

**MINUTES OF THE
ETHICS COMMITTEE**

**MEETING OF
July 13, 2023**

01) OPEN MEETING

The Ethics Committee Meeting of Thursday, July 13, 2023 was called to order at 5:00 PM at the Knightly Meeting Room.

02) INTRODUCTION OF MEMBERS

MEMBERS PRESENT:

- Donna Sytek
- Donna Loranger
- Pam Russell
- Marybeth Stramaglia
- Anthony Conte

MEMBERS ABSENT:

N/A

OTHERS PRESENT:

Joseph Devine, Assistant Town Manager

03) ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Assistant Town Manager Devine opened the meeting and advised the committee the first course of action should be to elect a chair and vice chair. Mr. Conte stated he felt Mrs. Sytek should be the chair of the Ethics Committee.

MOTION by Mr. Conte to appoint Donna Sytek as the Chair.

SECOND by Mrs. Stramaglia

VOTE: 5-0-0 in favor.

Motion passed unanimously.

Assistant Town Manager Devine then handed the meeting over to the new Chair.

Chairman Sytek then asked for any nominations for Vice-Chairman.

MOTION by Mrs. Stramaglia to appoint Donna Loranger as the Vice-Chairman.

SECOND by Mrs. Russell

VOTE: 5-0-0 in favor.

Motion passed unanimously.

04) REVIEW CHARTER

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3 The committee initiated a review of the Charter and the authority derived from it. The discussion
4 centered around the committee's role concerning employees. Does the committee possess the
5 authority to enforce ordinances and rules upon employees? Assistant Town Manager Devine
6 mentioned that he had consulted the town's legal counsel in the past, and according to them, the
7 committee does not hold authority over employees. The rationale is that the Town has adopted
8 RSA 37, granting the Town Manager authority over all employees. Additionally, there were
9 queries as most employees are subject to a collective bargaining agreement that doesn't involve
10 the Ethics Committee. Ms. Stramaglia then inquired if the Ethics Committee would oversee the
11 Town Manager. Assistant Town Manager Devine reiterated his belief that it does not. Mr. Devine
12 stated that the Town Manager operates under a separate contract and reports to the Town Council.
13 Mr. Conte asked whether the committee could provide an advisory opinion on employees, as
14 outlined in the charter. Mr. Devine was tasked with seeking legal counsel's opinion on the
15 aforementioned questions.

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17 Mr. Conte brought up section 6.3.7, which appears vague, stating, "No board, committee, or
18 commission member shall accept any valuable gift." He suggested establishing a specific value.
19 Chairman Sytek mentioned that at the State level, it's \$25 for the executive branch and \$50 for the
20 legislative branch. The committee concurred that a value should be set and decided to include this
21 on the agenda for the next meeting. Another question arose about whether this applies to employees
22 or officials, as the Charter doesn't specify.

23
24 Mrs. Stramaglia inquired about the committee conducting training for staff and committees. Ms.
25 Loranger considered it beneficial and aligned with the intent of the Charter Commission. The
26 committee agreed that conducting training in a manner similar to how the Town educated the new
27 Town Council, involving NHMA, would be advantageous. This approach could offer a local
28 perspective and emphasize the importance of ethics.

29
30 Chairman Sytek questioned whether complaints could only be submitted by residents. This led to
31 a discussion about whether business owners could also file complaints. Was this specified in the
32 charter? Ms. Loranger asked for clarification on the definition of a resident. Mrs. Stramaglia
33 suggested that taxpayers and businesses engaged with the town should be able to file complaints.
34 The committee expressed interest in exploring this during an upcoming meeting.

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36 Chairman Sytek then presented a draft of a complaint form for the committee's review. The
37 committee appreciated that the form required the person to select which section of the code of
38 ethics the alleged violation pertains to. The Town will develop a committee page on the website,
39 including the content of this form online.

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41 Chairman Sytek announced that the next meeting would be held on August 23rd.
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1 **MOTION by Mr. Conte to adjourn the meeting at 5:55 PM.**

2 **SECOND by Ms. Loranger**

3 **VOTE: 5-0-0 in favor.**

4 **Motion passed unanimously.**

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6 Minutes recorded by: Joseph Devine

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8 Approved: By Ethics Committee

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10 Date: August 23, 2023