

Opinion of the City of Rochester Board of Ethics
Opinion Number 2018-2
November 13, 2018
C17-3

Overview

On 12/20/2017, Rachel Barnhart ("Barnhart") submitted a request ("Request") (C17-3) for an advisory opinion from the Board of Ethics ("Board") of the City of Rochester ("City") concerning a City purchase of 100 copies of "The New Guardians: Policing in America's Communities for the 21st Century" authored by Dr. Cedric Alexander. The cost of the books totaled \$1,566 and the books are given away free of charge at a book signing held at local restaurant in July 2016.

Applicable Code of Ethics Provisions

Sections of the Code of Ethics alleged to have been violated:

- C.4 *No City officer or employee, acting in the performance of his or her official duties, shall treat, whether by action or omission to act, any person more favorable than it is the custom and practice to treat the general public.*
- C.5 *No City officer or employee shall use or permit the use of city-owned vehicles, equipment, materials or property for the convenience or profit of himself or herself or any other person.*

Opinion

The Board determines that based on the subject matter of the book and the author's professional qualifications, its purchase and distribution is consistent with the Mayor's overall initiative of improving the relationship between law enforcement and the community. The Board does not evaluate the value or merits of this particular purchase and distribution and also notes the purchase occurred prior to Dr. Alexander becoming Deputy Mayor of the City.

It is the opinion of the Board that the City's purchase of Dr. Alexander's book does not violate the referenced provisions of the Code of Ethics.

(Ginett, Lee, Scott, Sierra, Steinbrenner, Weir)