



**MONDAY, APRIL 7, 2025  
INDEPENDENT ETHICS REVIEW BOARD**

**CITY HALL  
COUNCIL CHAMBER  
2700 TOWN CENTER BOULEVARD NORTH  
SUGAR LAND, TX 77479  
[https://youtube.com/live/t83oa5\\_I4-U?feature=share](https://youtube.com/live/t83oa5_I4-U?feature=share)  
5:30 P.M.**

**I. ATTENTION**

*A. Members of the City Council, Board and/or Commission may participate in deliberations of posted agenda items through videoconferencing means. A quorum of the City Council, Board and/or Commission will be physically present at the above-stated location, and said location is open to the public. Audio/Video of open deliberations will be available for the public to hear/view, and are recorded as per the Texas Open Meetings Act.*

*The meeting will live stream at [https://youtube.com/live/t83oa5\\_I4-U?feature=share](https://youtube.com/live/t83oa5_I4-U?feature=share).*

**II. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Pursuant to Texas Government Code section 551.007, citizens are permitted to address the City Council, Board and/or Commission in person with regard to matters posted for consideration on the agenda. Each speaker must complete a "Request to Speak" form and give it to the City Secretary or designee, prior to the beginning of the meeting.

Each speaker is limited to three (3) minutes, speakers requiring a translator will have six (6) minutes, regardless of the number of agenda items to be addressed. Comments or discussion by City Council, Board, and/or Commission members, will only be made at the time the subject is scheduled for consideration.

*For questions or assistance, please contact the Office of the City Secretary (281) 275-2730.*

**III. MINUTES**

*A. Consideration of and action on the minutes of the January 30, 2025 meeting.*

*Linda Mendenhall, City Clerk*

**IV. RECENT ARTICLES OF INTEREST**

**A.** Review of and discussion on recent ethics articles of interest.

*Krista Stegemiller, Chair*

**THE INDEPENDENT ETHICS REVIEW BOARD RESERVES THE RIGHT, UPON MOTION, TO SUSPEND THE RULES TO CONSIDER BUSINESS OUT OF THE POSTED ORDER. IN ADDITION TO ANY EXECUTIVE SESSION LISTED ABOVE, THE INDEPENDENT ETHICS REVIEW BOARD RESERVES THE RIGHT TO ADJOURN INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION AT ANY TIME DURING THIS MEETING FOR THE PURPOSE OF CONSULTATION WITH THE ATTORNEY AS AUTHORIZED BY TEXAS GOVERNMENT CODE SECTIONS 551.071 TO DISCUSS ANY OF THE MATTERS LISTED ABOVE.**

**IF YOU PLAN TO ATTEND THIS PUBLIC MEETING AND YOU HAVE A DISABILITY THAT REQUIRES SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS AT THE MEETING, PLEASE CONTACT THE CITY SECRETARY, (281) 275-2730. REQUESTS FOR SPECIAL SERVICES MUST BE RECEIVED FORTY-EIGHT (48) HOURS PRIOR TO THE MEETING TIME. REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS WILL BE MADE TO ASSIST YOUR NEEDS.**

**I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE ABOVE NOTICE WAS POSTED ON THE OUTSIDE BULLETIN BOARDS, A PLACE CONVENIENT AND READILY ACCESSIBLE TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC AT ALL TIMES, CITY OF SUGAR LAND CITY HALL, 2700 TOWN CENTER BOULEVARD NORTH, SUGAR LAND, FORT BEND COUNTY, TEXAS, 77479, AND ON THE CITY WEBSITE (WWW.SUGARLANDTX.GOV) UNDER MEETING AGENDAS.**

**Posted on this 3rd day of April, 2025 at 4:27 P.M.**



## **Agenda Request**

**APRIL 7, 2025**

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**AGENDA REQUEST NO:** III.A.

**AGENDA OF:** Independent Ethics Review Board

**INITIATED BY:** *Linda Mendenhall, City Clerk*

**PRESENTED BY:** *Linda Mendenhall, City Clerk*

**RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT:** City Secretary

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**AGENDA CAPTION:**

Consideration of and action on the minutes of the January 30, 2025 meeting.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

Consideration of and action on the minutes of the January 30, 2025 meeting.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

Consideration of and action on the minutes of the January 30, 2025 meeting.

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**BUDGET**

**EXPENDITURE REQUIRED:**

**CURRENT BUDGET:**

**ADDITIONAL FUNDING:**

**FUNDING SOURCE:**

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## ATTACHMENTS:

Description	Type
▣ 013025ierb_minutes	Other Supporting Documents





**CITY OF SUGAR LAND**

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 30, 2025**

**INDEPENDENT ETHICS REVIEW BOARD MINUTES**

**5:30 PM**

**Cane Room 161**

**QUORUM PRESENT**

All members of the Board were present except for Amy Suhl and Laura Bowen

**I. ATTENTION**

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*The meeting will live stream at <https://youtube.com/live/NMNR53a0i9A?feature=share>*

**II. PUBLIC COMMENT**

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*For questions or assistance, please contact the Office of the City Secretary (281) 275-2730.*

No members of the public addressed the Board.

### **III. MINUTES**

- A. Consideration of and action on the minutes of the November 13, 2024 meeting.

***Linda Mendenhall, City Clerk***

A motion to **Approve**, Item III-A, Approval of the November 13, 2024 meeting minutes., was made by Steve Tralie and seconded by Andrew Wolf, the motion **Passed**.

Ayes: Calobrisi, Crosby, Earle, Martinez, Stegemiller, Tralie, Wolf,

Absent: Bowen, Suhl

### **IV. ORIENTATION**

- A. Review of and discussion on the purpose, roles, and responsibilities of the Independent Ethics Review Board in their capacity as the Code of Ethics review task force.

***Meredith Riede, City Attorney / Executive Director***

Meredith Riede, City Attorney/Executive Director, gave a presentation, made comments and answered questions from the Board.

### **V. ANNUAL ETHICS TRAINING**

- A. Receive training related to the Sugar Land Code of Ethical Conduct and state laws regulating ethics and reporting responsibilities of City officials.

***Meredith Riede, City Attorney / Executive Director***

Meredith Riede, City Attorney/Executive Director, gave a presentation, made comments and answered questions from the Board.

### **VI. WORKSHOP**

- A. Review of and discussion on the proposed revisions to the Code of Ethical Conduct.

***Krista Stegemiller, Chair***

Krista Stegemiller, Chair led the discussion, made comments, and answered questions from the Board.

Meredith Riede, City Attorney/Executive Director, made comments and answered questions from the Board.

The Board reviewed and discussed revisions to the Code of Ethical Conduct.

## **VII.ADJOURNMENT**

A motion to **Approve**, Adjournment at 6:51 p.m., was made by Andrew Wolf and seconded by Steve Tralie, the motion **Passed**.

Ayes: Calobrisi, Crosby, Earle, Martinez, Stegemiller, Tralie, Wolf,

Absent: Bowen, Suhl

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**Linda Mendenhall, City Clerk**





## **Agenda Request**

**APRIL 7, 2025**

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**AGENDA REQUEST NO: IV.A.**

**AGENDA OF:** Independent Ethics Review Board

**INITIATED BY:** *Meredith Riede, City Attorney/Executive Director*

**PRESENTED BY:** *Krista Stegemiller, Chair*

**RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT:** Legal

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**AGENDA CAPTION:**

Review of and discussion on recent ethics articles of interest.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

Review and discuss recent articles of interest related to ethics and local governments.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

Each quarter the Board will review and discuss recent articles appearing in U.S. newspapers regarding ethics and local governments.

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**BUDGET**

**EXPENDITURE REQUIRED:** N/A

**CURRENT BUDGET:** N/A

**ADDITIONAL FUNDING:** N/A

**FUNDING SOURCE:**N/A

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## ATTACHMENTS:

Description	Type
☐ Article of Interest from San Antonio	Other Supporting Documents
☐ Complaint from San Antonio article of interest	Other Supporting Documents

## LOCAL NEWS

# Challenger for District 1 seat files complaint against San Antonio city councilwoman Sukh Kaur

In the complaint, Julisa Medrano-Guerra's campaign accuses Kaur of several ethics violations

**Nate Kotisso**, Digital Journalist

**Garrett Brneger**, Reporter

Published: **April 1, 2025 at 9:38 PM**

Updated: **April 2, 2025 at 12:11 PM**

Tags: **City Council, City Hall, San Antonio, Vote 2025, Elections, Sukh Kaur**



*Julisa Medrano-Guerra, a candidate in May's District 1 city council race in San Antonio, formally lodged an ethics complaint against incumbent Sukh Kaur on Tuesday. (City of San Antonio (Kaur) and Julisa Medrano-Guerra's campaign)*



6



In the complaint, which KSAT obtained on Tuesday night, Medrano-Guerra’s campaign accused Kaur of using city resources for campaign purposes, failing to disclose financial interests and multiple conflicts of interest.

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In an emailed statement sent to KSAT on Wednesday morning, Kaur commented on the ethics complaint.

“Given that the Medrano Guerra campaign has admitted to hiring a private investigator to follow me, this political attack comes as no surprise. I remain confident that the ethics review board, through its established process, will find no merit in these allegations,” the statement reads.

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According to the Medrano-Guerra campaign, Kaur received \$34,250 worth of campaign contributions between September 2023 and January 2025 from 22 individuals and businesses with “pending or ongoing matters” with the city council.

In 13 votes involving these entities, Medrano-Guerra’s campaign claims Kaur “voted in ways that advanced their interests.”

Another alleged ethics violation, according to the complaint, includes Kaur’s Chief of Staff Ryan Salts.

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### He Couldn't Use His Arm

Aliou's burns were so severe he lost

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Salts attended a Lavaca Neighborhood Association meeting as a representative of the City of San Antonio. After the meeting, Salts began distributing campaign signs and discussed Kaur’s re-election campaign efforts with attendees, the complaint states.

When a formal complaint is levied, the city has previously hired a lawyer to complete an independent investigation into the complaint. If a violation was committed, the lawyer will present their findings to the city’s Ethics Review Board within 10 business days of the filing.

Medrano-Guerra’s full complaint can be seen below.

[Ethic Violation Sukh \(3\)](#) by [nkotisso](#) on Scribd



provides funding for initiatives managed by the San Antonio Housing Trust Foundation, on whose board Kaur now serves. Since leaving SAAF, Kaur has received political donations from several of its senior executives involved in grantmaking. She has also voted in favor of pursuing grant funds from SAAF for Housing Trust Foundation projects.

These overlapping relationships—as a former employee, a grant-seeking official, and a political beneficiary of SAAF leadership—create an undeniable conflict of interest. Her decisions in this arena may be compromised by her ongoing financial and professional entanglements with the foundation.

**Applicable Ethics Code Section:**  
**Sec. 2-43: Conflicts of Interest**

## 8. Additional Ethical Red Flags

Councilwoman Kaur has accepted campaign support from Charter Schools Now PAC, an organization primarily funded by billionaire Walmart heirs Jim and Alice Walton. The PAC is known for backing conservative candidates across Texas, yet Kaur has not addressed their involvement in her campaign publicly, nor clarified her policy alignment with their agenda.

More significantly, Kaur has made conflicting public statements about her 2013 DWI conviction. While she legally had the record sealed in 2020, she initially claimed she had "never hidden" it, only to later say that opponents uncovered it and used it against her. As a public official, she had an ethical responsibility to be transparent with voters about a criminal conviction involving public safety and personal judgment. Her failure to voluntarily disclose this information undermines public trust.

Additionally, during her time as an educator, she did not disclose this conviction to either the

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4 / 4



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[2025 election dates, deadlines you need to know about in Bexar County](#)

• [FULL BALLOT: May 3 joint general, special, charter and bond election in Bexar County](#)  
**Nate Kotisso**

Nate Kotisso joined KSAT as a digital journalist in 2024. He previously worked as a newspaper reporter in the Rio Grande Valley for more than two years and spent nearly three years as a digital producer at the CBS station in Oklahoma City.

[email](#)



**Garrett Brnger**

Garrett Brnger is a reporter with KSAT 12.

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ALL COMMENTS 6

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UR

**URPuppet** 8 HRS AGO

We would have no elected officials from the current resident of the White House to the City Council if it was an ethics violation to vote on issues aligned with campaign contributors. If we are serious about Special Interest (Republican AND Democrat), we should disallow ANY money from Special Interests. In fact, we should establish an Election Trust Fund where ALL candidates get their funding with ALL candidates being given the SAME amount of money for their campaign. Talk about a level playing field. Then, candidates could run on people's issue rather than Special Interest. It will never happen because it would need to be made into law by the corrupt politicians.

REPLY 1 2

NM

**Navy man** 12 HRS AGO

Any Americans running for office?

REPLY 1 REPLY 3 5

JA

**Jen Antoine** 3 HRS AGO

Reply to **Navy man**

She's from Silver Spring Maryland and moved to SA in 2020, just in time to be made a pawn of the developer class. That's why she never says a thing during any council meetings including during issues which are in her district. She has no idea what's going on. Then she's gone through three chiefs of staff in two years and none of her fellow council members want to work with her on anything - and she doesn't want to work. This is a vanity project for a very self-involved woman.

REPLY 2 1

BJ

**Big Jay** 17 HRS AGO

Noooo, not San Antonio politics??? What is the city going too... 🤔 🤔 🤔

REPLY 1 1

TO

**Tony\_TX** 18 HRS AGO



REPLY 1 REPLY 0 0

VA

**Valdez** 17 HRS AGO

Reply to **Tony\_TX**



REPLY 0 0

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Vintage POLAROID Model 268 Camera Flash

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**Aidan W**

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## 1. Use of City Resources for Campaign Purposes

On March 18, 2025, Councilwoman Sukh Kaur's Chief of Staff, Ryan Salts, attended the Lavaca Neighborhood Association meeting in his official capacity as a city representative. During the meeting, Salts introduced himself by title, presented information on District 1 business—including infrastructure concerns and code enforcement issues—and invited constituents to engage further with the office. However, immediately after the official portion of the meeting, Salts began distributing campaign signs, taking campaign photos, and discussing Kaur's re-election campaign.

These actions constitute an improper use of public resources for political purposes. Salts was functioning in his role as a city employee while engaging in campaign activity, a clear misuse of taxpayer-funded time and authority to advance a political agenda. This blurring of official city work with electoral campaigning violates the ethical boundaries that require strict separation between public duties and political activity. The circumstances strongly suggest that Salts may have been directed or pressured to do so by Councilwoman Kaur.

### **Applicable Ethics Code Sections:**

**Sec. 2-49: Public Property and Resources**

**Sec. 2-50: Political Activity**

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## 2. Coercion or Improper Direction of City Employees

The events at the Lavaca meeting further suggest a more serious concern within Councilwoman Kaur's office—that city employees may be implicitly or explicitly expected to perform political work. While public officials and their staff may engage in political activities on their own time, the law and ethics code clearly prohibit dual-role behavior in which someone simultaneously performs official government duties and campaign-related tasks.

The incident involving Ryan Salts raises concerns that the office lacks any formal policy or clear boundaries regarding the separation of campaign and city work. Notably, Kaur's office has the highest staff turnover of any City Council office during this term, which could reasonably reflect internal discomfort or resistance from employees who may have been asked to engage in unethical behavior. The implication is that some staffers may have been coerced or terminated for objecting to these blurred boundaries.

### **Applicable Ethics Code Section:**

**Sec. 2-50: Political Activity**

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### 3. Failure to Disclose Financial Interests

Councilwoman Kaur has repeatedly failed to disclose material financial interests, in what appears to be a clear violation of city and state ethics requirements. For example, she did not disclose ownership or rental income from a condominium at 1401 South Flores #307, which she owned from 2017 to 2023, despite indicating in one filing that she received income from it. Additionally, she has never disclosed ownership of her current residence at 814 W. Craig Place, which has been deeded in her name since 2020. These omissions obstruct the public's ability to evaluate her financial interests and potential conflicts.

Her failure to disclose business interests is equally concerning. Kaur is the founder and principal of Jeet Investment Group, LLC, which owns 415 East Cevallos Street—property used for her bar business. Despite the significance of this interest, she has failed to fully and consistently report her financial stake in the business.

Furthermore, Kaur has served as president of the Kirpa Foundation, a nonprofit she co-founded in 2015. Although she has held this position for nearly a decade, she has not disclosed it on any financial statements submitted between 2022 and 2025, including the City's required PFS Addendum, which mandates disclosure of all leadership positions with nonprofit organizations. These repeated omissions suggest either a deliberate effort to conceal her affiliations or a gross failure to meet her disclosure obligations.

**Applicable Ethics Code Sections:**

**Sec. 2-73: Financial Disclosure Report**

**Sec. 2-74: Contents of Financial Disclosure Reports**

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### 4. Failure to Reveal a Court Judgment and Lien

On March 15, 2023, a mechanic's lien was filed against Jeet Investment Group, LLC—Councilwoman Kaur's company—in the amount of approximately \$150,000. This lien was the result of a court judgment following non-payment for services and materials provided by River City Doors and Hardware during the development of the property at 415 East Cevallos Street between December 2022 and January 2023.

Despite the size and seriousness of this legal judgment, Kaur has failed to disclose the lien on any of her financial filings. A lien of this magnitude presents a significant legal and financial liability that could reasonably influence her decision-making as a public official—particularly as it pertains to her business interests. Her failure to report the lien constitutes a serious breach of the city's financial disclosure requirements.

**Applicable Ethics Code Section:**

**Sec. 2-73: Financial Disclosure Report**

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## 5. Conflicts of Interest and Pay-to-Play Concerns

Between September 2023 and January 2025, Councilwoman Kaur received at least \$34,250 in campaign contributions from 22 individuals and business entities with pending or ongoing matters before the San Antonio City Council. In every one of the 13 documented votes involving these contributors, Kaur voted in ways that advanced their interests. This consistent pattern suggests a troubling pay-to-play dynamic.

One particularly concerning example occurred in November 2024, when Kaur made the motion and voted to approve a 10-year, \$54 million concession contract for the Airport. The contract was awarded to Host True Flavors, a catering company owned by Chef Johnny Hernandez, who—along with his family—had donated over \$3,000 to Kaur's campaign and listed an address adjacent to her bar property. The proximity of their businesses, the campaign donations, and the city contract raise serious questions about favoritism and abuse of office for political or personal benefit.

**Applicable Ethics Code Sections:**

**Sec. 2-43: Conflicts of Interest**

**Sec. 2-44: Unfair Advancement of Private Interests**

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## 6. Undisclosed or Misleading Professional History

Councilwoman Kaur has consistently promoted herself as a former teacher and education consultant, yet in recent years, the majority of her income has come from bar ownership and real estate development. She is the founder of Jeet Investment Group, which owns and operates alcohol-serving establishments, including the large-scale project at 415 East Cevallos Street. In 2024, she filed permits to construct two new bars at the site, confirming the shift in her professional focus.

Additionally, Kaur appears to have misrepresented her employment history. On her LinkedIn profile, she claims to have worked at the San Antonio Area Foundation from 2017 to 2020, but IRS records only reflect income from the organization in 2018 and 2019. This discrepancy may be an attempt to bolster her résumé or to reinforce ties to the nonprofit sector, where she has received substantial political support.

**Applicable Ethics Code Section:**

**Sec. 2-74: Contents of Financial Disclosure Reports**

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## 7. Conflict of Interest in Nonprofit and City Funding

The San Antonio Area Foundation (SAAF), where Kaur was formerly employed, currently provides funding for initiatives managed by the San Antonio Housing Trust Foundation, on whose board Kaur now serves. Since leaving SAAF, Kaur has received political donations from several of its senior executives involved in grantmaking. She has also voted in favor of pursuing grant funds from SAAF for Housing Trust Foundation projects.

These overlapping relationships—as a former employee, a grant-seeking official, and a political beneficiary of SAAF leadership—create an undeniable conflict of interest. Her decisions in this arena may be compromised by her ongoing financial and professional entanglements with the foundation.

**Applicable Ethics Code Section:**  
**Sec. 2-43: Conflicts of Interest**

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## 8. Additional Ethical Red Flags

Councilwoman Kaur has accepted campaign support from Charter Schools Now PAC, an organization primarily funded by billionaire Walmart heirs Jim and Alice Walton. The PAC is known for backing conservative candidates across Texas, yet Kaur has not addressed their involvement in her campaign publicly, nor clarified her policy alignment with their agenda.

More significantly, Kaur has made conflicting public statements about her 2013 DWI conviction. While she legally had the record sealed in 2020, she initially claimed she had "never hidden" it, only to later say that opponents uncovered it and used it against her. As a public official, she had an ethical responsibility to be transparent with voters about a criminal conviction involving public safety and personal judgment. Her failure to voluntarily disclose this information undermines public trust.

Additionally, during her time as an educator, she did not disclose this conviction to either the **Houston Independent School District (HISD)** or the **Texas Education Agency**, despite their professional conduct standards. This failure demonstrates a long-standing pattern of avoiding accountability in both public and educational roles.

During her current City Council term, Kaur has also missed 17 official meetings and failed to vote on at least 125 items. Her absenteeism reflects a lack of commitment to her constituents and undermines the trust placed in her as an elected representative.

**Applicable Ethics Code Section:**  
**Sec. 2-41: Statement of Purpose**

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