

To the Honorable,
Mayor of Milwaukee and the members of the Common Council

**The City of Milwaukee Board of Ethics
2011 Annual Report**

The City of Milwaukee Board of Ethics administers the Code of Ethics, Chapter 303, which promotes the essential elements of public trust. The Board works to implement the Code by issuing confidential advisory opinions, investigating sworn complaints, requiring and reviewing the Statement of Economic Interests (SEI) forms of city employees and board members.

The Ethics Board met nine times during 2011 for its regular meetings. In 2010, the office of the City Clerk began posting the SEI form on the Ethics Board's web site. In addition, for the first time, those required to file SEI forms were notified of this obligation by e-mail.

In 2011, the Board responded to one complaint and six requests for opinions. A summary of the opinion requests are included in this report. These summaries should not be viewed as definitive advice, but rather as a guide to the type of situations addressed by the Board.

The seven citizen members of the Board for 2011 were:

Dwight Ellis – Chair (Until September 2011)

Annie Wacker – Vice-Chair

Patricia Hintz

Joanne Barndt

Robert Shelledy

Summary of Opinions Issued In 2011

11-1. The Board addressed one confidential complaint received from a citizen.

Potential Conflicts of Interest

11-2.

A city employee requested an advisory opinion to see if the City's Ethics Code permits a loan through the NSP Home Buyers Assistant Program to an employee of the City who works as a loan officer for the same program. The Board found an inherent conflict of interest for an employee of a City loan program to seek the same loan where persons working on and approving the loan are the superiors or co-workers of the employee seeking the loan.

11-3

A city employee wanted to apply for a forgivable Rental Rehabilitation Loan through the Department of City Development, Neighborhood Improvement Development Corporation. The Board does not believe that under the circumstances presented that the employee would be using his or her public position for private benefit.

11-4

A City employee asked to work on a freelance project with a Common Council member to maintain a campaign voter database and produce a walk list. The Board found that the employee would not be using his or her public position for his or her benefit and the ethics code does not prohibit the employee from engaging in the proposed freelance work on the basis of the information presented to the Board.

11-5

A city official planned on attending a facilitated panel of experts hosted by another City and State. The Board found that that the ethics code does not prohibit an employee from attending the workshop in his or her private capacity and retaining the compensation paid for his or her participation -- based upon the indication that the employee will be using personal vacation time for attendance at the workshop.

11-6

The propriety of the Mayor joining a delegation made up of public and private individuals who would travel to another city and state as a guest of a mentioned corporation. The Board's opinion is that the Mayor's participation in the trip would not violate the code of ethics

11-7

A City employee seeking to participate in the Neighborhood Improvement Development Corporation's Rental Rehabilitation Program. The Board found the employee's participation would not constitute the use of his or her public position to gain something of substantial value for private benefit.