



ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ROCKVILLE ETHICS COMMISSION

Calendar year 2024.

TO: MAYOR AND COUNCIL

FROM: THE ROCKVILLE ETHICS COMMISSION

The Rockville Ethics Commission (“Commission”) consists of seven members, and its mission pursuant to Rockville City Code Section 16-2 is to:

- Ensure the public has the highest trust in city officials and employees
- Assure the public that decisions are made impartially and with independence of judgment
- Ensure city business is conducted free from improper influence.

During 2024, the Commission met seven times with approximately one meeting every two months. The Commission canceled two meetings in August and September due to lack of a quorum. Since the Fall of 2024, Mayor and Council appointed two commissioners to fill vacancies on the Commission. The Chair of the Ethics Commission, Kevin Jenkins, resigned on February 29, 2024, due to a recently developed conflict of interest. Kevin Gash, an existing commissioner, replaced Mr. Jenkins as Chair on March 13, 2024. Each meeting was properly noticed and the meeting agendas, minutes, and videos are available on the City of Rockville website. <https://www.rockvillemd.gov/1312/Ethics-Commission>

The primary activity of the Commission has been to review the financial disclosure forms of elected officials and candidates, members of designated boards, and senior level city staff for technical compliance as required by Rockville City Code and State law. As requested, the Commission also provides advisory opinions. In 2024 the Commission did not receive any requests for advisory opinions.

In 2024, 47 financial disclosure statements were filed, with 100% compliance among City Council members, boards, commissioners, and senior level members of city staff. While the Commission has the ability to leverage penalties against late or non-filers, the Commission did not have to do so in 2024. On September 18, 2024, the Commission certified, in accordance

with the requirements of Maryland law, that the City of Rockville complied with the requirements of General Provisions Article, Title 5, Subtitle 8, Annotated Code of Maryland, for elected local officials. This certification was provided as required by Maryland law to the State Ethics Commission.

The Commission also reviewed training materials provided by the Commission's attorney-advisor, Leela Fireside, to ensure compliance with the city and state ethics codes. As part of ensuring compliance with State law, the Commission reviewed, approved, and forwarded to the City Council an update to the Rockville City Code, Chapter 16 – Public Ethics - in August of 2024.