

**ST. MARY'S COUNTY ETHICS COMMISSION**

**MINUTES OF June 18, 2007**

**St. Mary's County Governmental Center**

**Members Present: George E. Baroniak, Chair**

**Joseph B. Bush, Vice Chair**

**Arthur E. Goeller, Member**

**Terri Holder, Members**

**Warren Kunz, Member**

**Viola Gardner, Alternate Member**

**Susan J. Wolfe, Executive Secretary**

**Others Present: Donna Sasscer, Department of Economic Cooperation & Development**

**Liz Passarelli, Office of the County Attorney**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Baroniak at 2:00 p.m.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Next Meeting. The next meeting will be held on July 9, 2007.

**REVIEW/APPROVE MINUTES:**

Minutes of June 4, 2007. A motion was made by Mr. Bush to accept the minutes as written. The motion was seconded and carried.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

Summary Paragraphs for Advisory Opinions 2007-1 and 2007-2. The paragraphs were approved as corrected.

Request for Information from Commissioner Daniel H. Raley. At its June 4 meeting, members reviewed a letter from Commissioner Raley to the Ethics Commission asking whether there is a conflict of interest is a county resident, Mr. Brett Grohsgal, who participated in the formation of the Home Grown Farm Market LLC (LLC), desires to become a member of that organization. Mr. Grohsgal's spouse, Dr. Christine Bergmark, Executive Director, Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission, Tri-County Council, is responsible for distributed tobacco settlement funds which will be used by the LLC. Mr. Baroniak provided a briefing on his research concerning the LLC. Tobacco settlement funds are only to be used in the construction of the building. The county will own the property and lease it to the LLC for 25 years. Mr. Kunz asked if any county money is going into the project. Mr. Baroniak answered in the negative. Mr. Baroniak introduced Donna Sasscer, Office of the Director for Economic Cooperation &

Development, who is responsible for coordinating this project. She stated that an LLC was the simplest business model that could be used for the project. The philosophy of the market is to sell only products grown in the five Southern Maryland counties. Liz Passarelli joined the meeting and provided information on the draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The county will have the right to use 40 acres of the property set aside. Ms. Sasscer said that value-added products, e.g., jams, etc., will be able to be sold in the market once proper Health Department approval is acquired.

Members reviewed the conversations with Ms. Sasscer and Ms. Passarelli and determined to prepare an advisory memorandum to Mr. Raley stating that they find no conflict of interest in this matter. The

Ms. Wolfe will prepare the memorandum and meet with Mr. Baroniak for his review and approval.

Lobbying. Mr. Baroniak asked Mr. Kunz to review the latest release of lobbying rules from the Maryland State Ethics Commission in order to determine their impact on the Commission's Ordinance and Rules of Procedure, as well as on the county at large. Copies of these new documents have been provided to John Savich and Christy Holt Chesser. As soon as the review is completed, Commission members will be able to determine when best to hold a training session under the guidance of the State Commission.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE STATEMENTS:**

Two statements were reviewed.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

None.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

A motion was made by Mr. Bush to adjourn the meeting at 3:31 p.m. The motion was seconded and carried.