

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY ETHICS BOARD MEETING MINUTES

DATE: September 13, 2023
LOCATION: Room 331, Gerace Office Building, 3 North Erie Street,
Mayville, New York 14757

TIME: 2:01 – 4:02 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Diane Hannum
John Marengo
Darlene Nygren
Stephanie Stevens

MEMBER ABSENT: John Hamels

OTHERS PRESENT: Amanda Gallagher from the County Executive's Office
Kristen Wright from the County Law Department
Respondent for Case No. 2023-03

CALL TO ORDER & PUBLIC NOTIFICATION:

John M. called the meeting to order at 2:01 p.m.

Amanda confirmed proper public notification was completed as the notice of today's meeting was sent out to the local media and posted on the county website on September 6, 2023. It also appeared in the Post-Journal's "Briefly" section on September 9, 2023.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Diane motioned to approve the minutes from the August 16, 2023 meeting, which was seconded by Darlene. All in favor with John M. abstaining from voting as he was not present at the last meeting.

REVIEW CORRESPONDENCE:

John M. reported that there was no mail in the Board's P.O. Box.

Amanda provided an update on the Board's case files. The follow-up letter concerning Case No. 2023-03 was sent and the Board was still awaiting acknowledgement from the Respondent.

Kristen left the meeting at 2:06 p.m.

Amanda reported that for Case No. 2023-07 the follow-up letter was sent and we are still awaiting the Extension Request Form for the Board's review. Amanda to follow-up with the Respondent's Department Head.

Amanda also reported that Case No. 2023-08 was closed as it was determined that training confirmation was timely received.

Kristen returned to the meeting at 2:09 p.m.

REVIEW OF CHANGES TO CODE OF ETHICS, STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE FORM, AND QUESTIONS:

The Board reviewed changes to the Code of Ethics, which included changes to the definitions of Family Member and Related Person, adding definitions for Nepotism and Supervising Authority, adding a new section on Nepotism, and adding two new paragraphs to the section on the Use of County Resources.

The Board also discussed moving its P.O. Box from Jamestown to Mayville as the Board's P.O. Box is mentioned in the Reporting Violations section of the Code.

Stephanie motioned to approve the P.O. Box change, which was seconded by Darlene. All in favor.

Diane motioned to accept the amendments to the Code of Ethics as presented, which was seconded by Stephanie. All in favor.

The Board reviewed changes to the Statement of Financial Disclosure Form, which included clarification to include the first name, middle initial, and last name of a Spouse and any dependent children in Questions 2 and 3; providing the definition of Related Person in Questions 6c, 8, and 10; changes to the answer columns for Question 12; and adding an additional acknowledgment paragraph to the Certification part of the form.

Stephanie motioned to approve the changes to the Statement of Financial Disclosure, which was seconded by Diane. All in favor.

The Board discussed questions about interests and real estate and requested that the questions and answers be added to the Statement of Financial Disclosure training.

RETURN TO REVIEW OF CORRESPONDENCE:

Stephanie motioned to go into executive session at 3:06 p.m. to receive the advice of the Office of the County Attorney, which was seconded by Darlene. All in favor.

Stephanie motioned to leave executive session at 3:38 p.m., which was seconded by Darlene. All in favor.

REVIEW OF TITLES OF REQUIRED FILERS AND INTEREST IN CONTRACTS DISCLOSURE:

The Board reviewed proposed changes to the List of Titles Required to File a Statement of Financial Disclosure, which included removing 26 titles that are no longer in the County's classification plan and adding 6 new titles.

Darlene motioned to update the list as presented, which was seconded by Diane. All in favor.

The Board reviewed a draft Interest in Contracts Disclosure form that could be utilized instead of the Statement of Financial Disclosure for individuals who only need to disclose interests in contracts per Article 18 of New York State General Municipal Law.

Stephanie motioned to adopt the Interest in Contracts Disclosure, which was seconded by Diane. All in favor.

STATUS OF ANNUAL CODE OF ETHICS TRAINING FOR COUNTY EMPLOYEES:

Amanda provided an update on the 2023 Code of Ethics Training. There were four county employees who still needed to complete the ethics training. Of them, two of the employees are still out on medical leave and will be required to complete the training upon their return to work, one is no longer a county employee, and one has returned to work and submitted an extension request form for the Board's review.

The Board reviewed Extension Request Form #T-23-12.

Stephanie motioned to approve Extension Request Form T-23-12, which was seconded by Diane. All in favor.

STATUS OF FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE FORMS:

Amanda reported that so far for 2023, a total of 360 forms have been reviewed and approved by the Board as of September 11, 2023. There are 7 forms pending review and 3 forms with upcoming due dates.

DISCUSS 2023 ANNUAL REPORT:

The Board held off on discussing the Annual Report and will review membership and 2024 meeting dates at its next meeting.

NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting of the Ethics Board is scheduled for October 25, 2023 at 1 p.m. in Room TBD of the Gerace Office Building, 3 N. Erie St. in Mayville, N.Y.

MOTION TO ADJOURN:

Stephanie motioned to adjourn the meeting at 4:02 p.m., which was seconded by Darlene. All in favor.

Minutes prepared by Amanda Gallagher and respectfully submitted to John Marengo.