**Town of Old Saybrook**

# ETHICS COMMISSION

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

THURSDAY, MARCH 12, 2015

The Ethics Commission met at a special Meeting on Thursday, March 12, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. at the Old Saybrook Acton Library.

1. **Call to Order:** Edward Cassella called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m. Members present: Edward Cassella, Paula Ladd, Lew Lewandowski and Kerry Knobelsdorff.
2. **Approval of Minutes:**
3. Special Meeting Minutes, February 12, 2015 – - **Motion:** To approve (Lewandowski/Ladd): **Approved.**
4. **Comments from the public:** None
5. **Old Business:**
6. **Review of Code of Ethics and “Procedures for complaints and advisory opinions” for potential revision.**
7. Mr. Cassella said he talked to Carl Fortuna about presenting our proposed revisions to the Town and Mr. Fortuna said to let him know when we’re ready to present the revisions to the Town for a vote.
8. The members continued their discussion from the previous meeting on adopting an internal procedure, similar to one contained in the Old Lyme Code of Ethics, allowing the Commission to do a “preliminary review” of a complaint, upon receipt, and decide whether a complaint warrants any further action by the Commission. A consensus agreed to this. Mr. Cassella will incorporate the language from the Old Lyme Code of Ethics into the Formal Complaint Procedures and present the language for the next meeting.
9. Ms. Ladd discussed her review of the State statutes with respect to confidentiality as it pertains to the Formal Complaint procedures, and she presented some suggested language, similar to that included in the Old Lyme Code, for dealing with confidentiality in the Commission’s handling of investigations. Mr. Cassella asked Ms. Ladd to prepare additional suggested language using provisions from different town codes for the commission to consider at the April meeting.
10. The members discussed Mr. Lewandowski’s recommendation to shorten the filing deadline and the members agreed on bringing it down from 3 years to 2 years. This would require a change to the Code, subject to approval at a Town Meeting.
11. Members continued the discussion of the applicability of the Code and the conflict of interest provisions and discussed the inconsistent terminology. Mr. Cassella said that he would go through the Code to identify the inconsistencies and potential corrections.
12. Members discussed the provision of the Code to paid consultants, and the inclusion of a separate code of ethics for consultants in the State statutes as well as specific references and conduct regulation in at least one of the town codes reviewed. Mr. Cassella said that he will look at how other towns deal with the applicability of their codes to paid consultants.
13. Ms. Knobelsdorff reported that the complaint form and the advisory opinion request form, as well as the Code, are now available on the Town’s website under the Ethics Commission page. Also available are the Minutes and Agendas. Ms. Knobelsdorff will follow up with the Town IT director with respect to getting the commissions meetings posted on the Town’s calendar and organizing the minutes and agendas chronologically.
14. Mr. Lewandowski asked if we have a target date to have our work done, and Mr. Cassella said that our goal is to have the work done by the Summer, and that we will try to get all the revisions drafted at the regular meeting in April.
15. **Update on Ethics training opportunities with CCM and Office of State Ethics for boards and commissions and town employees.**

Ms. Ladd reported that the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) has added us to the scheduler’s list for training in 2016. A minimum of 25 attendees are required and the town needs to provide a room for the training. The CCM scheduler said to follow up with her in early summer to secure a date. Ms. Ladd provided the members with information from CCM that the State is proposing a mandate for a state-wide code of ethics that would be mandated for all municipalities.

1. **New Business:** None

**6. Adjournment:** **Motion:** To adjourn (Lewandowski/Ladd): **Approved.** Meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Next Regular Meeting scheduled for April 16, 2015 at 6:00 p.m.

Submitted: Kerry E. Knobelsdorff, Secretary