



CITY OF LAREDO ETHICS COMMISSION

ANNUAL REPORT

**FEBRUARY 1, 2016 THROUGH
JANUARY 31, 2017**

I. Introduction

On September 4, 2012, City Council passed Ordinance 2012-O-126 which adopted a new Code of Ethics establishing standards of conduct for all city officials, employees, board members and persons doing business with the City of Laredo. The Ethics Commission is charged with reviewing all alleged violations of its ethics code and charter and making findings in accordance with the laws under its jurisdiction. This Ethics Commission is pleased to present this Annual Report to the Mayor and City Council pursuant to the requirements set out in §8.11 of the Code.

II. Ethics Commission Members

The Ethics Commission consists of nine members each of which is nominated by the Mayor or a City Council Member. Pursuant to §12.02 of the City Charter, the term of the commission member shall be for the term of the officeholder who made the nomination. The Ethics Commissioners and their respective terms of service are as follows:

<u>COMMISSIONER</u>	<u>APPOINTED BY</u>	<u>TERM EXPIRES</u>
Sigifredo Perez III	Mayor Pete Saenz	11/2018
Rodolfo Morales III	Council Member Rudy Gonzalez	11/2018
Nathan Chu	Council Member Vidal Rodriguez	11/2018
Mirta Pina	Council Member Alejandro Perez, Jr.	11/2018
Sabas Zapata III	Council Member Albert Torres	11/2020
Vacant	Council Member Nelly Vielma	N/A
Elsa Galvan	Council Member Roberto Balli	11/2020
Manuel Sanchez	Council Member Charlie San Miguel	11/2018
Vacant	Council Member George Altgelt	N/A

III. Support Staff

City staff members assist the Ethics Commission. They prepare agendas, meeting minutes, and provide relevant information and advice during deliberations. Staff currently assigned to work with the Ethics Commission includes:

- ❖ Nora E. Govea, Human Resources Department
- ❖ Kristina Laurel Hale, Acting City Attorney
- ❖ Cristian Rosas-Grillet, Ethics Compliance Officer

IV. Activities

The Commission met a total of eight (8) times in the year 2016 to review alleged violations of the code or for other purposes directly related to its responsibilities. A summary of these activities are as follows:

<u>Date Meeting</u>	<u>Primary Purpose</u>	<u>Decision or Action</u>
March 8, 2016	Selection of Chairperson and Vice Chair with possible action. Discussion with Possible Action on a formal complaint filed against former candidate for City Council Vidal Rodriguez.	George Juarez and Humberto Trevino, Jr., elected respectively. Complaint dismissed based on lack of jurisdiction.
April 12, 2016	Discussion with Possible Action on preliminary assessment of formal complaint filed against each member of the Laredo City Council for violations of Sections 2.02(a) and 3.02(b).	No violation of Section 2.02(a).
April 19, 2016	Discussion with Possible Action on Request for Recusal of Commissioner Humberto Trevino in pending complaint filed by Lakshmana Viswanath and preliminary assessment of formal complaint filed against City Council Member Roque Vela, Jr., for violation of Section 2.11.	Commission Member Humberto Trevino, Jr., recused himself. Complaint dismissed due to lack of evidence.
April 20, 2016	Discussion with Possible Action on preliminary assessment of complaint filed against each member of the Laredo City Council for violation of Section 3.02.	Complaint dismissed.
June 13, 2016	Discussion with Possible Action on preliminary assessment of four complaints against Mayor Pete Saenz for violations of Sections 12.05 and 12.06 of the Charter, and violations of Sections 2.06 and 2.07 of the Ethics Code.	No violations. Complaints dismissed on the grounds of insufficient evidence.
August 11, 2016	Discussion with Possible Action on preliminary assessment of complaint against Council Member Vidal Rodriguez.	Complaint dismissed based on Section 8.08(C) of the Ethics Code.
October 12, 2016	Discussion and Possible Action on preliminary assessment of a complaint filed against Doanh "Zone" T. Nguyen.	Complaint dismissed.
December 7, 2016	Discussion with Possible Action on preliminary assessment of complaint filed against Osbaldo Guzman and Jesus Olivares.	Complaint dismissed against Jesus Olivares due to lack of sufficient evidence. Call for an evidentiary hearing for complaint filed against Osbaldo Guzman.

V. Conclusion

The City of Laredo Ethics Code was created to promote integrity in public service for the benefit of all citizens. The lack of complaints filed this prior year is a positive sign that the code is achieving the intended purpose.