



TEXAS ETHICS COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Public Meeting Minutes

February 11, 2026, 10:18 a.m.
Capitol Extension, Room E1.014
Austin, Texas 78701



COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chris Flood, Chair; Patrick W. Mizell, Vice Chair, Randall H. Erben, Sean Gorman, Geanie W. Morrison, Richard S. Schmidt, Joseph O. Slovacek, and Mark Strama, Commissioners.

COMMISSIONERS NOT PRESENT: None.

STAFF PRESENT: Amanda Arriaga, Brandon Barrett, Margie Castellanos, Carmen Dalpiaz, Desirae Gonzalez, Jessie Haug, Cristina Hernandez, Jordan Hunn, Natalie McDermon, David Onyike, Amy Padilla, Lindsay Powers, Marie Primm, Meredith Rasmussen, Margaret Sanchez, Patti Shannon, Seth Smith and Bill Wilson.

MINUTES

These minutes are a summary record of the Commission's actions at the meeting. For a detailed record of discussions and statements made by persons speaking at the meeting, please consult the video recording located on the Texas House of Representatives' audio/video website here: <https://house.texas.gov/video-audio/capitol-events/>.

The minutes reflect the order in which the items were heard.

Agenda Item 1: Call to Order; Roll Call.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Flood. Amanda Arriaga, General Counsel, called the roll. All Commissioners were present.

Agenda Item 2: Discussion and possible action related to outside counsel contracts for certain lawsuits filed against either the Texas Ethics Commission and/or commissioners.

Amanda Arriaga, General Counsel, briefed the Commission on this agenda item. Motion by Commissioner Schmidt to approve the outside counsel contract with Butler, Snow and to renew the Request for Proposal; second by Commissioner Strama. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Agenda Item 3: Discussion regarding dates for next quarterly Commission meeting.

Chair Flood led the discussion on the next Commission meeting dates. Chair Flood, Commissioners Schmidt and Slovacek and Amanda Arriaga, General Counsel, responded with questions and comments. The tentative dates for the next Commission meetings are May 13, 2026 and September 23, 2026. **No action was taken.**

Agenda Item 4: Approve minutes for the following meetings:

- **Executive Session on December 10, 2025; and**
- **Public Meeting on December 10, 2025.**

Chair Flood briefed the Commission on this agenda item. Motion by Commissioner Schmidt to approve the minutes in Agenda Item 4; second by Commissioner Morrison. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Agenda Item 5: Discussion and possible action on the proposal and publication in the Texas Register re-adoption with amendments of Chapter 20 of the TEC rules, related to reporting political contributions and expenditures, including an amendment to §18.10 (Guidelines for Substantial Compliance for a Corrected/Amended 8-day Pre-election Report) which is affected by this re-adoption.

Chair Flood and Natalie McDermon, Deputy General Counsel, briefed the Commission on this agenda item. Motion by Commissioner Schmidt to adopt Agenda Item 5; second by Commissioner Gorman. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Agenda Item 6: Discussion and possible action on the adoption or proposal and publication in the Texas Register regarding re-adoption of Chapter 34 of the TEC rules, related to regulation of lobbyists.

Chair Flood and Natalie McDermon, Deputy General Counsel, briefed the Commission on this agenda item. Motion by Commissioner Schmidt to adopt Agenda Item 6; second by Commissioner Erben. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Agenda Item 7: Discussion and possible action regarding the implementation of SB 293 (89R) related to the methodology by which the TEC may make equitable adjustments to the dollar amount on which the standard service retirement annuity is computed for the elected class of pension recipients. Possible action includes the adoption or proposal and publication in the Texas Register of 1 Tex. Admin Code § 50.3 regarding the equitable adjustments of pensions.

Chair Flood and Natalie McDermon, Deputy General Counsel, briefed the Commission on this agenda item. Motion by Commissioner Schmidt to adopt Agenda Item 7; second by Vice Chair Mizell. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Agenda Item 8: Discussion and possible action on the proposal and publication in the

Texas Register regarding re-adoption of Chapter 16 of the TEC rules, related to facial compliance.

Chair Flood and Natalie McDermon, Deputy General Counsel, briefed the Commission on this agenda item. **No action was taken.**

Agenda Item 9: Discussion and possible action on the proposal and publication in the Texas Register regarding re-adoption of Chapter 26 of the TEC rules, related to political and legislative advertising.

Chair Flood and Natalie McDermon, Deputy General Counsel, briefed the Commission on this agenda item. Motion by Commissioner Schmidt to publish Agenda Item 9 for public comment; second by Commissioner Gorman. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Agenda Item 10: Discussion and possible action on the proposal and publication in the Texas Register regarding re-adoption of Chapter 45 of the TEC rules, related to conflicts of interest.

Chair Flood and Amanda Arriaga, General Counsel, briefed the Commission on this agenda item. Motion by Commissioner Schmidt to publish Agenda Item 10 for public comment; second by Vice Chair Mizell. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Agenda Item 11: Discussion and possible action on the proposal and publication in the Texas Register regarding re-adoption of Chapter 46 of the TEC rules, related to disclosure of interested parties.

Chair Flood and Natalie McDermon, Deputy General Counsel, briefed the Commission on this agenda item. Motion by Commissioner Schmidt to publish Agenda Item 11 for public comment; second by Commissioner Morrison. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Agenda Item 12: Discussion and possible action on the proposal and publication in the Texas Register of new Chapter 7 of the TEC rules, related to contract procedures.

Chair Flood and Amanda Arriaga, General Counsel, briefed the Commission on this agenda item. Motion by Commissioner Schmidt to publish Agenda Item 12 for public comment; second by Commissioner Erben. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Agenda Item 13: Discussion and possible action regarding TEC's comprehensive review of its rules.

Amanda Arriaga, General Counsel, briefed the Commission on this agenda item. **No action was taken.**

Agenda Item 14: Advisory Opinion Request No. AOR-740: Whether asking questions of or requesting a formal written opinion from certain state officials,

without suggesting an answer to the questions, would require registration under Chapter 305, Texas Government Code.

Chair Flood and Amanda Arriaga, General Counsel, briefed the Commission on this agenda item. Andrew Cates addressed the Commission. Chair Flood, Commissioner Erben, Ms. Arriaga and Natalie McDermon, Deputy General Counsel, responded with questions or comments. Motion by Commissioner Schmidt to adopt AOR-740; second by Commissioner Erben. **Motion passed unanimously. AOR-740 is adopted.**

Agenda Item 15: Advisory Opinion Request No. AOR-741: Whether a video recorded with students at a charter school is political advertising for the purposes of Sections 255.003 and 255.001 of the Election Code.

Chair Flood and Natalie McDermon, Deputy General Counsel, briefed the Commission on this agenda item. Chair Flood, Commissioners Erben, Schmidt and Strama, and Natalie McDermon, Deputy General Counsel, responded with questions or comments. Motion by Commissioner Schmidt to adopt AOR-741; second by Commissioner Morrison. **Motion passed unanimously. AOR-741 is adopted as written and will be revisited later for a possible revision.**

Agenda Item 16: Advisory Opinion Request No. AOR-742: Whether the revolving door prohibition in Section 572.069 of the Government Code would prohibit a former employee of a state agency from accepting certain employment.

Natalie McDermon, Deputy General Counsel, briefed the Commission on this agenda item. Motion by Commissioner Schmidt to adopt AOR-742; second by Vice Chair Mizell. **Motion passed unanimously. AOR-742 is adopted.**

Agenda Item 17: Advisory Opinion Request No. AOR-744: Whether a tax rate election (“TRE”) flier prepared by a school district (the “district”) is political advertising for the purposes of Sections 255.003 of the Election Code.

Carmen Dalpiaz, Assistant General Counsel, briefed the Commission on this agenda item. Vice Chair Mizell and Ms. Dalpiaz responded with questions or comments. Motion by Vice Chair Mizell to adopt AOR-744; second by Commissioner Schmidt. **Motion passed unanimously. AOR-744 is adopted.**

Agenda Item 18: Advisory Opinion Request No. AOR-745: Whether a video constitutes political advertising for the purposes of the Election Code’s prohibition against using public funds for political advertising.

Natalie McDermon, Deputy General Counsel, briefed the Commission on this agenda item. Motion by Commissioner Schmidt to adopt AOR-745; second by Commissioner Erben. **Motion passed unanimously. AOR-745 is adopted.**

Agenda Item 19: Discussion and possible action on appeals of determinations made under 1 Tex. Admin. Code §§ 18.11, 18.25 and 18.26 relating to administrative waiver or reduction of a fine, for the following filers:

Staff Recommendation: Waiver

- A. Alexander, Troy R. (00010227)
- B. Garner, Britt J., Campaign Treasurer, Blue Action Democrats – Southwest Austin (dissolved) (00082469)
- C. Givens-Davis, Amber N. (00069505)
- D. Ivey III, Ben L. (00089429)

Staff Recommendation: Reduction

- E. Bickers, Leland, Campaign Treasurer, Save Austin Now PAC (00085302)
- F. Hunsucker, Michael R. (00053200)
- G. Martin-Lane, Andrea (00069228)
- H. Ticknor, Corey (00087238)

Staff Recommendation: No Further Reduction or Waiver

- I. Hotze, Dr. Steven, Campaign Treasurer, Woodfill of Texas PAC (00088405)

Chair Flood and Natalie McDermon, Deputy General Counsel, briefed the Commission on this agenda item.

#A through D: Motion by Commissioner Schmidt to accept staff recommendations of waiver for Agenda Item 19, Nos. A through D; second by Commissioner Erben. **Motion passed unanimously.**

#E: Ms. McDermon informed the Commission that Mr. Bickers had requested that his hearing be continued to the May meeting. Motion by Commissioner Schmidt to postpone the hearing on Agenda Item 19, No. E; second by Vice Chair Mizell. **Motion passed unanimously.**

#F: Michael Hunsucker addressed the Commission. Motion by Commissioner Slovacek to waive the late-filing penalty on Agenda Item 19, No. F; second by Commissioner Schmidt. **Motion passed unanimously.**

#G: Andrea Martin-Lane addressed the Commission. Vice Chair Mizell responded with questions or comments. Motion by Commissioner Schmidt to adopt staff recommendations on Agenda Item 19, No. G; second by Commissioner Slovacek. **Motion passed unanimously.**

#H: Motion by Commissioner Schmidt to adopt staff recommendations on Agenda Item 19, No. H; second by Commissioner Slovacek. **Motion passed unanimously.**

#I: Ms. McDermon provided an update on this agenda item. Motion by Commissioner Schmidt to adopt staff's updated recommendation on Agenda Item 19, No. I; second by Commissioner Morrison. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Agenda Item 20: Briefing and discussion of actions taken or in-progress to implement move of Texas Ethics Commission from Sam Houston Building to Barbara Jordan Building.

Amanda Arriaga, General Counsel, briefed the Commission on this agenda item. Chair Flood, Vice Chair Mizell, Commissioners Erben, Morrison, Schmidt and Slovacek, and Ms. Arriaga responded with questions or comments. **No action was taken.**

Agenda Item 21: Briefing and discussion of various Commission policies, including Alternative Dispute Resolution, Commission policy-making responsibility, contracts and negotiated rulemaking.

Amanda Arriaga, General Counsel, briefed the Commission on this agenda item. **No action was taken.**

Agenda Item 22: Adjourn.

Commissioner Slovacek provided comments. **Commission meeting adjourned by unanimous consent.**

Meeting adjourned at 11:15 am.