State Ethics Commission
Enforcement Division
One Ashburton Place, Room 619
Boston, MA 02108-1501
July 30, 2015

Re: Complaint against Margaret McLean Laforest serving in her capacity as a Quincy City Councilor of Ward One and Executive Director of Discover Quincy, a contract funded by the City of Quincy subject to the restrictions of G.L. c. 268A, s.20

Background: Margaret McLean Laforest was elected to the City of Quincy Ward One City Council seat in 2008. Margaret was employed part time as an Event Coordinator at Historic New England from March 2007 to July 2013 earning approximately $15,000.00 per year. Margaret was employed as a full time employee, for a short time, by the South Shore Workforce Development Board (WIB). The WIB is controlled by the Mayor of the City of Quincy. The Quincy Mayor appoints WIB Board Members and has control over the selection of the WIB Executive Director who hires employees at will. The Mayor of Quincy recommended City Coucilor LaForest for a position at the WEB. It was widely known that after only a short while the Executive Director of the WIB did not think Councilor LaForest was qualified and she had difficulty adjusting to her new position. The WIB Executive Director requested the Mayor find her a different position.

The City of Quincy did have a funded position for a "City of Quincy Director of Tourism" in the city budget. The position was eliminated. The Mayor of the City of Quincy moved the money that was used to fund that position to a contracted position with the Quincy Chamber of Commerce. Approval was required by the Quincy City Council. The contract was to provide promotional tourism services on behalf of the City of Quincy. The program, with the position, was funded by the city subject to the approval by the Quincy City Council.

In or around July of 2013 Margaret McLean Laforest left the WIB and was hired by the South Quincy Chamber of Commerce as the Executive Director of a tourism program that was created called "Discover Quincy". She was invited to apply for the position by the Chairman of the Quincy Chamber of Commerce, at that time, Sean Galvin, a major developer for the downtown Quincy Development Project and a close supporter of the Mayor. Councilor LaForest will be reviewing and voting on downtown development projects and or the process.

After reviewing the votes taken by the Quincy Council for the past 2 years, the time she has been employed as the city funded Executive Director of a Tourism, Councilor LaForest has never voted against any of the Mayor's proposals, submittals or appropriations submitted to the City Council (Votes attached). She has never been critical of anything the Quincy Mayor has proposed.

Councilor LaForest attends non tourism related events and meetings during normal business hours. We have no way of knowing what work arrangements she has with the Quincy Chamber of Commerce however she is being paid with public funds she should not be attending events related to her city council job or campaigning for reelection while on Quincy Chamber of Commerce time.

In 2014 Margaret LaForest, in her capacity as a Quincy City Councilor, voted to fund her own position. In 2015 she did not recuse herself, required by law, from the order that funded her position with the South Shore Chamber of Commerce as the Executive Director of Discover Quincy. I could not find the record for her vote in 2013. The June 2014 City Council meeting minutes showing Councilor LaForest's vote attached. June 2015 vote, where she was present and did not recuse herself, minutes not available but can be found on the City of Quincy website.

As a Quincy City Councilor Margaret McLean Laforest enjoys a salary of $29,500.00 including expenses paid for by the taxpayers. Councilor Margaret McLean Laforest also enjoys a salary of an estimated $80,000.00 as the city taxpayer funded and City of Quincy contracted position of Executive Director of Tourism. Councilor Laforest voted to fund her own position as Executive Director of Tourism.

We own a business in Quincy. Margaret LaForest has been known to be vindictive especially towards local business so we appreciate this complaint and our names to be kept confidential.

[redacted]