

A meeting of the City Ethics Commission (Commission) was held on Monday, April 14, 2025, in the Council Chamber, 2nd Floor, City Hall, Hagerstown, Maryland.

The following people were in attendance:

- Joseph Jefferson, Chairperson
- Lewis C. Metzner
- Stacy L. Michael
- Jessica Scott
- Richard Willson
- Jason Morton, City Attorney
- Donna Spickler, City Clerk

[REDACTED]

Mr. Jefferson called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m.

On a motion duly made by Mr. Willson and seconded by Ms. Michael, the minutes from December 16, 2024 were approved.

Old Business

Ms. Michael reminded the group they had discussed talking with outside counsel to explore a more general discussion of what they could do and what they should not do when presented with questions that were considered on December 16, 2024.

[REDACTED]

Mr. Willson stated this request would be an example of what to discuss with outside counsel.

Ms. Michael stated the one from the City employee is another example.

Mr. Jefferson stated the two requests considered in December would be additional examples. Outside counsel could advise the Commission members if they are on the right path.

Ms. Michael reminded the group that former member Jessica Scott had some strong concerns about those requests but did go with the consensus of the group. Ms. Michael would like to have a legal opinion about what could be expected of elected officials and whether or not they should or could apply for grants.

Mr. Metzner stated the City Council does not vote on who receives the grants.

Mr. Jefferson stated it appears the consensus of the group is to wait to bring in outside counsel until they feel there is a conflict.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Mr. Morton left the meeting at this time.

Requests for Advisory Opinions

Councilmember Caroline Anderson was present to answer questions about her request. She started her business, Aeon Virtual Office, in 2022. She has applied for 2 City grants every year – Spring Sprouts and Microenterprise Grant. She has received those grants each year. The funding has been used for needed equipment on a smaller scale, social media marketing, and monthly payments. The Spring Sprouts grant application is due soon and she has asked for an Advisory Opinion to determine if she, as an elected official, is eligible to apply for the grant.

Aeon does not have a storefront but there is office space.

Mr. Jefferson asked if the grant awards are voted on by the Mayor and City Council. Councilmember Anderson stated they are not, it is through the business and economic development departments.

Mr. Jefferson asked if Councilmember Anderson is waiving the confidentiality status of her request. She indicated she is.

Councilmember Anderson left the room.

[REDACTED]

