

BOARD OF ETHICS

Internal Guidelines

These guidelines are intended to provide for the efficient working of the Board of Ethics. They are to be followed in the spirit in which they are written, rather than strict rules and regulations.

1. Quorum: A quorum shall be three voting members of the Board.
2. Action: An affirmative vote of at least three members shall be required to approve any decision of the Board of Ethics.
3. Rules for Order: For procedures not covered herein, Robert's Rule of Order for Small Organizations shall govern.
4. Meetings:
 - a. Frequency: The Board of Ethics shall hold meetings on a monthly basis if specific business is pending. However, it is not required to schedule meetings in the months of August and December, but may do so by a majority vote of the members. The Board of Ethics shall hold at least two meetings per year.
 - b. Duration: Meetings shall be scheduled to last one to two hours. The duration of a specific meeting may be extended as needed, by a majority vote of the members present.
 - c. Time: Meetings shall be scheduled in the evenings between 6:30 and 8:00 pm.
 - d. Location: Meetings shall be held at either Town Hall or at any other Town of Yorktown facility.
 - e. Scheduling: The next meeting shall be scheduled no later than at the end of each meeting. If it is necessary to schedule a meeting prior to the next scheduled meeting, such meeting may be called by the Chair or by any two Board members acting in concert.
 - f. Announcement: The date, time, location and proposed agenda of a meeting shall be posted on the Town Website prior to the meeting. If a meeting is scheduled not more than one week in advance, the date, time, location and proposed agenda, if any, shall be posted on the Town website as soon as practical.
 - g. Minutes: Unless otherwise required by law, within a reasonable period of time, the Secretary of the Board of Ethics shall file with the Town Clerk the approved minutes of the meeting and the approved minutes of the previous meeting. It is expected that the Town Clerk's office will post the approved minutes on the Town Website as soon as practical after receipt.
 - h. Presiding Officer: The Chairman shall preside over meetings. If the Chairman is absent, the members shall choose one of their members present to serve as acting chairman for the duration of the meeting.

i. Agenda: At the discretion of the Chairman, an agenda may be proposed for each meeting. Among the items that the Chairman shall consider in developing the proposed agenda shall be agenda items agreed to at the previous meeting, items proposed by members of the Board of Ethics, and new business concerning matters raised with or referred to the Board of Ethics since the previous meeting. One of the first items of business at each meeting shall be the acceptance or modification of the proposed agenda.

j. Public Participation: The Public may and is encouraged to attend the open meetings of the Board of Ethics. The Public does not attend when the Board convenes in Closed Session. At open meetings, allowing the public to speak is within the discretion of the Board. However, it is the intent of the Board, subject to reasonable rules as it may impose, to allow the public to speak. A public comment period may be scheduled on the agenda. Public comment is subject to the necessary rule of avoiding excessive repetition, obstructionism or personal attacks. The Chairman or majority of the members present may rule that a speaker is out-of-order.

5. Investigations: In recognition of the need to properly address issues brought to the Board of Ethics, depending on their scope and complexity, the Board of Ethics may request the Town Board to provide it with an outside counsel pursuant to General Municipal Law 808. If the subject of an inquiry is a member of the Town Board, the Board of Ethics may also request the Town Board provide it with an outside counsel pursuant to General Municipal Law 808.

The Board of Ethics will use its best efforts to avoid interference with criminal investigations, will refer suspected criminal misconduct to the Town Board and the District Attorney at the Town Board's discretion and will refrain from acting while a criminal investigation is pending.

6. Opinions:

- a. Requests for Opinions from the Board of Ethics shall be made in writing. The Board of Ethics may institute standardized procedures and/or formats for submitting requests for opinions to the Board of Ethics.
- b. Opinions issued by the Board of Ethics shall be in writing. Where it is necessary to keep the identity of the requestor confidential, the name and other identifying information will be excised from the opinion.
- c. Records of the Board of Ethics will be maintained on all opinions issued.

7. Amendments to the Guidelines: These guidelines may be amended at a public meeting of this Board by a majority vote of the members.

8. Committee Members:

- a. Share a vision and a mission
- b. Have specific goals
- c. Commit to working together as a team to achieve goals
- d. Agree to written guidelines

9. Guidelines can include the following:

- a. Arrive on time
- b. Attend all meetings
- c. Keep minutes that are:
 - i. Distributed to and reviewed by each member
 - ii. Amended, when appropriate
 - iii. Approved, as amended, when necessary
 - iv. Archived
- d. Use consensus in decision making

10. If the Committee has a formal membership, roles can include:

- a. Chairperson
- b. Secretary
- c. Team Member

11. The responsibilities of each role may include, but not be limited to the following:

a. Chairperson:

- i. Keeps team members on task
- ii. Ensures that every member has a chance to contribute
- iii. Ensures that issues and differences of opinion are addressed with civility
- iv. Keeps team members focused on problem solving and decision making
- v. Is the liaison with relative and relevant teams, groups and individuals

b. Secretary:

- i. Provide the content for the team's work at the beginning of each meeting by distributing the minutes of the previous meeting, (minutes can be distributed by e-mail prior to the meeting); in either case, the Secretary requests:
 - ii. Members' input
 - iii. Amendments when appropriate
 - iv. Approval of the minutes
 - v. Distributes the written agenda, if any, developed at the previous meeting
 - vi. Records the data, information, discussions, and decisions at the current meeting, lists next steps, benchmark dates, the member's responsibility for the next steps, and the items to be placed on the next agenda.

c. Team Members:

- i. Share knowledge
- ii. Contribute
- iii. Listen
- iv. Participate
- v. Become actively involved in the Team's next steps.

12. The team members may decide to rotate roles, or change roles, after a specific period of time.

13. Failure to attend three meetings within a six month period, without an accepted reason by the majority vote of the Board, will be reported to the Town Board recommending that this member be removed.