

TOWN OF EAST GREENBUSH

BOARD OF ETHICS

TOWN HALL, 225 COLUMBIA TURNPIKE, RENSSELAER, NY 12144

MEETING MINUTES

12/9/2021

CALL TO ORDER/DETERMINATION OF QUORUM AT 6:35 PM

Members Present:

Roger Johnson, Chairman

Joseph Slater, BOE Attorney

Mary Boisvert

Frank Coppa

Ellen Schwab, Town Employee Representative

Sean O'Neill

Bridget Fritz, Town Board Liaison

Public Comments

Mr. David Terpening referred to a 1/16/2016 memo from Supervisor Jack Conway regarding BOE meeting minutes.

The 2nd page of the memo refers to broadening the definitions of relatives as well as reasonable nepotism.

It was noted the current Code (Local Law #3 of the Year 2016) does address said definitions in detail in Section 2 (Relatives) and Section 15 (Nepotism)

Mr. Terpening asked if the code applies to only employees. Joe responded that Section 3 answers by stating it applies to officers and employees, Board members and Attorneys.

Mr. Terpening asked if the former Code of Ethics is available. If not online, is it something that the Town Clerk can gather based on a FOIL request. Yes it is. The current code (Local Law #3 of the Year 2016) refers to the previous code as Local Law #3 of 2013.

Old Business

Minutes of May 20, 2021 meeting approved by all. Motion by Mary and seconded by Ellen.

Roger's meeting with Supervisor Jack Conway on 10/27/21 reviewed pertaining to:

Terms expiring for 3 members (Roger Johnson, Mary Boisvert and alternate Lee Cookson). Supervisor is aware and working on replacements.

Administrative Support is needed by the Board - Jack is aware and is following up. Bridget will follow-up.

Ethics memo - 2 meetings ago the committee decided due to Covid that it was difficult to gather everyone together to be trained. At that time there were 26 new employees and the Town Boards that needed training. The Board suggested that a written copy of the Code of Ethics would be handed out to each new employee and they would sign off via an acknowledgement memo. Attorney Joe Slater drafted the memo which basically acknowledges by stating "I've read the Code of Ethics and will comply". The memo was approved in January 2020 but not yet released. Liaison Bridget Fritz will follow up on the status. This "sign off sheet" would solve the issue of new employees made aware of the Code of Ethics. Section 20-D of the Code of Ethics (Local Law 3 of the Year 2016) refers to the responsibility of an employee to abide by the Code of Ethics, regardless if the Code of Ethics is actually received or not. Frank advised some organizations hand out pamphlets that contain pertinent information. Does the on-boarding for new employees include Code of Ethics?

BOE and Section 19, Part B. Code of Ethics – In the last meeting Frank Coppa raised an issue that a behavioral incident was not brought to the BOE. It was determined that the BOE can only assess issues that are formally brought to the board's attention in writing (complaint form). Roger advised that the individual is no longer a Town employee. The Board of Ethics mission is to determine possible conflicts of interest, as well as to investigate formal ethics complaints. Bridget also responded to this issue and agreed with the aforementioned.

New Business

Roger Johnson advised this is his last meeting. His term is over on December 31, 2021. Supervisor Jack Conway is aware. Roger offered to write the Annual Report,

which is due February 15, per Section 23 of the Code of Ethics-Local Law #3 of the Year 2016 if BOE requests.

Election of the Chairman each year can't take place until the first meeting of each calendar year, per Section 4H of the Internal Rules & Regulations.

Once new members are finalized by the Town Board a meeting should be held ASAP. Sean is unavailable mid-January through mid-April.

Financial Disclosure Statements were handed out and reviewed. Roger suggested that whoever the new Chairman is that they be given assistance to review all statements to determine conflicts of interest. The forms are due to the Town Clerk by April 15th of each year, based on the previous year's information.

At 7:35 meeting was closed. Sean moved and Frank seconded.