

Lewis County Board of Commissioners

RESOLUTION

No. 01-22-10

Re-Instituting a Code of Ethics for Officials and Employees of Lewis County Government

WHEREAS, Section 49 of the Comprehensive Governmental Ethics Reform Act of 2006, 2006 Public Charter 1 (1st Ex. Sess.), (the "Ethics Reform Act") *REQUIRES* county legislative bodies to adopt certain ethical standards by resolution; and

WHEREAS, on June 18, 2007 the Lewis County Board of Commissioners adopted the County Technical Assistant Services model of ethical standards for Lewis County; and

WHEREAS, on March 16, 2009 the Lewis County Board of Commissioners chose to rescind the adoption of the CTAS model of ethical standards for Lewis County; and

WHEREAS, Lewis County Government desires to implement its own version of ethical standards as the Code of Ethics for Lewis County;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the legislative body of Lewis County meeting in regular session this 19th day of January, 2010 that:

Section 1. The model of ethical standards developed by the Lewis County Ethics Policy Study Committee, which was passed out for commissioners to review at the December 21, 2009 regular Board of Commissioner meeting, is hereby instituted as the Code of Ethics for Lewis County, Tennessee.

Section 2. Upon approval of this resolution, the County Clerk is directed to:

- A) Mail a copy of this resolution and the adopted Code of Ethics policy to the State Ethics Commission; and
- B) Mail or hand deliver a copy of this resolution and the adopted Code of Ethics policy to each county office governed thereby, including all boards, committees, commissions, authorities, corporations, and other instrumentalities appointed or created by the county or an official of the county, specifically including the county school board, the county election commission, the county health department, and utility districts in the county; and
- C) Post a copy of the Code of Ethics on each public bulletin board in the county courthouse.

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2010 JAN 22 AM 11:38
BUREAU OF ETHICS
& CAMPAIGN FINANCE

We, the undersigned County Commissioners, move the adoption of the above resolution.

Commissioner Don Ward moved to adopt the resolution.

Commissioner Brown seconded the motion.

Voting in Favor 13

Voting Against 2

APPROVED:

Jonah Keltner
Jonah Keltner, County Mayor

ATTEST:

Sandra Clayton
Sandra Clayton, County Clerk

CODE OF ETHICS

LEWIS COUNTY, TENNESSEE

Section 1. Definitions.

(1) "County" means Lewis County, which includes all boards, committees, commissions, authorities, corporations or other instrumentalities appointed or created by the county or an official of the county, and specifically including the county school board, the county election commission, the county health department, and utility districts in the county.

(2) "Officials and employees" means and includes any official, whether elected or appointed, officer, any county employee or servant, or any member of any board, agency, commission, authority or corporation (whether compensated or not), or any officer, employee or servant thereof, of the county.

(3) "Personal interest" means, for the purpose of disclosure of personal interests in accordance with this Code of Ethics, a financial interest of the official or employee, or a financial interest of the official's or employee's spouse or child living in the same household, in the matter to be voted upon, regulated, supervised, purchased or otherwise acted upon in an official capacity.

Section 2. Disclosure: personal interest in voting matters.

An official or employee with the responsibility to vote on a measure shall disclose during the meeting at which the vote takes place, before the vote and to be included in the minutes, any personal interest that affects or that would lead a reasonable person to infer that it affects the official's or employee's vote on the measure. In addition, the official or employee may, to the extent allowed by law, recuse himself or herself from voting on the measure.

Section 3. Disclosure of personal interest in non-voting matters.

An official or employee who must exercise discretion relative to any matter other than casting a vote and who has a personal interest in the matter that affects or that would lead a reasonable person to infer that it affects the exercise of the discretion shall disclose, **before** the exercise of said discretion, the interest in question in a written statement and shall file it with the County Executive's office. The written statement shall be turned over to the ethics committee within five working days for review. In addition, the official or employee may, to the extent allowed by law, recuse himself or herself from the exercise of discretion in the matter.

Section 4. Acceptance of gifts and other things of value.

An official or employee, or an official's or employee's spouse or child living in the same household, may not accept, directly or indirectly, any gift, money, gratuity, or other consideration or favor of any kind. (A Christmas ham, turkey, luncheon or retirement gift, from the county government would not be considered a violation of the above. \$50 limit.)

(1) For the performance of an act, or refraining from performance of an act, that he would be expected to perform, or refrain from performing, in the regular course of his duties; or

(2) That a reasonable person would understand was intended to influence the vote, official action, or judgment of the official or employee in executing county business.

It shall not be considered a violation of this policy for an official or employee to receive entertainment, food, refreshments, meals, health screenings, amenities, foodstuffs, or beverages that are provided in connection with a conference sponsored by an established or recognized statewide association of county government officials or by an umbrella or affiliate organization of such statewide association of county government officials.

Section 5. Ethics Complaints.

A County Ethics Committee (the "Ethics Committee") consisting of five members shall be appointed to one-year terms. Appointments shall be concurrent with the selection of county internal committees. The Ethics Committee shall consist of two County Commissioners, two citizens of the county (individuals may not be employed by any public entity – County, State or School System etc.) and one constitutionally elected Department Head.

Selection for Ethics Committee shall be as follows: Commissioners shall be selected in the following manner – 1st year District 1 & 9, 2nd year 2 & 8, 3rd year 3 & 7 etc., etc., etc. Constitutional County Department Heads shall be selected randomly by selecting a different department head each year until entire list of offices has been covered. Citizens may volunteer to serve or may be contacted by notice or personnel request to serve.

The Ethics Committee shall convene as soon as practicable after their appointment and elect a chair and a secretary. The records of the Ethics Committee shall be maintained by the secretary and shall be filed in the office of the county clerk, where they shall be open to public inspection. Questions and complaints regarding violations of this Code of Ethics or of any violation of state law governing ethical conduct should be directed to the chair of the Ethics Committee. Complaints shall be in writing and signed by the person/persons making the complaint, and shall set forth in reasonable detail the facts upon which the complaint is based. Committee meetings shall only be called as necessary after appointments and committee positions have been made.

The County Ethics Committee shall investigate any credible complaint against an official or employee charging any violation of this Code of Ethics, or may undertake an investigation on its own initiative when it acquires information indicating a possible violation, and make recommendations for action to end or seek retribution for any activity that, in the Committee's judgment, constitutes a violation of this Code of Ethics. If a member of the Committee is the subject of a complaint, such member shall recuse himself or herself from all proceedings involving such complaint.

The Committee may:(1) inquire of the County Attorney for a legal opinion and/or recommendations for action; (2) in the case of an official, refer the matter to the county legislative body for possible public censure if the county legislative body finds such action warranted; (3) in the case of an employee, refer the matter to the official responsible for supervision of the employee for possible disciplinary action if the official finds discipline warranted; (4) in a case involving possible violation of state statutes, refer the matter to the district attorney for possible ouster or criminal prosecution. (5) Inquire of the State Ethics Commission for additional advice. Individuals filing a complaint shall expect to have a response, along with a plan of action if required, within thirty days of the date listed on the written submitted complaint. If the Ethics Committee report finds the specific incident unwarranted and without substance the case shall be considered closed. In the event that the individual/individuals do not agree with the finding of the Ethics Committee they may appeal (ONCE) to the County Commission for reconsideration of the issue.

The interpretation that a reasonable person in the circumstances would apply shall be used in interpreting and enforcing this Code of Ethics. When a violation of this Code of Ethics also constitutes a violation of a personnel policy or a civil service policy, the violation shall be dealt with as a violation of the personnel or civil service provisions rather than as a violation of this Code of Ethics.

Section 6. Applicable State Laws.

In addition to the ethical principles set out in this Code of Ethics, state laws also provide a framework for the ethical behavior of county officials and employees in the performance of their duties. Officials and employees should familiarize themselves with the state laws applicable to their office or position and the performance of their duties. To the extent that an issue is addressed by state law (law of general application, public law of local application, local option law, or private act), the provisions of that state law, to the extent they are more restrictive, shall control. Following is a brief summary of selected state laws concerning ethics in county government. For the full text of these statutes, see the Tennessee Code Annotated (T.C.A.) sections indicated.

Campaign finance—T.C.A. Title 2, Chapter 10. Part One (campaign financial disclosure) requires candidates for public office to disclose contributions and contributors to their campaigns. Part Three (campaign contribution limits) limits the total amount of campaign contributions a candidate may receive from an individual and sets limits on the amount a candidate may receive in cash.

Conflict of interest—T.C.A. § 12-4-101 is the general conflict of interest statute that applies in all counties. It prohibits anyone who votes for, lets out, or in any manner supervises any work or contract from having a direct financial interest in that contract, purchase or work, and it requires disclosure of indirect financial interests by public acknowledgment.

Conflict of interest—T.C.A. § 49-6-2003 applies to the department of education in all counties and prohibits direct and indirect conflicts of interest in the sale of supplies for use in public schools.

Conflict of interest—T.C.A. § 5-1-125 applies in all counties and prohibits county officials and employees from purchasing surplus county property except where it is sold by public bid.

Conflict of interest—T.C.A. § 54-7-203 applies in all counties that are governed by the County Uniform Highway Law. It prohibits officials and employees in the highway department and members of the county legislative body from having any personal interest in purchases of supplies, materials, machinery, and equipment for the highway department.

Conflict of interest—T.C.A. § 5-14-114 applies in counties that have adopted the County Purchasing Law of 1957. It prohibits the purchasing agent, members of the purchasing commission, and all county officials from having any financial or other personal beneficial interest in any contract or purchase of goods or services for any department or agency of the county.

Conflict of interest—T.C.A. § 5-21-121 applies in counties that have adopted the County Financial Management System of 1981. It prohibits all county officials and employees from having any financial or other personal beneficial interest in the purchase of any supplies, materials or equipment for the county.

Conflict of interest—T.C.A. §§ 5-5-102 and 12-4-101 govern disclosures and abstentions from voting due to conflicts of interest of members of county legislative bodies.

Conflict of interest disclosure statements—T.C.A. § 8-50-501 and the following sections require candidates and appointees to local public offices to file a disclosure statement with the state ethics commission listing major sources of income, investments, lobbying activities, professional services provided, bankruptcies, certain loans, and other information, and to keep these statements up to date.

Gifts—T.C.A. § 5-14-114 applies in counties that have adopted the County Purchasing Law of 1957. It prohibits the purchasing agent, members of the purchasing commission, and all county officials from receiving anything of value, directly or indirectly, from anyone who may have or obtain a contract or purchase order with the county.

Gifts—T.C.A. § 5-21-121 applies in counties that have adopted the County Financial Management System of 1981. It prohibits the finance director, purchasing agent, and employees in those departments from accepting anything of value, directly or indirectly, from anyone who furnishes supplies, materials or equipment to the county.

Honoraria—T.C.A. § 2-10-116 prohibits elected officials from accepting an honorarium (including money or anything of value, but not including reimbursement for actual expenses) for an appearance, speech, or article in their official capacity.

Private use of public property—T.C.A. § 54-7-202 applies in counties that are governed by the County Uniform Highway Law. It prohibits the private use of equipment, rock, and other highway materials.

Court sales—T.C.A. § 39-16-405 prohibits judges, clerks of court, court officers, and employees of court, from bidding on or purchasing any property sold through the court for which such person discharges official duties.

Rules of the Supreme Court—Rule 10, Cannon 5 (Code of Judicial Conduct) establishes ethical rules for judges and other court personnel when exercising judicial functions.

Fee statutes—T.C.A. §§ 8-21-101, 8-21-102, and 8-21-103 set out circumstances where fees are authorized, prohibit officials from requiring payment of fees in advance of performance of services except where specifically authorized, and set penalties for charging excessive or unauthorized fees.

Consulting fee prohibition for elected county officials—T.C.A. §§ 2-10-122 and 2-10-124 prohibit officials from receiving compensation for advising or assisting a person or entity in influencing county legislative or administrative action.

Crimes involving public officials—T.C.A. § 39-16-101 and the following sections prohibit bribery, soliciting unlawful compensation, and buying and selling in regard to offices.

Official misconduct—T.C.A. § 39-16-402 applies to public servants and candidates for office and prohibits unauthorized exercise of official power, acting in an official capacity exceeding the servant's power, refusal to perform a duty imposed by law, violating a law relating to the servant's office or employment, and receiving a benefit not provided by law.

Official oppression—T.C.A. § 39-16-403 prohibits abuse of power by a public servant.

Bribery for votes—T.C.A. §§ 2-19-121, 2-19-126, and 2-19-127 prohibit bribery of voters in elections.

Misuse of official information—T.C.A. § 39-16-404 prohibits a public servant from attaining a benefit or aiding another person in attaining a benefit from information which was obtained in an official capacity and is not available to the public.

Ouster law—T.C.A. § 8-47-101 sets out conduct that is punishable by ouster from office, including misconduct in office and neglect of duty.

**LEWIS COUNTY CODE OF ETHICS
CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURE STATEMENT**

Instructions: This form is for reporting personal interests required to be disclosed under Section 3 of the Code of Ethics of this county. Officials and employees are required to disclose personal interests in matters that affect or would lead a reasonable person to infer that it would affect the exercise of discretion of an official or employee.

1. Date of disclosure: _____

2. Name of official or employee: _____

3. Office and position: _____

4. Description of personal interest (describe below in detail):

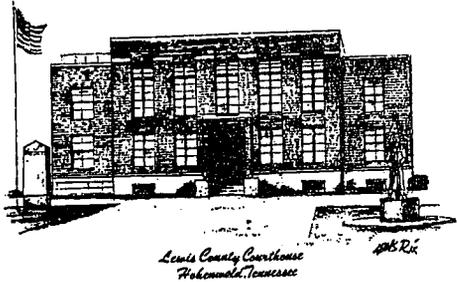
Signature of official or employee

Date

Witness Signature

Date

Printed name of witness



Sandra Clayton

LEWIS COUNTY CLERK

JANUARY 21, 2010

RE: RESOLUTION OF CODE OF ETHICS
FOR LEWIS COUNTY GOVERNMENT

ENCLOSED YOU WILL FIND COPY OF RESOLUTION ORD #01-22-10,
REINSTITUTING A CODE OF ETHICS FOR OFFICIALS AND EMPLOYEES OF
LEWIS COUNTY GOVERNMENT. ALSO ENCLOSED IS THE ADOPTED CODE
OF ETHICS POLICY. THE LEWIS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
ADOPTED THIS RESOLUTION ON THE 19TH DAY OF JANUARY 2010 DURING
THE REGULAR SESSION MEETING OF THE LEGISLATIVE BODY.

SINCERELY,

Sandra Clayton

SANDRA CLAYTON
LEWIS COUNTY CLERK