

Merom Brachman, *Chairman*
Michael A. Flack, *Vice Chairman*
Bruce E. Bailey
Elizabeth E. Tracy



OHIO ETHICS COMMISSION
William Green Building
30 West Spring Street, L3
Columbus, Ohio 43215-2256
Telephone: (614) 466-7090
Fax: (614) 466-8368

www.ethics.ohio.gov

Paul M. Nick
Executive Director

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For more information, contact:
Paul M. Nick
Executive Director
(614) 466-7090

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

ETHICS COMMISSION ELECTS OFFICERS AND REVIEWS REPORTS

At its meeting on January 22, 2016, the Ohio Ethics Commission re-elected Merom Brachman as Chairman and Michael A. Flack as Vice Chairman. Mr. Brachman is a Columbus businessman and a long-time member of the Ethics Commission. Mr. Flack retired as the Vice President of Ethics and Business Practices at Nationwide Insurance.

In its open session, the Chairman raised a current focus of public attention on work by officials serving in some private, non-profit groups that also do business with the official's public subdivisions. He referenced several 2010 Commission Advisory Opinions related to matters now under confidential staff review.

Mr. Brachman asked staff to provide an overview of the public contracts prohibitions under Ohio criminal code sections within the Commission's jurisdiction. Staff summarized these opinions given in 2010 to several candidates for Cuyahoga County Council.

The Chairman notes that these Opinions were unanimously approved by the Commission in June and August 2010 by vote of appointees from prior Administrations, and he pointed out that such opinions afford immunity for officials who comply with them.

The Commission will be reviewing these past Opinions and any relevant information, solicited from this meeting's audience, at its next meeting on February 26, 2016.

In other business, the Commission also reviewed various 2015 statistics, highlights included the following:

- Commission Attorneys provided 199 written advisory opinions, each of which was responded to within 15 days of their receipt.
- Commission staff provided 206 educational sessions around the state that were attended by more than 15,000 people and reached an additional 8,000 people through online courses and webinars.

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