

Committee Attendees: Jim Pross (Chair), Sara Bartlett, Leonard Kimble

Interested Party before the committee: The Honorable Mayor Jason Levesque

Meeting called to order by Jim Pross at 5:36pm EST.

Auburn Mayor Jason Levesque discussed his four years as mayor of Auburn. His primary businesses have been marketing and real estate. In 2017, he sold his marketing business. He has made one real estate transaction in the last 3 years, a property in Lewiston. He has elected to pass over chances for development deals. Mayor Levesque's question before the committee is: How involved can and can't the mayor be in development deals, especially with the inclusion of financial development incentives?

Mayor Levesque continued and relayed to the committee that he owns three properties in Auburn, two residences and one undeveloped parcel of land.

Committee Response.

Jim Pross (chair) cited the City of Auburn Code of Ordinances, Chapter 2, Division 2, Section 2-115 Procedure for determinations by the Ethics Panel.

This section outlines a five-step process that shall be followed by the Ethics Panel.

The first step is a written referral of a case that describes "with particularity the factual basis of the referral."

The second step is a fact-finding procedure. The remaining steps are Deliberation, Issuance of advisory opinion, and the Time limits of the panel's findings.

Committee members Kimble and Bartlett concur. The panel finds that it is not appropriate for it to give opinions on hypothetical situations, and that it must receive a written referral describing specific facts before it can move forward with the process described in the ordinance.

Mayor Levesque asks if the city might propose a more proactive approach to ethics matters.

Committee Response.

The Panel does not have a role to play in this case. The charter of the committee is to advise city boards, committees, and the council. It has no plenary authority to render an opinion on hypothetical situations. The panel is designed to give opinions on specific facts, not to provide guidance.

The Panel invited Mayor Levesque to return before the committee with specific facts for referral.

Meeting adjourned at 6:00PM EST by unanimous vote.