



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO
PRESS RELEASE

Ethics Commission

Dorothy L.W. Smith, Chair
Dorothy Leonard, Vice Chair
Charles H. Dick, Jr.
April R. Riel
Karen Thomas-Stefano
Gregory A. Vega
Larry S. Westfall

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Friday, September 10, 2004

CONTACT:
Stacey Fulhorst

San Diego Ethics Commission
(619) 533-3476

Ethics Commission Enforces Economic Interest Disclosure Requirements

San Diego - At a public meeting yesterday, the San Diego Ethics Commission announced that it has taken action to enforce the economic interest disclosure requirements set forth in the Ethics Ordinance. The Commission voted unanimously to authorize a Probable Cause Hearing concerning a City Official's failure to timely file a 2003 annual Statement of Economic Interest. With yesterday's action, the Commission has now ordered Probable Cause Hearings for a total of three City Officials who are alleged to have failed to timely file their 2003 Statements. These City Officials are:

- Gregory Dietrich, member of the City Heights Project Area Committee
- Kevin deFreitas, member of the Centre City Area Committee
- Stephen Redfearn, member of the Qualcomm Stadium Advisory Board

In addition, the Commission has entered into settlement agreements with the following City Officials who have agreed to pay a fine in connection with their late filing of a 2003 Statement:

- Charles Ambers, Jr., member of the Old Town San Diego Planned District Design Review Board
- Aida Mancillas, member of the Arts & Culture Commission

The settlement agreements were made by way of stipulations that can be viewed on the Commission's website at www.sandiego.gov/ethics.

The Ethics Ordinance requires all City Officials to file an annual Statement of Economic Interests disclosing certain financial interests, including investments, interests in real property, loans, gifts, and sources of income that could potentially present a conflict of interest when participating in municipal decisions. According to the Commission's Executive Director Stacey Fulhorst, "The disclosure of economic interests is one of the fundamental provisions of the Ethics Ordinance because it provides the transparency necessary to assure the public that City Officials are not influencing municipal decisions that could affect their personal economic interests." Annual Statements of Economic Interests are due on April 1 of each year. The City Clerk's Office contacts each filer well in advance of the filing deadline, and sends a follow-up notice if the Statement is not timely received.

Commission Chairwoman Dorothy Smith commented that, although the Commission is mindful of the invaluable service provided by the members of the City's Boards and Commissions, the requirements regarding economic interest disclosure "cannot be ignored simply because these City Officials are volunteers." Chairwoman Smith added that, with the enforcement actions taken this year, the Commission hopes to put all City Officials on notice that the timely filing of Statements of Economic Interests will be strictly enforced by the Commission.

The Probable Cause Hearings ordered by the Commission will take place during the month of November of 2004. According to City law, a Probable Cause Hearing is not open to the public unless requested by the Respondent. If the Commission finds that there is probable cause to believe that local governmental ethics laws have been violated, the Commission will schedule an Administrative Hearing, which will be open to the public. If the Commission determines that a violation has occurred, it may levy a penalty of up to \$5,000 per violation.

#####