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CITY OF BOSTON Municipal Lobbying Compliance Commission

Minutes Thursday, March 17, 2022, 2:00 PM Virtual Meeting held remotely via Google Meet Due to COVID-19 Pandemic

Commission Members Present: Interim City Clerk Alex Geourntas, Sammy Nabulsi, Linda Champion, Vivien Li, and Christine O'Donnell representing City Council President Ed Flynn and secretary for this meeting.

Others Present: N/A

Call to order at 2:03 PM

Sammy Nabulsi, Commission Chair, opened the virtual meeting, welcomed everyone, and explained that the meeting is being held remotely. The Commission proceeded with the agenda. The Commission reviewed the minutes from the February 17, 2022 meeting. There was a motion to amend the minutes due to a typographical error of the date in the third sentence. The motion was to change 2002 to 2022. The Commission approved the motion and the Commission approved the February 17, 2022 minutes as amended.

City Clerk Update

The Commission discussed the City Clerk transition. Interim City Clerk Alex Geourntas provided an update on the appointments of the current commissioners explaining their terms ended in January 2022; therefore, they are all holdovers and reappointments are being reviewed by the Administration.

Update on Lobbying Website Pages

Interim City Clerk Alex Geourntas stated that the online lobbying application has been approved and that online reporting will begin in April. Interim City Clerk Alex Geourntas further explained that the online reporting will allow the Clerk's Office to use the CCL number for tracking purposes, that the online system will be more efficient, and will provide the ability to track for every quarter. Interim City Clerk Alex Geourntas stated that the Clerk's Office will revamp the webpage.

The Chair expressed concerns with the lobbyists that have not filed reports but attempted to lobby. The Chair stated that the Commission needs to know who is not complying with the ordinance. Interim City Clerk Alex Geourntas explained that once reporting is online it will be easy to track who is not complying, and that prior to the online rollout such reports could be done manually. The Chair requested a report on how many are behind in two or more reports. The Commission discussed the importance of knowing delinquencies so that the Commission can discuss potential action. The Chair stated that the Commission should focus on the current delinquent ones and how many are delinquent by more than one report.

Commissioner Li inquired about staff resources. Interim City Clerk Alex Geourntas explained that the Clerk's Office will continue to support the requirements but that the dataset on the website will be updated automatically and workload processing time may be reduced.

Interim City Clerk Alex Geourntas provided an update on the January reports and stated that there are 23 lobbyists outstanding, 12 clients outstanding, and 6 entities outstanding. Interim City Clerk Alex Geourntas explained that an email will be sent as a reminder.

Old/New Business

The Commission will address the status of appointments. The Commission will look at the delinquencies and how the Commission will proceed. The Commission will look at the ordinance to see what the commission is authorized to do. The Commission will discuss public outreach efforts about the lobbying regulatory scheme at the next meeting

The Commission discussed communications about the lobbyist ordinance to employees and the public. The Chair and the Commission members reviewed a draft memorandum that summarizes the purpose of the lobbying ordinance. The Chair stated that his intent is to cover the key points of the ordinance without being overly long or complicated. Commissioner Li suggested that the first page be shorter and the Commission discussed that it is important for City employees to know that lobbyists need to be registered and how to check for registration. The Commissioners discussed using a recorded webinar or slideshow to educate employees. The Commission also discussed including lobbyist training into the conflict of interest and ethics training and using a certificate of compliance. Commissioner Champion suggested doing Clerk's Office segments about the regulations and requirements and partnering with WGBH and the schools to educate the general public. Commissioner Champion also suggested playing a video or webinar at the meetings of community organizations. Interim City Clerk Alex Geourntas stated he will work with Dion Irish on communications to City employees.

Meeting adjourned at 4:00 PM.