

Ethics Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: February 17, 2011

The meeting began at 7 pm in the Town Hall Conference Room.

Members attending: Richard Rubenstein, Joan Landzberg, Laurie Noonan, Robert Garofalo,

Non-voting member/Ethics Board Counsel attending: Jeannette Koster

1. Regular Business:

- a. The minutes of the February 7, 2011 minutes were reviewed and approved as amended.
- b. Attendance was noted.

2. President's Comments:

- a. Richard indicated that he received additional comments from Susan Siegel on 2/17/11, regarding the draft Disclosure Form.
- b. Comments from the Planning Board, Town Board and other department heads expressed FOIL, (Freedom of Information Law), concerns and in general, expressed their opinion that the Disclosure Form was "overly intrusive".

3. New Business:

- a. The current revision of the Disclosure Form was reviewed by the Committee.
- b. Members reviewed all comments received from Town and Planning Board members and made additional amendments to the draft Disclosure Form to address expressed concerns.
- c. The Committee agreed that a Mission Statement and some form of introductory statement on the Disclosure Form would be beneficial to explain the purpose of form completion and ease concerns that personal information would be disclosed to the public.
- d. Jeannette provided the opinions of Bob Freeman and documentation from other municipalities as to their policies on what specific items and financial information should be disclosed on the forms.
- e. Westchester County's Disclosure requirements were reviewed.
- f. The Committee discussed Westchester County's terminology for Family Member as "spouse or unemancipated child", but decided to keep the current language on the Disclosure Form
- g. The Ethics Committee also reviewed the opinions of the "Review Committee on Open Government" on exclusions to public disclosure of financial information. The members agreed that the Review Committee's suggestions should be incorporated into a recommended amendment to the Town Ethics Code. The Amendment will recommend the exclusion of financial information to public disclosure if:
 - i. The financial information poses no conflict of interest;
 - ii. The financial information has no material bearing to the Town;
 - iii. The financial information has no relationship to the official duties being performed by the Town Board/Department member.
- h. The Ethics Committee decided that additional time would be needed to make additional revisions to the Disclosure Form and to draft the recommendations to the Town Board for amendments to the Town Ethics Code. The members agreed that another meeting would be necessary to properly address all concerns and comments and draft the necessary changes/amendment language.

4. Next Steps:

- a. Richard agreed to work on the above mentioned revisions to the form once again.
- b. Jeannette agreed to draft the suggested amendment language when she returns from vacation in the first week of March.
- c. The Committee will review the Mission Statement drafted by Joan Landzberg at the next scheduled meeting.
- d. Laurie will contact the Town Clerk to notify her of the next Ethics Committee meeting that is to be held on February 24, 2011 at 7pm and to request that the next meeting date and time be posted on the website.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm.

The next meeting is scheduled for February 24, 2011 at 7pm in the YCCC in Community Room #1.

Minutes submitted by Laurie Noonan