



Los Angeles City Ethics Commission

March 19, 2013

The Honorable City Council
c/o June Lagmay, City Clerk
200 North Spring Street
City Hall – 3rd Floor
Los Angeles CA 90012

**Re: Council File Number 13-0271
Appointment of Maggie Ragland Neilson to the
Board of Animal Services**

FOR COUNCIL CONSIDERATION

Dear Councilmembers:

On March 5, 2013, the Mayor transmitted to the City Clerk a letter indicating his appointment of Ms. Maggie Ragland Neilson to the Board of Animal Services. The Ethics Commission received Ms. Neilson's pre-confirmation statement of economic interests (SEI) on March 13, 2013, and this letter is provided for your consideration as part of the confirmation process. A copy of this letter is also being provided to Ms. Neilson to help her avoid potential conflicts of interests that may arise in the course of her tenure as a member of the Board of Animal Services.

Ms. Neilson does not report any investments, income sources, or interests in real property on her SEI. However, interests disclosed on an SEI are not the only interests that can give rise to a conflict of interests. For example, state law may require recusal by a board or commission member due to certain business activities of the clients of that member's employer. Additionally, recusal may be required under City Charter § 222, which states that the City Attorney may provide a written opinion concerning the obligation of a City official to refrain from acting on a matter when it may violate state law or when action may not be in the public interest.

If a matter raises a potential conflict of interests, we encourage Ms. Neilson to seek the advice of the City Attorney before acting. If Ms. Neilson is required to disqualify herself from acting on a matter, Los Angeles Municipal Code § 49.5.6(J) and Executive Directive 2005-1 require her to file the Recusal Notification Form (CEC Form 51) with the Ethics Commission and the Mayor's office. If a board or commission member is disqualified from acting on three or more agenda items in a year because of a conflict caused by the same interest, the Ethics Commission is required by City Charter § 707 to review the conflict. If the Ethics Commission determines that the member has a significant and continuing conflict of interests, it must order divestment of the interest that is causing the conflict.

In addition to reviewing a nominee's SEI, the Ethics Commission also verifies that the nominee is a registered City voter. We have received a completed Residence Verification Form for Ms. Neilson, which affirms that she is registered to vote in the City.

If you have questions, please feel free to contact Ethics Program Manager Shannon Prior at (213) 978-1960.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Heather Holt", written in a cursive style.

Heather Holt
Executive Director

cc: Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa
Ms. Maggie Ragland Neilson