handed out the cover letter to the Advisory Opinion and Decision for the Board to review and approve/edit as necessary. Discussion regarding which individuals and/or agencies should receive a copy of the letter, specifically which fall under CCBBoE purview. It was noted that the CCBBoE only has purview of the boards that oversee county agencies, not the members of the agencies themselves.

Action item: Attorney Wehunt offered to get with Christy Black requesting a list of all boards the CCBBoE has jurisdiction over, then scan and email a copy to the Board.

It was suggested that Christy Black be requested to run it in the newsletter for county employees, if one exists.

Edits suggested to the letter: removing the second, third and fourth paragraphs and the two words "in summary" in the fifth paragraph and the phrase "background as to" in the first paragraph.

Motion: Member Howard made a motion to accept the revised version of the letter, seconded by Natalie Green. Motion passed unanimously.

▪ **Discussion Items: Accept nominations for 2016 CCBBoE Chair/Vice Chair; Elect Chair/Vice Chair**

Nominations for Chairman:

Member Dodge nominated Member Roberts for chairman, seconded by Member Howard. Member Roberts accepted the nomination. No further nominations. Member Green made a motion to close the floor for further nominations, seconded by Member Dodge. Motion passed unanimously. Board voted unanimously to accept the nomination and elect Member Roberts as the new chairman.

Nominations for Vice-Chairman:

Vice-Chairman Frieden nominated Member Dodge for vice-chairman, seconded by Member Roberts. Member Dodge accepted the nomination. Member Green made a motion to close the floor for further nominations, seconded by Member Howard. Motion passed unanimously. Board voted unanimously to accept the nomination and elect Member Dodge as the new Vice-Chairman.

- **Discussion Items: Discuss 2016 Budget**

Discussion regarding salary for secretary. (The secretary was asked to step out while the salary was being discussed.)

Motion: Member Green made a motion to increase the secretary's salary to \$375 plus mileage for meetings for the 2016 calendar year, starting with the January 21, 2016 meeting. Member Dodge seconded. Member Howard abstained from the vote. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion to increase overall budget of CCBoE. It was suggested that this be accomplished by writing a formal resolution to Chairman Ahrens requesting an increase in the budget, including the cost for the Poole incident to illustrate the need for an increase. It was noted that the Poole incident alone, aside from all other costs for 2015, cost approximately \$6,537. It was noted that even just two complaints in one year could easily top \$15,000. It was suggested to request a base amount per year that would cover normal expenses as well as one small complaint and request an additional amount in the event that the CCBoE has a large complaint or more than one complaint in a single calendar year.

Motion: Member Roberts made a motion to request \$10,000 as an annual budget for the CCBoE. Vice Chairman Frieden seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

- **New Business**

Vice-Chairman Frieden announced that she was resigning her position on the Board, after 10 years of service. She said that she would write a letter to Chairman Buzz Ahrens to inform of her resignation and would send a copy of the letter to the Board.

Action Item: Secretary Shoop to contact Christy Black to make sure Vice-Chairman Frieden's contact information is removed from the CCBoE website.

It was suggested that a small token be given for those who have served on the Board for a long time, such as a plaque and/or certificate, to honor their commitment in volunteering their time to serve the citizens of the county without pay or any other compensation. It was suggested that a plaque be put up in the county office showing the names of long-serving members, with spaces to add names and years of service, and that a certificate be given to the departing member as well as a keepsake. It was also suggested that the Board of Commissioners be requested to write a letter of commendation for the departing member, signed by all commissioners, which could be framed and presented to the departing member.

Action item: Member Roberts volunteered to research the county's policy about plaques on the wall.

Member Roberts gave the following updates:

- The procedure for filing an ethics complaint is on the CCBoE webpage. Not all the steps would fit on the first page, so viewers can click on a hyperlink to take them to the remainder of the procedure.
 - We have a CCBoE group address that sends an email to all CCBoE members.
 - Reminder to all to update passwords every three months – county policy – and do all communication through the county email.
 - Asked for CCBoE members to send him our contact information and locations.
- **Next Meeting:**
The 2nd Quarterly Meeting of 2016 will be held on Thursday, April 21, 2016, at 6:00 p.m. at the Cherokee County Conference Center at The Bluffs.
 - **Motion to Close:**
Member Dodge made a motion to adjourn. Motion seconded by Member Howard. Motion carried unanimously.