

**New Mexico State Ethics Commission
Meeting Minutes
August 2, 2019
New Mexico Department of Agriculture
3190 S. Espina St., Las Cruces, NM 88001**

CONVENE AND ROLL CALL

Commissioner Stuart Bluestone called the State Ethics Commission meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. The roll was called and a quorum was established. Commissioners provided brief personal introductions, and, at Commissioner Bluestone’s request, audience members provided brief introductions.

PRESENT

Stuart M. Bluestone, Member
Dr. Garrey E. Carruthers, Member
Dr. Judy Villanueva, Member
Frances F. Williams, Member

Approval of Agenda.

Motion to approve agenda passed unanimously.

Brief Update on DFA’s Efforts for Ethics Commission.

1. Jeremy Farris, Department of Finance and Administration (“DFA”) General Counsel, provided the Commission with an update on DFA’s efforts to hire part-time temporary employee, professional service contracts on behalf of the Commission, and efforts to advertise for an Executive Director.
2. A motion to authorize DFA to expend funds for the State Ethics Commission to join the Council on Government Ethics Laws (“COGEL”) passed unanimously.

Determination of Process for Selecting Final Two Commissioners.

1. A motion to select one registered Republican and one independent (decline to state) or member of a minor party for the remaining two Commissioner seats passed unanimously.
2. Commissioner Bluestone moved to hold applications for the independent/minor party seat open through Friday, August 9, 2019. Commissioners Bluestone and Carruthers voted in favor; Commissioners Villanueva and Williams voted in opposition. The motion failed.
3. For the Republican seat, the Commissioners elected to invite for interviews the following applicants:
 - a. Ron Solimon (Carruthers, Villanueva, Williams, Bluestone)
 - b. Alan Torgerson (Carruthers, Bluestone)
 - c. William Zimmer (Villanueva)
 - d. Peyton George (Williams)
4. For the Independent/Minor Party seat, the Commissioners elected to invite for interviews the following applicants:
 - a. Jeff Baker (Carruthers, Williams, Bluestone)
 - b. Rebecca Haffenden (Carruthers, Villanueva)

- c. Craig McClure (Williams)
- d. Beverly Jimmerson (Williams, Villanueva)
- e. Carol Miller (Bluestone)

Determination of Interview Questions for Finalists.

The Commissioners elected to ask each of the interviewed applicants the following questions:

- 1. Please introduce yourself. (3 minutes).
- 2. Why do you want to be an Ethics Commissioner?
- 3. Why do you think you are well-qualified to serve as an Ethics Commissioner?
- 4. What do you think are the Ethics Commission's most significant responsibilities and the most significant challenges facing the Ethics Commission, and how do you think those challenges may be effectively addressed?
- 5. Please describe an important ethical issue that you faced and how you handled it.

Actions Relating to Applicant Interviews

The Commissioners authorized DFA to conduct checks regarding interviewees' eligibility with statutory requirements.

Discussion of Interested Persons Notice List.

The Commissioners discussed the creation of an interested persons notice list and authorized DFA to invite on an opt-out basis the inclusion of applicants for such a list.

Public Comment.

- 1. The Honorable Helen Mary Garcia noted her appreciation for the Commission and related her work in the Legislature regarding past bills for the creation of an Ethics Commission.
- 2. Maria Ariyo (sp?) presented her view that, as a retired state employee, an Ethics Commission is necessary. She noted that state employees had been replaced with government contractors who are allowed to park more closely to state buildings.
- 3. Bonnie Votaw of the League of Women Voters expressed a concern that the Commissioners were not subject to more extensive background checks.

Adjournment.

The meeting adjourned at 11:55 a.m.