
1992 Wis Eth Bd 8
LOCAL OFFICIALS -- MEALS, LODGING, TRAVEL AND
ENTERTAINMENT

A local official should not permit another to pay the official's costs of a golf outing to which the official has been invited because of holding an official position. OEB 92-8

March 24, 1992

Facts

- [1] This opinion is based upon these understandings:
- a. You are the attorney for a school district.
 - b. Your law firm plans to sponsor a golf outing to which local government officials will be invited.
 - c. The cost per person would be approximately \$45.00.

Question

- [2] The Ethics Board understands your question to be:

To what extent, if any, does the Code of Ethics for Public Officials restrain a local official from permitting another to pay the official's cost of a golf outing?

Discussion

- [3] Wisconsin's Code of Ethics for Public Officials and Employees provides, in relevant part:

19.59(1)(a) No local public official may use his or her public position or office to obtain financial gain or anything of substantial value for the private benefit of himself or herself or his or her immediate family, or for an organization with which he or she is associated.

At least some of the individuals about whom you ask are local public officials as defined in § 19.42, *Wisconsin Statutes*.¹ An individual invited to a golf outing because of holding a local public office would violate the Ethics Code by permitting another to pay the official's costs. If an individual is being

¹ Local public officials covered by the Code include individuals who serve in an appointive office of a school district for a specified term and those who are appointed by a school board or school district administrator who serve at the pleasure of the appointing authority. Section 19.42(7u), (7w), and (7x), *Wisconsin Statutes*.

invited for a reason unrelated to holding public office, then §19.59 does not restrain the official's accepting the outing at your firm's expense.

Advice

[4] A local official should not permit another to pay the official's costs of a golf outing to which the official has been invited because of holding an official position.