FORT LEE BOARD OF ETHICS COMMITTEE
Minutes for the Meeting of December 1, 2021

Attendance: C. Blue (Vice-Chair), R. Ferris, J. Criscione, H. Liapes, D. Sarnoff, J. Woolley (Recording Secretary). Absent: A. Suarez (Board Attorney).

The meeting began at 7:40 P.M. in Room 219 of the Fort Lee Public Library. Notification was carried out in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act. Notification was sent to The Record and The Jersey Journal. The Borough Clerk's Office was informed. Notification of this meeting was posted on the bulletin board in the Borough Hall. The Borough Administrator's Office was also aware. A roll call was taken.

1. Case 2021-1: In the Matter of [redacted]: A complaint regarded a Fort Lee issue had been forwarded from the State Ethics Board to former Chair G. Cervieri. He had forwarded it to H. Liapes.

2. Financial Disclosure Forms: Three people have not yet filed their forms. R. Ferris suggested the Board consider forwarding information to the Mayor and Council. D. Sarnoff said he would recuse himself from any consideration G. Lee's form..

3. Motion to enter into Closed Session: On a motion made by R. Ferris and seconded by H. Liapes, the Board unanimously voted to enter into Closed Session at 7:50.

4. Return to Open Session: The Board returned to an Open Meeting at 8:12 P.M.

5. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:13 P.M. on a motion made by H. Liapes, seconded by D. Sarnoff, and approved unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted

Jonathan Woolley

FORT LEE BOARD OF ETHICS COMMITTEE
Minutes for the non-public Closed Session Meeting of December 1, 2021

Attendance: C. Blue (Vice-Chair), R. Ferris, J. Criscione, H. Liapes, D. Sarnoff, J. Woolley (Recording Secretary). Absent: A. Suarez (Board Attorney).

This portion of the Closed Session meeting was not open to the public. The meeting had begun at 7:40 P.M. in Room 219 of the Fort Lee Public Library as an open meeting. Notification had been carried out in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act. A roll call was taken at that time. The Board had gone into Closed Session at 7:50 P.M.

1. Case 2021-1: In the Matter of A. R.: A complaint regarded a Fort Lee issue had been forwarded from the State Ethics Board to former Chair G. Cervieri. He had forwarded it to H. Liapes. Items discussed were as follows:

- **Recording the Case:** The Board was concerned about how the case would be referred to in the minutes. J. Woolley said they are recorded by number and refer to the person under consideration by initials. The Board was concerned the person under consideration might see there is a complaint against him in the Open Session minutes. J. Woolley agreed not to list his initials, unless instructed otherwise.
- **Anonymous Complainant:** The name of the complainant is not listed on the complaint; thus the Board has no way to contact him / her. C. Blue and J. Woolley said several cases had been considered by the Board in the past, over a decade ago. At that time, the then-Board Attorney had drafted a complaint form that required a complainant to sign their name on the form. (It is unclear whether the Borough Clerk still has copies of this form, and whether its usage is still in effect). However, this complainant has used a State Ethics Board form that allows anonymity. C. Blue will look into this complainant and his submission further.
- **Contacting A. R.:** It was decided not to contact A. R. at this point due to insufficient information about both the complainant and the facts behind the complaint.
- **Obtaining Further Information:** C. Blue will look into this complainant and his submission further. The Board decided the matter of whether a registered foundation is on file should be looked into, which J. Woolley can assist with. J. Woolley will also apprise the Board Attorney of the Board's receipt of this issue and that his assistance will be needed for further response.

2. Adoption of State Ethics Rules: Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Board had not held a meeting regarding setting ethics guidelines for this year. On a motion made by D.

Sarnoff and seconded by H. Liapes, the Board unanimously adopted the ethics rules of the State of New Jersey to serve as the Board's guidelines for 2021.

3. Motion to return into Open Session: On a motion made by D. Sarnoff and seconded by H. Liapes, the Board unanimously voted to end the Closed Session portion of the meeting and return to holding an Open Meeting at 8:12.

4. Return to Open Session: The Board returned to an Open Meeting at 8:12 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted

Jonathan Woolley

FORT LEE BOARD OF ETHICS
Minutes for the Meeting of February 2, 2022 – Without Redactions

Attendance: C. Blue (Vice-Chair), R. Ferris, J. Criscione, H. Liapes, D. Sarnoff, J. Kates, A. Suarez (Board Attorney), J. Woolley (Recording Secretary).

The meeting began at 7:30 P.M. in Room 219 of the Fort Lee Public Library. Notification was carried out in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act. A roll call was taken.

1. Approval of Minutes: On a motion made by H. Liapes and seconded by D. Sarnoff, the minutes of the December 1, 2021 meeting were approved unanimously, with one abstention (J. Kates).

2. Appointment of Chair: On a motion made H. Liapes and seconded by J. Criscione, the Board unanimously appointed C. Blue to serve as Chair for 2022.

3. Appointment of Vice Chair: On a motion made by C. Blue and seconded by D. Sarnoff, the Board unanimously appointed H. Liapes to serve as Vice Chair for 2022.

4. Appointment of Recording Secretary: On a motion made by C. Blue, the Board unanimously appointed J. Woolley to serve as Recording Secretary for 2022.

5. Adoption of State Ethics Rules: On a motion made by J. Criscione and seconded by J. Kates, the Board unanimously adopted the ethics rules of the State of New Jersey to serve as the Board's guidelines for 2022.

6. Case 2021-1: In the Matter of A. R.: A. Suarez said he spoke to A. R., who said no money is made by him or anyone else; he is simply treasurer of a fund used to assist victims of unfortunate events; the trustees (he is not one of them) vote on disbursements. H. Liapes asked if taxpayer money was involved: A. Suarez said it could be but A. R. had told him it is typically funded by donations from businessmen and schoolchildren, and is audited annually by an outside firm. J. Kates asked about responding to the complainant; A. Suarez said he can't as he doesn't have name and contact information, but would respond to P. Lee of the State Ethics Board. On a motion made by R. Ferris and seconded by H. Liapes, the Board unanimously directed A. Suarez to obtain further information; he said he would check there are no salaries issued and contact the Mayor for additional information.

5. Signed Forms: J. Criscione asked about signed forms or complaints. A former Board Attorney did draft one and give it to the Borough Clerk's office for use in a complaint but it is unclear if it still exists (J. Woolley may be able to check on its status). It has not been used for the most recent complaints. For Case 2021-1, a signed form was not used because the complaint was forwarded from the State Ethics Board rather than being submitted directed to the Fort Lee Board of Ethics by the complainant.

5. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 P.M. on a motion made by J. Criscione, seconded by D. Sarnoff, and approved unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted

Jonathan Woolley

FORT LEE BOARD OF ETHICS
Minutes for the Meeting of March 2, 2022

Attendance: C. Blue (Chair), R. Ferris, J. Criscione, D. Sarnoff, J. Kates, A. Suarez (Board Attorney), J. Woolley (Recording Secretary).

The meeting began at 7:30 P.M. in Room 219 of the Fort Lee Public Library. Notification was carried out in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act. Notification was sent to The Record and The Jersey Journal. The Borough Clerk's Office was informed. Notification of this meeting was posted on the bulletin board in the Borough Hall. The Borough Administrator's Office was also aware. A roll call was taken.

1. Approval of Minutes: On a motion made by J. Kates and seconded by D. Sarnoff, the minutes of the February 2, 2022 meeting were approved unanimously.

2. Motion to enter into Closed Session: On a motion made by J. Criscione and seconded by J. Kates, the Board unanimously voted to enter into Closed Session at 7:34P.M.

3. Return to Open Session: The Board returned to an Open Meeting at 7:54 P.M.

4. Upcoming Meetings: J. Woolley will let people know if there is going to be a meeting in April.

5. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted

Jonathan Woolley

FORT LEE BOARD OF ETHICS COMMITTEE
Minutes for the non-public Closed Session Meeting of March 2, 2022

Attendance: C. Blue (Chair), R. Ferris, J. Criscione, D. Sarnoff, J. Kates, A. Suarez (Board Attorney), J. Woolley (Recording Secretary).

This portion of the Closed Session meeting was not open to the public. The meeting had begun at 7:30 P.M. in Room 219 of the Fort Lee Public Library as an open meeting. Notification had been carried out in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act. A roll call was taken at that time. The Board had gone into Closed Session at 7:34 P.M.

1. Case 2021-1: In the Matter of A. R.: A Suarez had prepared some materials based on his research since the February Board meeting. These materials had been distributed to the Board prior to the March 2 meeting and formed the basis for discussing this case. Noteworthy topics discussed were as follows:

- **Itemization of Deposits and Expenses:** A. Suarez had obtained a breakdown of the bank deposits and withdrawals / checks written related to this case. It was his opinion everything was appropriate. The Board accepted this view. J. Kates asked about two specific expenses, but, based on the information obtained, it appears one expense was regarding multiple people while the other was regarding one person.
- **Process of Handling Expenses:** J. Criscione asked how people request aid / money be expended from the fund. A. Suarez explained the process based upon his research: A. R. does not make requests or decisions, A. R. merely writes checks as directed to do so. For comparative purposes, A. Suarez provided the Board a brief summary of how similar requests have been handled in Ridgefield. It was noted the fund is for a charitable foundation.
- **Conclusion:** The Board and A. Suarez agreed there appeared to be no irregularities. All of the money was accounted for. A. Suarez said there are no legal problems with A. R.'s actions. The Board accepted and agreed with this view. C. Blue briefly noted the Board would have subpoena power should any further cases arise on this matter.

2. Motion to Dismiss Case 2021-1: In the Matter of A. R.: D. Sarnoff made a motion to dismiss the Complaint / Case 2021-1 and to notify the State to that effect. The motion was seconded by J. Kates and approved unanimously. A. Suarez will send letters notifying the State Local Finance Board and the Borough Clerk the case / complaint has been dismissed. In response to a question from a Board member, he said he could not notify the Complainant directly as the Complainant was anonymous.

3. Motion to return into Open Session: On a motion made by D. Sarnoff and seconded by C. Blue, the Board unanimously voted to end the Closed Session portion of the meeting and return to holding an Open Meeting at 7:54 P.M.

4. Return to Open Session: The Board returned to an Open Meeting at 7:54 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted

Jonathan Woolley