

TOWN OF STRATFORD, CONNECTICUT
ETHICS COMMISSION
Minutes of the meeting held August 22, 2016

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:01PM.

Commissioners in attendance: Susan Birge, (Chairperson), Thomas Kulhawik, (Vice Chairman), Robert J. Chimini, (Recording Secretary), Bruce Hawley

Also in attendance: Jeryl Gray

II. Meet with (and Interview) Ethics Commission Applicants

Chairperson Susan Birge distributed the applications and resumes of four (4) individuals who have submitted their names to the Office of the Mayor/Town Clerk Office for consideration as Ethics Commissioners. Applications were received from the following:

Rose Blackwell, 290 McKinley Ave. – Democrat
Lisa M. Donnelly, 269 California St. - Republican
Gladys Avila-Ramos, 72 Mohawk St. - Democrat
David R. Kennedy, 390 Chickadee Lane - Republican

The current commissioners (as a group) met with each of the above applicants individually in ten (10) minute sessions. Applicant David R. Kennedy was absent and unable to attend due to an out of town business commitment.

Each applicant was queried as to why they were interested in being a member of the Ethics Commission, their work background, and their familiarity with confidentiality requirements. All candidates interviewed were asked the same questions. All candidates interviewed gave favorable and knowledgeable to the commissioner's inquiries.

Chairperson Birge, advised the commissioners present that in keeping with the Town of Stratford Ethics Code (*Town Ordinance: Article IV: Ethics Code (#08-09)*), it would be necessary to select a DEMOCRAT at this time as a full time commissioner.

After a review of the applicants' current Commissioners voted to submit the name of **Gladys Avila-Ramos** to the Mayor's office (h copy to the Town Council Secretary) as a full member of the Commission. Rose Blackwell, Lisa Donnelly, and David Kennedy's names will be submitted possible alternate members of the commission.

III. Distribution of Code and Signed Acknowledgement Statement

Chairperson Birge met with the head of Town Human Resources; Ron Eng who stated that effective in 2011 all employees received a copy of the Town's Ethics Code and the acknowledgement form. Some returned the signed form and that went into their personnel file; some employees did NOT return a signed acknowledgement form. Mr. Eng explained that there is nothing we (Town) can do to mandate a signed acknowledgement form because the unions do not agree to that. The Union objected because of the rules regarding seniority and promotion are in conflict with the Code.

Mr. Eng stated that after 2011 every newly hired employee gets the code and acknowledgement form as part of the New Employee Packet.

Chairperson Birge asked Mr. Eng about whether elected officials have been provided the Code and acknowledgement form. Eng stated that that falls under the jurisdiction of the Town Clerk and nothing has been done about that. Chairperson Birge recommended that we invite the Town Clerk to our next meeting to determine the most effective way to disseminate the Code to ALL elected and appointed officials.

IV. Municipal Ethics Training

Chairperson Birge spoke to Mr. Eng regarding the training of Town employees relative to the Ethics Code. Mr. Eng suggested that we use Town consultant (Larry Securelli) for that person. Chairperson Birge researched the consultant and did not feel that he had experience with ethics training and recommended that we engage an independent consultant for that purpose.

TOWN OF STRATFORD, CONNECTICUT
ETHICS COMMISSION
Minutes of the meeting held August 22, 2016
(Continued Page. 2 of 2)

Chairperson Birge emailed the CCM to see if they offered (free) and Ethics training. CCM that they do however the only time they could provide training would be during the day. There was concern that the suggested times would not be convenient. Commissioner Hawley suggested that we might consider using some form of "on line" training and Chairperson Birge suggested that we could perhaps video the CCM provided training session and have that video distributed by the Town's Webmaster. Chairperson Birge will check back with CCM if a video format is a possible approach.

V. New Business

Chairperson Birge called for any new business. No New Business was discussed.

VI. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Birge and seconded by Commissioner Kulhawik. The motion passed and Chairperson Birge adjourned the meeting at 8:22 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert J. Chimini
Recording Secretary