



STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

Commission Meeting Minutes of August 1, 2025, 9:00AM **[Subject to Ratification by Commission]**

Call to Order

Chair Lang called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

1. Roll Call

Chair Lang called roll; the following Commissioners were present:

Hon. William F. Lang, Chair (attended virtually)
Jeffrey L. Baker (attended virtually)
Stuart M. Bluestone (attended virtually)
Hon. Celia Castillo (attended virtually)
Hon. Gary Clingman (attended virtually)
Hon. Dr. Terry McMillan (attended virtually)
Dr. Judy Villanueva (attended virtually)

2. Approval of Agenda

Executive Director Jeremy Farris proposed an amendment to add item 9.3 under "Discussion regarding current and potential litigation" for discussion regarding an action related to the nondisclosure of sensitive personal information act and to move item 6 to follow the "Discussion regarding current and potential litigation." Commissioner Bluestone proposed a second amendment to add a public comment period prior to the Executive Session.

Commissioner Bluestone moved to approve the agenda with the proposed amendments; Commissioner Clingman seconded. Hearing no discussion or objections the amended agenda was approved unanimously.

3. Approval of June 6, 2025, Commission Meeting Minutes

Chair Lang sought a motion for approval of the minutes of the June 6, 2025 meeting. Commissioner Bluestone moved to approve the minutes; Commissioner Baker seconded. Hearing no discussion or objections, the June 6, 2025 meeting minutes were approved unanimously.

Commission Meeting Items

4. Advisory Opinion 2025-03 (*Amended*) – District Legislative Aide Employment with Another State Agency (*Chato*)

Chief Compliance Counsel Chato provided an overview of Amended Advisory Opinion No. 2025-03. Advisory Opinion No. 2025-02 in summary states that the Governmental Conduct Act does not prohibit a public employee from having a second paying job so long as the employee discloses the job to the employee's employer, the employee is not being paid for work already performed as a public employee, and there is no conflict between the employee's public employment and secondary employment such that the positions are otherwise incompatible. The amended position adds in clarifying language and does not otherwise change the legal analysis.

Chair Lang sought a motion to approve the Amended Advisory Opinion 2025-03. Commissioner Castillo moved to approve the Amended Advisory Opinion 2025-03; Commissioner Baker seconded. After some discussion Chair Lang conducted a roll call vote. All Commissioners voted in the affirmative and approved the Amended Advisory Opinion 2025-03 unanimously.

5. Updated Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (*Chato*)

Chief Compliance Counsel Chato provided the Commissioners with the updated notice of proposed rulemaking. Due to a clerical error at State Records Center and Archives, the original notice was not published in the June 24, 2025, issue of the New Mexico Register. The updated notice reflects a revised rulemaking timeline. The second proposed amendment updates the definition of "ethics laws" to include any laws over which the Commission has jurisdiction or authority to act.

Chair Lang sought a motion to approve the notice of proposed rulemaking for the Commission's October 2026 meeting. Commissioner Castillo moved to approve the notice of proposed rulemaking; Commissioner Baker seconded. Hearing no discussion, Chair Lang conducted a roll call vote, Commissioners voted unanimously to approve the notice of proposed rulemaking.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Commission Meeting Items

---Begin Executive Session---

Chair Lang sought a motion to enter executive session. Commissioner Castillo moved to enter executive session under NMSA 1978, §§ 10-15-1(H)(2) (limited personnel matters), 10-15-1(H)(3) (administrative adjudicatory proceedings) and 10-15-1(H)(7) (attorney client privilege pertaining to litigation). Commissioner Clingman seconded the motion. Hearing no discussion, Chair Lang conducted a roll call vote, Commissioners voted unanimously to enter executive session.

6. Discussion regarding administrative matters under RULONA:
(Branch)

I. 2025-NP-07

7. Discussion regarding administrative matters under State Ethics Commission Act:
(Goodrich, Randall)

- I. Administrative Complaint No. 2025-19
- II. Administrative Complaint No. 2025-20
- III. Administrative Complaint No. 2025-21
- IV. Administrative Complaint No. 2025-22
- V. Administrative Complaint No. 2025-23

8. Discussion regarding current and potential litigation:
(Farris, Woods)

I. Commission authorization of a civil against regarding violations of the Governmental Conduct Act by an elected official employee of a local municipality.

II. Commission authorization of a civil action regarding late reporting fees referred to the Commission by the Secretary of State.

III. Nondisclosure of sensitive personal information

9. Appointment and salary of Executive Director

---End Executive Session---

Matters discussed in closed meeting were limited to those specified in motion to enter executive session. After concluding discussion of these matters, the Commission resumed public session upon an appropriate motion pursuant to NMSA 1978, § 10-15-1(J).

10. Action on administrative matters under RULONA

- I. Commission staff sought a motion for a default order in 2025-NP-07 *In re commission of Ver Ploegh*. Chair Lang sought a motion for the default order. Commissioner Bluestone moved to approve the default order; Commissioner Baker seconded. Hearing no discussion, Chair Lang conducted a roll call vote, and the Commissioners unanimously approved the dismissal.

11. Action on Administrative Matters under the State Ethics Commission Act *(Goodrich, Randall)*

The Commission considered the following motions regarding actions on Administrative Complaints:

- I. Commission staff sought a motion for an order of dismissal due to lack of jurisdiction in Administrative Case No. 2025-19. Chair Lang sought a motion for approval of the dismissal. Commissioner Villanueva moved to approve the dismissal; Commissioner Castillo seconded. Hearing no discussion, Chair Lang conducted a roll call vote, and the Commissioners unanimously approved the dismissal.
- II. Commission staff sought a motion for an order of dismissal due to lack of jurisdiction in Administrative Case No. 2025-20. Chair Lang sought a motion for approval of the dismissal. Commissioner Clingman moved to approve the dismissal; Commissioner Castillo seconded. Hearing no discussion, Chair Lang conducted a roll call vote, and the Commissioners unanimously approved the dismissal.
- III. Commission staff sought a motion for an order of dismissal due to lack of jurisdiction in Administrative Case No. 2025-21. Chair Lang sought a motion for approval of the dismissal. Commissioner McMillan moved to approve the dismissal; Commissioner Baker seconded. Hearing no discussion, Chair Lang conducted a roll call vote, and the Commissioners unanimously approved the dismissal.
- IV. Commission staff sought a motion for an order of dismissal due to lack of jurisdiction in Administrative Case No. 2025-22. Chair Lang sought a motion for approval of the dismissal. Commissioner Clingman moved to approve the dismissal; Commissioner Baker seconded. Hearing no discussion, Chair Lang conducted a roll call vote, and the Commissioners unanimously approved the dismissal.
- V. Commission staff sought a motion for an order of dismissal due to lack of jurisdiction in Administrative Case No. 2025-23. Chair Lang sought a motion for

approval of the dismissal. Commissioner Bluestone moved to approve the dismissal; Commissioner Castillo seconded. Hearing no discussion, Chair Lang conducted a roll call vote, and the Commissioners unanimously approved the dismissal.

12. Action on Authorization of Civil Action

(Farris, Woods)

- I. Commission staff sought a motion for approval authorizing a demand and civil action against Joe Milo and Aaron Sera regarding violations of the Governmental Conduct Act. Commissioner Castillo recused herself from the matter, including discussion in executive session and action in open session. Chair Lang sought a motion for approval of the authorization. Commissioner Bluestone moved to approve the authorization; Commissioner Baker seconded. Hearing no discussion, Chair Lang conducted a roll call vote, and the Commissioners unanimously approved the authorizations, with Commissioner Castillo recusing.
- II. Commission staff sought a motion for approval authorizing a demand and civil action against Gabriel Duran and Ariana Jamie Saludares to collect and enforce the late fees that have been assessed against them by the Secretary of State. Executive Director, Jeremy Farris, sought an amendment to the motion to include the enforcement of the Campaign Reporting Act as to Ariana Jamie Saludares and Gabriel Duran. Chair Lang sought a motion for approval of the authorization and amendment. Commissioner Baker moved to approve the authorization and amendment; Commissioner Bluestone seconded. Hearing no discussion, Chair Lang conducted a roll call vote, and the Commissioners unanimously approved the authorization and amendment.

13. Appointment and salary of Executive Director

- I. Commissioner Bluestone sought a motion to approve the appointment of Jeremy Farris as Executive Director for another six-year term and a salary increase of 12.31%. Commissioner Castillo seconded. Hearing no discussion, Chair Lang conducted a roll call vote, and the Commissioners unanimously approved the appointment and salary of Executive Director, Jeremy Farris.

14. Discussion of Next Meeting

Chair Lang confirmed the next regularly scheduled meeting will take place on October 10, 2025.

15. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

16. Adjournment

Chair Lang raised the adjournment of the meeting. With no objections made, the meeting adjourned at 11:15 AM.

For inquiries or special assistance, please contact Ethics.Commission@sec.nm.gov

From: [Chris Mechels](#)
To: [Commission, Ethics, SEC](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public Comment: August 1, 2025
Date: Wednesday, July 30, 2025 2:40:48 PM

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CAUTION: This email originated outside of our organization. Exercise caution prior to clicking on links or opening attachments.

To the Commission,

This message concerns a proposed exchange involving the Commission staff with the Ethics Boards of a number of Counties. I suggest that this is a very bad, even dangerous idea.

The proposal appears to come from Clifford Rees, of the SF County Ethics Board, and I learned of it at the latest Board meeting.

https://www.santafecountynm.gov/documents/agendas/agendas/Ethics_Board_07-25-2025.pdf

The SF Ethics Board is the only such Board in our state where the County Manager's staff select the Board members. Other such boards have Ethics members appointed by the individual Commissioners. Our current SF Board was appointed in 2023, and is packed by the County Manager to serve his interests. Mr. Rees, the Vice Chair, actually dominates the other members, by design. The previous Board had two active members, who attempted reforms, and Rees kills any such efforts.

Our SF Board, going back to 2010, is selected by the County Manager's staff, and chosen to serve that Manager. As a result the Manager has even threatened an BCC member with an Ethics violation, which is absurd but possible as the Manager, not the BCC, "owns" our Ethics Board. Mr. Rees was appointed to that end.

The only purpose for our SF Ethics Board is to serve the County Manager in dominating the BCC. It should be terminated, as it serves the County Manager, not the public.

As Mr. Rees is central to the proposed exchange, nothing good can come from it. Don't spread the poison.

You are being invited into a very shady adventure by Mr. Rees. Best to decline.

I can support everything and welcome questions.

Regards,

Chris Mechels
505-982-7144