



City of Denton

City Hall
215 E. McKinney St.
Denton, Texas 76201
www.cityofdenton.com

Meeting Agenda

Board of Ethics

Monday, May 19, 2025

5:30 PM

Council Work Session Room

SPECIAL CALLED MEETING

REGISTRATION GUIDELINES FOR ADDRESSING THE BOARD OF ETHICS

Citizens are also able to participate in the following way (NOTE: Other than public hearings, citizens are only able to comment one time per agenda item; citizens cannot use both methods to comment on a single agenda item. Public comments are not held for work session reports.):

- eComment – On Friday, May 16, 2025, the agenda was posted online at <https://tx-denton.civicplus.com/242/Public-Meetings-Agendas>. Once the agenda is posted, a link to make virtual comments using the eComment module will be made available next to the meeting listing on the Upcoming Events Calendar. Within eComment, citizens may indicate support or opposition and submit a brief comment about a specific agenda item. Comments may be submitted up until the start of the meeting at which time the ability to make an eComment will be closed. Similar to when a citizen submits a white card to indicate their position on an item, the eComments will be sent directly to members of the Board of Ethics and recorded by the Secretary.

Members review comments received in advance of the meeting and take that public input into consideration prior to voting on an agenda item. The Chair will announce the number of Comment Cards submitted in support or opposition to an item during the public comment period. Comments will not be read during the meeting. The Secretary will reflect the number of comments submitted in favor/opposition to an item, the registrant's name, address, and (summary of) comments within the Minutes of the Meeting, as applicable.

After determining that a quorum is present, the Board of Ethics of the City of Denton, Texas, will convene in a Regular Meeting on Monday, May 19, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Work Session Room at City Hall, 215 E. McKinney Street, Denton, Texas at which the following items will be considered:

SPECIAL CALLED MEETING

1. PRESENTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

This section of the agenda permits a person to make comments regarding public business on items as listed on the agenda and in-person presentations (allows for comments on items not listed on the agenda.) Each speaker will be allowed a maximum of three (3) minutes with up to five speakers per meeting.

2. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

- A. [BOE25-020](#) Consider approval of meeting minutes for April 14, 2025.

[Estimated Presentation/Discussion Time: 5 minutes]

Attachments: [Exhibit 1 - April 14, 2025 Minutes](#)

- B. [BOE25-021](#) Receive a report, hold a discussion, and give staff direction regarding City of Denton Code of Ordinances Chapter 2, Article XI (Ethics) Sec. 2-282(b) Sanctions.
[Estimated Presentation/Discussion Time: 30 minutes]
Attachments: [Exhibit 1 - Agenda Information Sheet.pdf](#)
- C. [BOE25-022](#) Receive a report, hold a discussion, and give staff direction regarding communication between Board of Ethics members and City Council members.
[Estimated Presentation/Discussion Time: 15 minutes]
Attachments: [Exhibit 1 - Agenda Information Sheet.pdf](#)
- D. [BOE25-023](#) Receive a report, hold a discussion, and give staff direction regarding future meeting topics.
[Estimated Presentation/Discussion Time: 5 minutes]
Attachments: [Exhibit 1 - Agenda Information Sheet.pdf](#)
[Exhibit 2 - Board of Ethics Tentative Meeting Topics \(May 2025\).pdf](#)

NOTE: The Board of Ethics reserves the right to adjourn into a Closed Meeting on any item on its Open Meeting agenda consistent with Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code, as amended, or as otherwise allowed by law.

CERTIFICATE

I certify that the above notice of meeting was posted on the official website (<https://tx-denton.civicplus.com/242/Public-Meetings-Agendas>) and bulletin board at City Hall, 215 E. McKinney Street, Denton, Texas, on Friday, May 16, 2025, in advance of the 72-hour posting deadline, as applicable, and in accordance with Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code.

OFFICE OF THE CITY SECRETARY

NOTE: THE CITY OF DENTON'S DESIGNATED PUBLIC MEETING FACILITIES ARE ACCESSIBLE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT. THE CITY WILL PROVIDE ACCOMMODATION, SUCH AS SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS FOR THE HEARING IMPAIRED, IF REQUESTED AT LEAST 48 HOURS IN ADVANCE OF THE SCHEDULED MEETING. PLEASE CALL THE CITY SECRETARY'S OFFICE AT 940-349-8309 OR USE TELECOMMUNICATIONS DEVICES FOR THE DEAF (TDD) BY CALLING 1-800-RELAY-TX SO THAT REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION CAN BE ARRANGED.



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Legislation Text

File #: BOE25-020, **Version:** 1

AGENDA CAPTION

Consider approval of meeting minutes for April 14, 2025.

[Estimated Presentation/Discussion Time: 5 minutes]

City of Denton Board of Ethics

After determining that a quorum was present, the Board of Ethics of the City of Denton, Texas, convened in a Regular Meeting on Monday, April 14, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Work Session Room at City Hall, 215 E. McKinney Street, Denton, Texas at which the following items will be considered:

PRESENT: Chair Annetta Ramsay, Members Patricia Reinke, Kenneth Ferguson, David Zoltner, Dianne Baker, and Andrea Eberhard

ABSENT: Vice-Chair Dustin Pavelek

1. PRESENTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

None.

2. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

A. BOE25-017 Consider approval of meeting minutes for March 10, 2025.

The item was presented, and discussion followed. Member Andrea Eberhard motioned to approve the meeting minutes; motion seconded by Member David Zoltner

AYES (5): Annetta Ramsay, Patricia Reinke, Kenneth Ferguson, David Zoltner, and Andrea Eberhard

NAYS (0):

ABSENT (1): Dustin Pavelek

ABSTAIN (1): Dianne Baker

B. BOE25-016 Receive a report, hold a discussion, and give staff direction regarding ex parte communication as it relates to the City of Denton Code of Ordinances Chapter 2, Article XI (Ethics).

The item was presented, and discussion followed.

C. BOE25-019 Receive a report, hold a discussion, and give staff direction regarding the process for holding Preliminary Assessment Panels per the City of Denton Code of Ordinances Chapter 2, Article XI (Ethics).

The item was presented, and discussion followed.

Member Dianne Baker motioned to direct staff to draft a proposal to allow ethic complaints be heard in a closed session during the preliminary assessment phase to the extent possible; Member Kenneth Ferguson seconded the motion.

AYES (2): Dianne Baker and Kenneth Ferguson

NAYS (4): David Zoltner, Patricia Reinke, Annetta Ramsay, Andrea Eberhard

ABSENT (1): Dustin Pavelek

D. BOE25-018 Receive a report, hold a discussion, and give staff direction regarding future meeting topics.

The item was presented, and discussion followed.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:46 p.m.

Annetta Ramsay
Chair

Joseph Haddad
Recording Secretary

APPROVED ON: _____



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File #: BOE25-021, **Version:** 1

AGENDA CAPTION

Receive a report, hold a discussion, and give staff direction regarding City of Denton Code of Ordinances Chapter 2, Article XI (Ethics) Sec. 2-282(b) Sanctions.

[Estimated Presentation/Discussion Time: 30 minutes]



City of Denton

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AGENDA INFORMATION SHEET

DEPARTMENT: Board of Ethics
CITY AUDITOR: Madison Rorschach
DATE: May 19, 2025

SUBJECT

Receive a report, hold a discussion, and give staff direction regarding City of Denton Code of Ordinances Chapter 2, Article XI (Ethics) Sec. 2-282(b) Sanctions.

BACKGROUND

City of Denton Code of Ordinances Chapter 2, Article XI (Ethics), Sec. 2-277 (i) states that the Board of Ethics may recommend amendments to Article XI (i.e., the Ethics Ordinance) to the City Council from time to time.

DISCUSSION

During March 10, 2025, meeting the Board of Ethics gave staff direction to place on a future agenda an item to discuss the current sanctions for a violation of the Ethics Ordinance. In general, sanctions may be determined by a simple majority vote of the Board of Ethics if a violation has occurred. There are currently five potential sanctions available under the Ethics Ordinance including: (1) Letter of Notification, (2) Letter of Admonition, (3) Letter of Reprimand, (4) Letter of Suspension (not applicable to City Council Members), and (5) Ineligibility (only applicable to Vendors).

Based on research conducted for the June 24, 2021, Board of Ethics meeting, staff found that only two of the City of Denton's benchmark municipalities – Dallas and San Antonio – have a process for considering if a submitted ethics complaint is frivolous. Their available sanctions for frivolous complaints are outlined below:

- **Dallas:** If ethics commission determine a complaint is frivolous it may prohibit a complainant from filing another complaint alleging violations for up to:
 - Two years after the date of the commissions determination that the complaint is frivolous if the commission has determined that within the proceeding five years another no other complaint filed by the complainant was frivolous; or
 - Four years after the years after the date of the commissions determination that the complaint is frivolous if the commission has determined that within the proceeding five years another complaint filed by the complainant was frivolous.
- **San Antonio:** If the Board determines a complaint is frivolous it may impose the following sanctions:
 - A civil penalty of not more than \$500;
 - Imposition of attorneys' fees incurred by the respondent of the frivolous complaint;
 - Any other sanction permitted by law.

Under this ordinance, the Board may notify the appropriate regulatory or supervisory agency for their appropriate action. This may include a referral to a criminal investigation agency or prosecution entity for investigation of perjury.

In addition, based on review of the model code, there is not clear criteria for determining that a submitted ethics complaint is frivolous.

This indicates that there may be an opportunity legally for the City to impose sanctions on Complainants that include a civil penalty or fine.

PRIOR ACTION/REVIEW (Council, Boards, Commissions)

May 1, 2018: Ethics Ordinance Adopted by City Council

Jun. 2, 2020: Ethics Ordinance Amended by City Council based on Board of Ethics Recommendations

Jan. 25, 2022: Ethics Ordinance Amended by City Council to eliminate Member experience requirements

Jul. 19, 2022: Ethics Ordinance Amended by City Council based on Board of Ethics Recommendations

Jul. 18, 2023: Ethics Ordinance Amended by City Council based on Board of Ethics Recommendations

Dec. 12, 2023: Ethics Ordinance Amended by City Council to eliminate Alternate Members

Apr. 15, 2025: Ethics Ordinance Amended by City Council based on Board of Ethics Recommendations

EXHIBITS

1. Agenda Information Sheet

Respectfully submitted:
Madison Rorschach, 940-349-7228
City Auditor



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Legislation Text

File #: BOE25-022, **Version:** 1

AGENDA CAPTION

Receive a report, hold a discussion, and give staff direction regarding communication between Board of Ethics members and City Council members.

[Estimated Presentation/Discussion Time: 15 minutes]



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AGENDA INFORMATION SHEET

DEPARTMENT: Board of Ethics

CITY AUDITOR: Madison Rorschach

DATE: May 19, 2025

SUBJECT

Receive a report, hold a discussion, and give staff direction regarding communication between Board of Ethics members and City Council members.

BACKGROUND

City of Denton Code of Ordinances Chapter 2, Article XI (Ethics), Sec. 2-277 (i) states that the Board of Ethics may recommend amendments to Article XI (i.e., the Ethics Ordinance) to the City Council from time to time.

DISCUSSION

During previous Board of Ethics meetings, the Board gave staff direction to bring back a discussion of communication between Board of Ethics members and City Council members.

PRIOR ACTION/REVIEW (Council, Boards, Commissions)

May 1, 2018: Ethics Ordinance Adopted by City Council
Jun. 2, 2020: Ethics Ordinance Amended by City Council based on Board of Ethics Recommendations
Jan. 25, 2022: Ethics Ordinance Amended by City Council to eliminate Member experience requirements
Jul. 19, 2022: Ethics Ordinance Amended by City Council based on Board of Ethics Recommendations
Jul. 18, 2023: Ethics Ordinance Amended by City Council based on Board of Ethics Recommendations
Dec. 12, 2023: Ethics Ordinance Amended by City Council to eliminate Alternate Members
Apr. 15, 2025: Ethics Ordinance Amended by City Council based on Board of Ethics Recommendations

EXHIBITS

1. Agenda Information Sheet

Respectfully submitted:
Madison Rorschach, 940-349-7228
City Auditor



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AGENDA CAPTION

Receive a report, hold a discussion, and give staff direction regarding future meeting topics.
[Estimated Presentation/Discussion Time: 5 minutes]



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AGENDA INFORMATION SHEET

DEPARTMENT: Board of Ethics
CITY AUDITOR: Madison Rorschach
DATE: May 19, 2025

SUBJECT

Receive a report, hold a discussion, and give staff direction regarding future meeting topics.

BACKGROUND

City of Denton Code of Ordinances Chapter 2, Article XI (Ethics), Sec. 2-277 (i) states that the Board of Ethics may recommend amendments to Article XI (i.e., the Ethics Ordinance) to the City Council from time to time.

DISCUSSION

Based on direction received at previous meetings the following meeting topics have been proposed.

Topic	Est. Time
Review Complaint Reconsideration Process	0:30
Comprehensive Review of Current Sanctions; Frivolous Sanctions	1:30
Preliminary Panel Member Objection Process	0:30
Order to Show Cause Process	0:45
Potential Campaign Financing Restrictions	0:30
Guidance on Interactions with Petitioners (Council Request)	0:30
Advisory Opinion Process	0:30
Review of Sanctions	0:30

DIRECTION

Based on this information, Staff would like direction from the Board on the following:

- What topic(s), if any, does the Board of Ethics want to be added to June 2025;
- What topic(s), if any, does the Board of Ethics want to be added to July 2025; and
- Any additional topics that the Board wishes to discuss at future meetings.

PRIOR ACTION/REVIEW (Council, Boards, Commissions)

May 1, 2018: Ethics Ordinance Adopted
Jun. 2, 2020: Ethics Ordinance amended based on Board of Ethics recommendations
Jan. 25, 2022: Ethics Ordinance amended by City Council to remove profession preferences
Jul. 19, 2022: Ethics Ordinance amended based on Board of Ethics recommendations
Jul. 18, 2023: Ethics Ordinance amended based on Board of Ethics recommendations
Dec. 12, 2023: Ethics Ordinance amended by City Council to eliminate Alternate Members
Apr. 15, 2025: Ethics Ordinance amended based on Board of Ethics recommendations

EXHIBITS

1. Agenda Information Sheet
2. Board of Ethics Tentative Meeting Topics (May 2025)

Respectfully submitted:
Madison Rorschach, 940-349-7228
City Auditor

Board of Ethics Tentative Meeting Topics

Updated: May 16, 2025

Meeting	Item	Est. Time
May 2025	Minutes	0:05
	Discussion of Sanctions	0:30
	Board of Ethics & Council Member Interactions	0:15
	Future Meeting Topics Update	0:05
	Total Est. Time:	0:55
June 2025	Minutes	0:05
	<i>TBD</i>	
	Management Reports (if needed)	0:05
	Future Meeting Topics Update	0:05
	Total Est. Time:	0:45
July 2025	Minutes	0:05
	<i>TBD</i>	
	Management Reports (if needed)	0:05
	Future Meeting Topics Update	0:05
	Total Est. Time:	0:15