



CITY OF BOSTON
Municipal Lobbying Compliance Commission

Minutes
Thursday, March 18, 2021, 2:00 PM
Virtual Meeting held remotely via Google Meet
Due to COVID-19 Pandemic

Commission Members Present: Sammy Nabulsi, Chair; Vivien Li, Linda Champion, City Clerk Maureen Feeney and Christine O'Donnell representing City Council President Kim Janey

Others Present: Assistant City Clerk Alex Geourtas, Clerk to the Commission; Dassie Bheecham, Operations Manager, City Clerk's Office and James Duffy, City's Web Team.

Call to order at 2:06 PM

Sammy Nabulsi, Chair of the Commission, opened the virtual meeting by welcoming everyone who then introduced themselves.

City Clerk Maureen Feeney updated the Commission on the upcoming transition. As City Council President, Councilor Kim Janey will become Acting Mayor once Mayor Walsh officially resigns to become US Secretary of Labor. City Councilor Matt O'Malley will serve as President Pro Tempore of the body once Councilor Janey becomes Acting Mayor. Christine O'Donnell, the Staff Attorney for the City Council's Central Staff will continue to represent Councilor O'Malley during Commission Meetings.

Motion to approve the February 25, 2021 Meeting Minutes was offered by Vivien Li and seconded by Christine O'Donnell. All in favor.

Sammy Nabulsi, Commission Chair, discussed mayoral transition as it relates to the status of Commission and its members since the appointments are co-terminus with the Mayor. City's Corporation Counsel will be following up on Commission's inquiry in the next week or so.

Sammy Nabulsi introduced James Duffy from the City's Web Team to discuss web page development and improvements for Lobbying Registration and Reporting.

Current web page layout can be improved by creating sub-pages for individual issues such as registration, fee waivers, CCL Numbers, Regulations and other issues as they arise. Developing various forms can be created via the City's web team such as Google Docs or Agile Point.

Fee Waivers and Complaints would be the first attempt to create specialized forms online that would be easy to access, understand and complete. Dassie Bheecham from the City Clerk's Office spoke about the current IPS system that is utilized for Lobbying. IPS allows staff to review reports and registrations, attach reports to individual accounts and prepare database for public access. The city is currently considering a possible upgrade or a totally new application for Lobbying that would make the entire lobbying system more seamless, automated and less frustrating.

Vivien Li initiated discussion about the reporting of unregistered lobbying activities and the process of filing complaints. Various options were discussed such as complaints filed in writing or submitting complaints on an online form via the city's web site. The example of a Complaint Form was shown during the meeting as a possibility utilized by the State Ethics Commission. Their online Complaint Form may be a suitable example for our needs.

Also, Commission members had concerns about anonymous and/or frivolous lobbying complaints filed online. More research will be conducted on the filing of complaints, creating a suitable form and getting additional feedback from the State Ethics Commission and the Inspector General's Office.

Motion to adjourn was offered by Vivien Li and seconded by Linda Champion. All in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 3:58 PM.