



# OKLAHOMA ETHICS COMMISSION

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September 21, 2023

Oklahoma Attorney General  
Getner Drummond  
313 N.E. 21<sup>st</sup> Street  
Oklahoma City, OK 73105  
Via email

General Drummond,

This letter acknowledges receipt of your letter of today. Like you, the Oklahoma Ethics Commission not only values transparency but consistently promotes same. To my knowledge and belief, the Commission has always acted consistently with the Open Meeting Act including the search process for my replacement. I had secured an attorney from your office to advise the Commission on this process and spoke with counsel regarding the search process after the July meeting, prior to the September 7, 2023 meeting, but for the meeting scheduled for today, reached out to that counsel several times prior to this meeting and received no response.

As you are aware the Constitution vests the Commission with the authority to hire its executive director and such an assignment precludes any other body from exercising that authority. The Commission is committed to utilizing a process to maximize applications from qualified individuals that would continue to conduct the operations of the Commission with the utmost professionalism and commitment to Commission's mission *as established directly by Oklahoma citizens*: ethical conduct of campaigns for elective state office and state questions, and ethical conduct of state officers and employees. The Commission takes its responsibility seriously and has acted to ensure transparency in the process during the search for its next director, in no small part to promote citizen trust in the appointment process. The Commission is utilizing a search committee of myself, two current members, and two former members of the Commission to assist in this process and make recommendations to the Commission. The search committee was created to provide valuable feedback to the full Commission but is "recommendatory, or advisory" and is not making any decision hiring the Commission's next director. *Andrews v. Independent School Dist. No. 29 of Cleveland County, 1987 OK 40*. But, rest assured, any decision on who to hire as its next director will be made by public vote of the Commission.

Out of an abundance of caution, today's meeting was canceled as we take your concerns very seriously. I believe a personal phone call would have assuaged your concerns without affecting the progress of the Commission. I also understand your concern to ensure compliance with the Open Meeting Act and that you did what you believed was necessary in the moment. The Commission is committed to ensuring its compliance with all applicable laws. I am available to discuss the Commission and its activity at any time, respecting of course, the confidentiality requirements of the Commission's investigations. Should you have any further questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ashley Kemp".

Ashley Kemp  
Executive Director