

ETHICS TASK FORCE

June 4, 2026

C. – MINUTES

May 21, 2026

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Thursday, May 21, 2026 – 1:00 p.m.

Hearing Room 704, Guardian Building, 500 Griswold, Detroit, MI 48226. and via Zoom

- A. Roll Call: 1:04 p.m.

Allen R. Wilson (Chair)	-	Present
Melissa Daub	-	Present
Jonathan C. Kinloch	-	Present

Commissioner Peterson-Mayberry was also present.

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| B. | Chairman's Remarks | Chair Wilson thanked the Ethics Board for its work. |
| C. | Daub/Kinloch | Approved. The April 30, 2026 meeting minutes. Motion Carried.

Yeas – Commissioners Wilson, Daub Kinloch -- 3 |
| D. | Unfinished Business | |
| E. | New Business | |
| 1. | Communication dated October from the Wayne County Ethics Board recommending revisions to the Wayne County Ethics Ordinance. | |

Members of the Ethics Board introduced themselves.

Charles Longstreet, Board Attorney, provided an overview of the Ethics Board's proposed amendments to the Wayne County Ethics Ordinance. He stated that the primary purpose of the revisions is to strengthen the Ethics Board's investigative and enforcement authority, noting that the Board currently relies solely on information provided by complainants and respondents and lacks the ability to independently investigate complaints. He highlighted proposed amendments that would grant investigative authority, subpoena power and the ability to administer oaths to witnesses.

Mr. Longstreet also discussed proposed provisions addressing the disqualification of Ethics Board members in certain cases to avoid conflicts of interest or the appearance of impropriety. He further noted that the Board's current enforcement powers are limited, including a civil infraction penalty of \$500 with little means of enforcement and that the proposed revisions are intended to create a more effective and accountable ethics process.

There was discussion among Commissioners with Commission Counsel Felicia Johnson regarding the legal and practical implications of granting the Ethics Board investigative authority, subpoena power, oath administration authority and enhanced enforcement powers. Counsel Johnson noted that similar authority was considered when the ordinance was originally adopted but was not included due to legal concerns. Discussion included how other jurisdictions structure ethics oversight, whether the Commission's authority could be delegated to the Ethics Board and potential ordinance amendments to support investigations and subpoenas. Concerns were also raised regarding the enforceability of penalties, particularly for union employees and elected officials and the practical challenges of collecting fines and imposing disciplinary actions. Commissioners further discussed the need for an independent and effective Ethics Board with sufficient authority, resources and public confidence to carry out its responsibilities.

2. Discussion of the powers of the Ethics Board.
(This item was discussed under Item 1)
3. Review of Ethics Ordinance Section 40-7 (a)(1-9), Establishment of the Ethics Board

Counsel Johnson reviewed proposed revisions to the Ethics Ordinance and explained that several changes were intended to improve clarity, consistency, and administration. She noted that references to domestic partners would be incorporated into the definition of “relative” rather than repeated throughout the ordinance. She also discussed proposed language to ensure Ethics Board members receive parking accommodations, clarified quorum requirements, recommended changing the annual report due date from December 15 to January 31 to allow inclusion of the full calendar year and suggested that removals be made in writing. In addition, she outlined a revised disqualification provision requiring Ethics Board members to recuse themselves when conflicts of interest, personal interests, or duties of loyalty exist.

There was discussion among Commissioners regarding proposed amendment to Section 40-7 to the Ethics Ordinance to revise the composition of the Ethics Board. The proposal would provide for three members nominated by countywide elected officials, two members who are active or retired judges, attorneys or licensed law enforcement officers, and two members from the general public. Discussion also included implementing the new appointment structure upon the expiration of current board members' terms and seeking public feedback as the proposed amendments are developed.

Kinloch/Daub

Approved. To proposed amendment to section 40-7.

Yeas – Commissioners Wilson, Daub
Kinloch -- 3

4. Review of Ethics Ordinance Section 40-7 (b), Open Meetings Act

Counsel Johnson stated that language would be added to clarify that the

Ethics Board is subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and noted that the Board has responded to FOIA requests over the years.

5. Review of Ethics Ordinance Section 40-7 (g), Advisory Opinions

There was discussion among Counsel Johnson and Commissioners regarding proposed revisions to the advisory opinion process, including clarifying language, defining time periods as calendar days, and whether advisory opinions should be allowed to be requested anonymously. Counsel Johnson explained that advisory opinions relate to an individual's own conduct and noted that jurisdictions vary in their treatment of anonymous requests. Commissioners discussed the benefits of anonymity in protecting individuals from potential retaliation, concerns regarding transparency and accountability, and the possibility of publishing advisory opinions to provide guidance to others. Discussion also included the distinction between advisory opinions and whistleblower protections.

The Task Force agreed to remove references to anonymous requests and anonymity from Section 40-7.

F. Such other matters as may be properly submitted before the Committee

G. Public Comments

Comments were provided by Ethics Board Attorney Charles O. Longstreet II, Siham Awada Jaafar, Ketra Lewis and Anthony Guerriero.

H. Adjournment

Daub/Kinloch
The Task Force adjourned at 2:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Octavia Hunter
Legislative Research Assistant