



**Town of East Greenbush Board of Ethics**  
**225 Columbia Turnpike Rensselaer, NY 12144**  
**Eastgreenbush.org**

**East Greenbush Board of Ethics**  
**2016 Annual Report**

The Board of Ethics (BOE) is pleased to submit the following report for the year 2016. The board is required to prepare and submit an annual report of its activities to the Town Board pursuant to Section 23 of the Town of East Greenbush Code of Ethics.

The Board engaged in the following activities during 2016:

**Board Members**

The Town Board reappointed Jessica Lansing to the BOE and filled the vacant position on the Board of Ethics with the appointment of Guy Warner on January 4, 2016. The two alternate vacancies remain unfilled. The Board unanimously re-elected, Kathleen Luria to serve as Chairperson.

Judith Ehrlich	Term Expiration December 31, 2016
Guy Warner	Term Expiration December 31, 2017
Kathleen Luria, Chair	Term Expiration December 31, 2018
Cheryl Vallee	Term Expiration December 31, 2019
Jessica Lansing, Employee Representative	Term Expiration December 31, 2020

**Meetings**

The board met ten times during 2016.

The Board met with new Supervisor Jack Conway in its first meeting of the year on January 6, 2016. Supervisor Conway submitted a memo to the BOE outlining his agenda for the Board of Ethics

- Provide an attorney, Joseph Slater, for the BOE on an as-needed basis
- \$5,000 budget (\$2,500 for attorney)
- ethics training of town employees
- sending BOE members to outside training
- ensuring employees have a copy and have signed for the Code of Ethics
- monitor financial disclosure

To date town employees have not received ethics training and BOE members have not received outside training.

Supervisor Conway also wanted to amend and strengthen the current Code of Ethics as the current code is narrowly conceived and must be expanded to effectively protect the public interest. He requested the BOE review the following areas: expand the definition of the term 'Relatives'; broaden financial disclosure requirements; include reasonable nepotism and post-employment limitations; expand prohibitions on political activity among town officials and specify criteria for appointment to and removal from Board of Ethics. Supervisor Conway suggested a dual approach with the Board of Ethics and the Town Board each reviewing and rewriting the code independently. He stated the " BOE must have the tools to function as an independent entity." Once the BOE finished their review it would submit a draft with their recommendations for revisions.

Each board member undertook a section of the code specified in Supervisor Conway's memo to review and rewrite to submit to the board for discussion and review in the next meeting.

The Board met on February 3<sup>rd</sup> , 16<sup>th</sup> , March 2<sup>nd</sup> , April 6<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> to discuss, review, and to rewrite not only the sections outlined in Supervisor Conway's January 6, 2017 memo but also review and make revisions the Code of Ethics in its' entirety.

During the February 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting, Guy Warner suggested the town provide a dedicated email address for the Board of Ethics. Supervisor Conway agreed this would be a good idea and would work on it. This was not accomplished in 2016.

On May 4, 2016 the BOE submitted to the Town Board its revised draft of the Code of Ethics.

The town board reviewed the BOE draft, made revisions and held a public hearing on the revised Code of Ethics on July 20, 2016. The BOE attended the public hearing. After the public hearing Supervisor Conway requested the BOE review, discuss and revise the code based on the public comments.

The BOE met on July 29, 2017 to review the changes made by the town board and incorporate changes based on public comments. Joseph Slater, the board's attorney, reviewed and made changes/corrections in the language where appropriate. The BOE submitted a revised draft to the town board on August 4, 2016.

The BOE held its' final meeting of the year on October 17, 2016. We discussed the revisions the town board made to our final draft and discussed the issue of training once the new code was adopted as law. Other issues discussed were, to obtain a secure location for BOE's confidential documents, the expiration of Judy Ehrlich's term on December 31, 2016 and getting the alternate positions filled in the new year. Judy Ehrlich declined to be appointed to another term.

**Advisory Opinions**

None were received.

**Formal Complaints**

A complaint held over from 2015 which had not been resolved. A BOE member had to recuse herself from voting on this issue and it was the board's belief we could not vote because we did not have a quorum due to the absence of a full five member board. During the January 6, 2017 BOE went into Executive Session to present the complaint to the new board member, discuss the complaint and vote as to whether this was a valid. It was determined that the complaint was not a violation of any part of the Code of Ethics and was not forwarded to the town board.

No complaints were received in 2016.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Luria, Chair  
East Greenbush Board of Ethics