

**MINUTES OF THE OPEN SESSION OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF  
THE ETHICS COMMISSION OF THE ROCHESTER PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT**

**Date and Time:** January 27, 2025, 5:00 p.m.

**Location:** Rochester Public Library Community Room, located at 1 Community Drive, Rochester, Illinois

**Meeting Called to Order:** 5:30 p.m. by Commissioner Hicks

**Commissioners Present:** David Hicks, Monroe McWard, Maggie Patterson

**Visitors:** Brian Costin, Deputy State Director, Americans For Prosperity -Illinois ("AFPI")  
Robert J. Tepatti, Rochester Public Library District Trustee

**Approve Minutes of Last Meeting:**

- A. The Minutes of the 12/4/24 Special Meeting were reviewed.
- B. Commissioner Patterson noted typographical errors in the proposed Minutes and requested the following changes:
  - 1) Page 2 noted a Nay vote by Commissioner "Hood" on her motion to find sufficient cause to proceed with a formal investigation into the allegations contained within the Formal Ethics Complaint filed by AFPI and requested the minutes be amended to correct the misnomer and correctly reflect the "Nay" vote was cast by Commissioner Hicks;
  - 2) Page 2 noted a "Aye" vote by Commissioner "Hood" on her motion to table the issue of whether there is sufficient cause to proceed with a formal investigation into the allegations contained within the Formal Ethics Complaint filed by AFPI and requested the minutes be amended to correct the misnomer and correctly reflect the "Aye" vote was cast by Commissioner Hicks;
  - 3) Commissioner Patterson requested sub-paragraph "g" on page 3 be correctly re-labeled as sub-paragraph "d".
- C. Motion made by Commissioner McWard to approve the Minutes of the 12/4/24 Special Meeting subject to the amendments requested by Commissioner Patterson and approved by acclamation.

**Unfinished Business:**

- A. Consideration of Formal Ethics Complaint submitted by Americans for Prosperity -

## Illinois

### Floor Opened For Public Comment

- a. Brian Costin of AFP-I presented the Commissioners with copies of the Illinois Attorney General's "A Guide to the Implementation of the Model Ethics Ordinance" and the Illinois Attorney General's Model Ethics Ordinance. Costin stated that Rochester Public Library District Board of Trustees failed to adhere to "State Law" which requires the Board of Trustees to enact an ethics ordinance which was no less restrictive than "State Law". Mr. Costin asserted that the Rochester Public Library District Board of Trustees' failure to adhere to "State Law" should not excuse illegal electioneering by trustees or employees. Costin reviewed the allegations contained in AFPI's Formal Ethics Complaint, identified the provisions of the Illinois Attorney General's Model Ethics Ordinance alleged to have been violated by trustees and/or employees of the Rochester Public Library District and the acts of trustees and employees which violated the Model Ethics Ordinance. Costin asked the Ethics Commission to initiate an investigation in order to ensure that the Library complies with the law.
- b. Commissioner McWard asked Costin whether he benefitted economically from the filing of AFPI's Formal Ethics Complaint. Costin responded that he receives a salary from AFPI but does not directly benefit from the filing of the Formal Ethics Complaint.
- c. Robert J. Tepatti stated that the Board of Trustees believed in was acting in the best interest of the community. The Board of Trustees tried to be "up front" with the community. The Board of trustees never told voters how to vote; it only advised voters of the consequences of a "yes" or "no" vote. The Board of Trustees received no training on ethics specific to the administration of the Library. The Board of Trustees did not act with an intent to deceive the community. The Board of Trustees did not spend public money. Had the Board of Trustees known what the "rules" were, missteps wouldn't have been made. The Board of Trustees needs more ethics training.

Floor Closed for Public Comment.

### **Closed Session**

Motion by Commissioner Hicks to go into closed session pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1) so that Commission could consider issue related to discipline and performance of Rochester Public Library District employees and volunteers. Passed by acclamation.

**Open Session**

Motion by Commissioner Hicks to re-open public session. Passed by acclamation.

- a. Motion made by Commissioner Patterson for Ethics Commission to find there to be sufficient cause to proceed with a formal investigation into the allegations contained within the Formal Ethics Complaint filed by AFPI. Motion seconded by Commissioner Hicks.
- b. Question called. Restatement of Commissioner Patterson’s motion for Ethics Commission to find there to be sufficient cause to proceed with a formal investigation into the allegations contained within the Formal Ethics Complaint filed by AFPI. Vote taken.  
 Motion passes.  
 Aye Votes: Commissioner Patterson, Commissioner McWard  
 Nay Votes: Commissioner Hicks

Floor reopened to discuss resolution of impasse caused by deadlock vote.

**New Business**

- A. Establish procedures to be used in an investigation of said Ethics Complaint.

Motion made by Commissioner McWard to approve investigatory process whereby Commission would schedule closed interviews of respondents named in the Formal Ethics Complaint who fall within the Ethic Commission jurisdiction. Motion seconded by Commissioner Hicks. Vote taken. Motion passes.

Aye votes: Commissioner Hood, Commissioner McWard, Commissioner Patterson.

Nay Votes: None

**Next meeting:** To be set after Commission’s interviews of respondents named in the Formal Ethics Complaint have been scheduled.

**Adjournment:** With no additional items to discuss, a motion for adjournment at 7:00 p.m. by Commissioner Hicks, second by Commissioner McWard and passed by acclamation.

3-95-25

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Commissioner  