



Washington State Executive Ethics Board

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Executive Ethics Board News

Mike Connelly, Chair
Matthew Williams III, Vice Chair
Linnaea Jablonski, Member
Lisa Marsh, Member

May 23, 2011

The Executive Ethics Board (Board) met on Friday, May 13, 2011. All members were present. Others attending included: Melanie de Leon, Executive Director, Ruthann Bryant, Board Secretary, Bruce Turcott, Board Counsel and Sue Jones, Board Investigator. Members of the public also attended.

Enforcement

In lieu of an enforcement hearing, the Board accepted a stipulation from:

Shelley Hepler, an employee of the Department of Corrections, for using state resources for personal gain. Evidence showed that Ms. Hepler used her state computer to access non-work related websites and pursue outside business transactions. The Board levied a civil penalty of \$1,500.

Board Action:

A. The Board began a preliminary review of Advisory Opinion (AO) 00-11 Use of State Facilities for Voluntary Benefits. This AO allows agencies to permit business that sell insurance under the payroll deduction statute to use state facilities to provide information about their products. Board staff has historically interpreted to allow only AFLAC and Colonial Life to make presentation in state facilities. However, there are currently 296 businesses that are on the payroll deduction list and if one business is allowed, then the others must be allowed as well. Following discussion, the Board requested that further analysis of 41.04.020 RCW by board counsel. Board will review the analysis at their July meeting.

B. The Board also discussed AO 03-02, which states that the Governor, when officially appointed to a statewide voter's pamphlet committee, using state resources to draft arguments that support or oppose a pending ballot initiative would not violate RCW 42.52.180. Board staff questioned whether the opinion should it be updated and expanded to include all state employees/officers who are in similar circumstances. The Board asked that staff research if there are other elected officials that the opinion would apply to and bring the matter to a future meeting for further discussion.

C. The Board approved a Department of Personnel Ethics Policy that will be used as a template for small agencies who receive human resource services from them.

Other:

Lisa Marsh, Deputy Assistant Commissioner for the Employment Security Department joined the Board to replace Neil Gorrell.

Meeting agendas can be found at www.ethics.wa.gov under "Meetings."

The next meeting of the Executive Ethics Board is scheduled for July 8, 2011