

The Ethics Review Board
City of New Orleans

Tuesday, October 28, 2008
10:30 a.m.

Loyola University New Orleans, Danna Student Center, Octavia I

- Present: Rev. Kevin Wildes, S. J., Chair, Rev. Cornelius Tilton, Vice Chair, Elizabeth Nalty, Secretary, Dean Winston Brown, and Professor Kathryn Lorio
- Excused: Mrs. Leah Chase and Dr. Beverly Favre
- Guests: Robert Cerasoli, IG, David Marcello, Leonard Odom, OIG, Marvin Doyal, OIG, and Jill Duchene, Executive Director to ERB

Rev. Wildes called the meeting to order at 10:47 a.m.

Mrs. Elizabeth Nalty moved to adopt the minutes from the September 23, 2008 meeting. Rev. Cornelius Tilton seconded – motion passed.

Rev. Kevin Wildes introduced the second agenda item for the meeting, the Ethics Review Board meeting schedule for the next few months. Rev. Tilton mentioned the ERB rules do not require the board to meet every month. In order to avoid conflict with holiday travel plans in November and December, the board decided to cancel the November meeting and hold the December meeting early. The meeting in December will be held on the 16th. January's meeting will remain on the regularly scheduled meeting day, the fourth Tuesday of the month, January 27th. The regularly scheduled meeting time in February falls on Mardi Gras and will instead be held a week earlier on February 17th.

Mrs. Nalty mentioned another date to remember is November 21st, when City Council will hold a budget hearing for the Office of Inspector General and the Ethics Review Board.

Rev. Wildes reminded the board members of the quickly approaching COGEL conference in December. He stated he was been working on the logistics to give board members the ability to attend the conference and receive reimbursement. Mr. Robert Cerasoli stated COGEL is the premier ethics organization and that it would be appropriate for the board to attend.

Rev. Kevin Wildes introduced the idea of using an RFP to create and implement an ethics education model. Rev. Tilton suggested the board consider hiring full-time staff to handle ethics education in the city. Mr. Cerasoli stated it could take some time to create positions and have them approved by Civil Service. Rev. Wildes acknowledged the need for the eventual hiring of staff. An RFP would be a short-term solution while hiring staff provides a long-term solution. Mr. Winston Brown said the board needs to know what the

objectives are for the ethics education before creating an RFP. Mr. Cerasoli stated the COGEL conference could help in figuring out the objectives. The board could intricately investigate the processes other ethics organizations have used and figure out the specifications for its own process. In order to create an RFP, the board needs specifications.

Rev. Kevin Wildes introduced David Marcello to discuss the city's code of ethics. David said at the last ERB meeting he got the sense the ERB was ready to begin moving out on its own agenda. He said the ERB has the ability to make recommendations on the city's code of ethics. As the board begins to receive complaints it may be able to address areas in which the code is lacking. Mr. Marcello then introduced some examples of areas on which the board may wish to focus; discrimination and public records requests.

Rev. Cornelius Tilton asked David Marcello about the specific ability for the Ethics Review Board to go into executive session to talk specifically with the inspector general. Mr. Marcello responded that the board would need a reason to hold an executive session such as the need to discuss an ongoing investigation. An executive session is neither needed nor legal to discuss operational issues like the need for a cooperative agreement. Rev. Tilton stated the executive session is needed to allow the inspector general to brief the board on the investigations his office is conducting. Mr. Cerasoli stated that neither he nor anyone from the office may disclose that information. Robert Cerasoli declared he did not even know all the investigations the office is conducting. Much of the information is classified. He stated he will only have the ability to share information about ongoing investigations the Office of Inspector General conducts for the Ethics Review Board.

Rev. Wildes asked for an update from the Office of Inspector General. Mr. Leonard Odom stated the office will launch its hotline very soon. He said the office will create posters to advertise the new hotline. It will be open nine hours a day on weekdays and will be manned by the criminal investigators, forensic auditors, and engineers. Mr. Cerasoli discussed the office's progress on ordering equipment. The office budget will be 85% to 90% personnel centric starting next year, therefore much of the equipment needed to function must be ordered during this fiscal year which ends December 31st. He said the office will be ten times more effective once the appropriate tools are in place. Mr. Cerasoli said the office is already receiving an exponential amount of complaints.

Rev. Cornelius Tilton moved to adjourn. Kathryn Lorio seconded. Meeting was adjourned at 12:10 p.m.