

## Public address to the Cook County Board of Commissioners-9/22/2022

President Preckwinkle appoints members to the Board of Ethics and this Commission approves those appointments, so I want to read a statement that I made to the Board of Ethics last month.

I was recently the subject of an investigation and the determination by the Board of Ethics was for my termination- yet I was never interviewed for the investigation and my integrity was put on trial. Reputation and integrity are extremely important to me and I'm here to defend myself in light of their findings. A little on my background- I am a member of the Chicago Mercantile Exchange and have been involved in derivative trading for almost 30 years. I have a spotless record with the National Futures Association and the Commodity Futures Trading Commission and the respect of my peers and colleagues. I am also an Illinois Public Official and adhere to my oath of office to uphold the Constitution of Illinois and the United States Constitution. Reputation is everything in my world. The personal legal action that the Board of Ethics attempted to take against me is morally reprehensible. I was the one hired; I was the party most harmed in this action to no fault of my own. I was a victim of circumstance, and my hiring was a result of the failed leadership at the Board of Review who authored and approved their Ethics Policy in 2012. I left my private sector position to take on the role of Chief of Staff. I was hired for my business acumen alone. It was not for several weeks later that the issue of an over-arching County policy came up and I was given legal advice that the County policy did not apply to my situation. So, I did what I do best, I got to work trying to improve the Property Tax Appeal process in Cook County.

I'm proud of my time and accomplishments at the Board of Review during my 18 months. I was ready to defend the lawsuit and looked forward to the discovery period because it was going to become quite apparent that I worked hard, and I would've prevailed in court. What also would've become public is the shortcomings of the Board of Review and the Board of Ethics. Illinois has a statute called the Open Meetings Act, 5 ILCS 120. Specifically, Section 1.05 requires all Illinois Public Officials complete the OMA trainings and file a copy of the certificate with the public agency within 90 days of taking office. The Ethics Boards own rules and regulations state in section 9.5 that Board members must adhere to OMA Section 1.05. On July 28<sup>th</sup>, 2022, I FOIA'd the Board of Ethics for their OMA certs. After the Ethics Board asked for 2 extensions, I was given the certs on Aug 22<sup>nd</sup>. 4 of the 5 Board members did not comply with the state law or their own rules. 3 Board members have now complied post FOIA and 1 has still not complied as of August 25<sup>th</sup>. As the North Star for compliance and the investigatory body into others misgivings, **The Board of Ethics should all be ashamed.** I'm not sure if the Board of Ethics members take an oath but if they do, I'm sure they violated that oath.

Another item that I want to make public today. Board of Review Commissioners Wendt and Cabonargi had a very public disregard for each other. Cabonargi called for an Ethics investigation into my hiring during a public meeting. After some investigation, I discovered that Ethics Chair Tom Szromba and Commissioner Cabonargi were colleagues at the Securities and Exchange Commission for 8 years. This relationship was never disclosed. Chair Szromba is lead counsel at Boeing and likely understands the concept of moral conflict- he should've have recused himself from this case based on that relationship.

Based on these findings, I asked that all the members of the Board of Ethics resign.