

Executive Ethics Board News

Shirley Battan, Chair
Gerri Davis, Vice Chair
Lisa Marsh, Member
Anna Dudek Ross, Member
Jan Jutte, Member

November 20, 2020

The Executive Ethics Board (Board) met virtually on Friday, November 13, 2020 for their regular meeting and on Thursday, November 19, 2020 for a special meeting. Board members present were Chair Shirley Battan, Vice Chair Gerri Davis and Members Lisa Marsh, Anna Dudek Ross and Jan Jutte. Others attending included: Kate Reynolds, Executive Director, Chad Standifer, Assistant Attorney General, Michelle Carr, Assistant Attorney General, David Killeen, Senior Investigator, Bobby Frye, Investigator and Ruthann Bryant, Administrative Officer. Members of the public also attended.

Enforcement

In lieu of an enforcement hearing, the Board accepted stipulations from:

- **Mitch Harada**, former Administrative Law Judge with the Board of Industrial Insurance Appeals, may have violated the Ethics in Public Service Act by using state resources for his private benefit and gain. Evidence indicated that he stored over 500 personal documents on his state computer, created and/or saved over 300 documents during work hours including letters regarding personal legal issues and property and used the office address for personal deliveries. The Board levied a civil penalty of \$3,500.
- **Jeff Merrill**, former President of the Washington State Patrol Trooper Association, may have violated the Ethics in Public Service Act by using state resources for a political campaign when he asked two troopers to participate in a political advertisement in opposition to Washington State Initiative I-976. The Board levied a civil penalty of \$2,500.
- **Courtney Stewart**, a Sergeant with the Washington State Patrol, may have violated the Ethics in Public Service Act by using state resources to participate in a political advertisement in opposition to Washington State Initiative I-976. The Board levied a civil penalty of \$1,500 with \$500 suspended.
- **Nicholas King**, a Trooper with the Washington State Patrol, may have violated the Ethics in Public Service Act by using state resources to participate in a political advertisement in opposition to Washington State Initiative I-976. The Board levied a civil penalty of \$1,500 with \$500 suspended.
- **Hahli Rogers**, former Executive Director of Corporate & Continuing Education at Lower Columbia College, may have violated the Ethics in Public Service Act by using state

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resources for her private benefit or gain. Evidence indicated that she used college grant funds to purchase gift cards and then later accompanied her son to the bookstore where he used the gift cards to purchase his books for the fall quarter. In addition, Ms. Rogers failed to submit leave for time taken off work and used the college credit card for personal purchases. The Board levied a civil penalty of \$4,500.

- **Debra Pagel**, a Social and Health Program Consultant with the Department of social and Health Services, may have violated the Ethics in Public Service Act by using state resources for her private benefit and gain by receiving pay for time not worked. Evidence indicated that she was routinely late for work and failed to submit leave for full days off. The Board levied a civil penalty of \$3,000 with \$500 suspended.
- **Michael Addams**, former Local Government Liaison for the Division of Child Support at the Department of Social and Health Services, may have violated the Ethics in Public Service Act by securing special privileges for himself when he accepted employment with an agency that he managed a contract for while employed at the Division of Child Support. The Board levied a civil penalty of \$2,500.
- **Beth Gordon**, an Administrative Assistant for the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, may have violated the Ethics in Public Service Act by giving herself a special privilege in the form of a hotel room upgrade. The Board levied a civil penalty of \$500 with \$100 suspended.
- **Michael Baskett**, former Technical Services Manager at the University of Washington, may have violated the Ethics in Public Service Act by using state resources for his private benefit and gain when he received pay for time not worked. Evidence indicated that he failed to submit leave totaling more than 271 hours. The Board levied a civil penalty of \$3,500.
- **Jane Dykstra**, a Fiscal Specialist 2 with the Washington State University College of Veterinary Medicine, may have violated the Ethics in Public Service Act by using state resources for her private benefit and gain when she received pay for time not worked. Evidence indicated that she failed to submit leave for approximately 192 hours. The Board levied a civil penalty of \$3,000.

The Board found Reasonable Cause in EEB Case 2018-053 (Smith), EEB Case 2020-013 (Garrett), EEB Case 2020-028 (Nelson), EEB Case 2020-029 (Merrill), EEB Case 2020-033 (Valdez) and EEB Case 2020-037 (Hofstad).

The Board dismissed EEB Case 2020-034 (Flynn), EEB Case 2020-036 (Lindquist) and EEB Case 2020-038 (Trepanier) and EEB Case 2020-042 (Millar).

The Board issued Final Orders of Default in EEB Case 2019-032 (Wentworth) and EEB Case 2019-035 (Parnell).

The Board reviewed three Executive Director's Dismissals: EEB Case 2020-026 (Winegar), EEB Case 2020-035 (Godin) and EEB Case 2020-043 (Duncan).

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Board Action:

The Board reviewed and approved the Superintendent of Public Instruction's Ethical Standards policy.

Approved versions of policies will be uploaded to the Board's website at www.ethics.wa.gov.

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