

TO: GREENBURGH TOWN BOARD
CC: GREENBURGH TOWN CLERK
GREENBURGH TOWN ATTORNEY

BOARD OF ETHICS ANNUAL REPORT TO TOWN BOARD FOR 2014

I. OVERVIEW

During 2014 the principal activities of the Board of Ethics were: (1) administering the Annual Statement of Financial Disclosure process, (2) issuing opinions on requests for advisory opinions made by Town officials, (3) reporting on the status of promulgation of the Code of Ethics and ethics training, both of which are required by the Code of Ethics and (4) reviewing and enhancing the Board of Ethics section of the Town Web site.

II. SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES IN 2014

A. Annual Statements of Financial Disclosure

In 2014, with one exception, all Town public officers and employees who were required to submit the Annual Statement Financial Disclosure did so. Nine agency members did not submit the Disclosure Form. As required by Town Code, the names of the individuals who did not submit the form were posted and remain posted on the Town website.

B. Opinions

In 2014, the Board of Ethics issued a total ten opinions. All were advisory opinions in response to requests or suggestions by Town officials. The Board of Ethics received no Verified Citizen Complaints in 2014. All opinions are posted on the Board of Ethics Section of the Town's website.

C. Code of Ethics Promulgation and Training

In September 2012, the Town Board made changes to the Town Code of Ethics. Over the past two years the Board of Ethics has worked cooperatively with the Office of the Town Attorney and the Town Clerk's Office on promulgation of the revised code and with the Office of the Town Attorney on ethics training. In 2013 Greenburgh elected officials were given the required training. In 2014 the Office of the Town Attorney provided training to appointed officials and certain employees. Agency members still need to be trained. This is an on going process which will continue into 2015.

D. Review and Enhancement of Board of Ethics Section of Town Website

In 2007, the Board of Ethics Section of the Town website was implemented. It contains among other things opinions, advisory opinions, Rules of the Board of Ethics, forms, Board of Ethics Reports on various ethics issues, Annual Reports of the Board of Ethics and information on the members of the Board of Ethics. This material was placed on the website to assist those individuals covered by the Code of Ethics comply with the Code of Ethics and to provide visibility concerning ethics matters to the citizens of Greenburgh. In 2014, the Board of Ethics completed work begun in 2013 to review and enhance this section of the Town website. Included in this effort was a focus on easy-of-use of the site by users and on the completeness and currency of the section and its various components.

III. MEMBERSHIP AND COUNSEL

A. Membership

In May 2014, Hon. Doris T. Friedman was appointed to the Board of Ethics to take the seat vacated by Mark E. Constantine. She will serve until 2018. In August 2014, Dr. Carol Sarcinella was appointed to fill a vacant seat and will serve until 2018. Dr. Sarcinella was elected as Secretary to the Board. On December 31, 2014, Chair Jack McLaughlin completed his five-year term as chair and stepped down. His outstanding service to the Board of Ethics and the community was and is greatly appreciated

B. Independent Counsel

The Board of Ethics does not have compensated independent counsel. NYS Law (General Municipal Law Section 802 (2) states that a municipal board of ethics "shall have the advice of counsel employed by the board." Joseph S. Malara has served as pro bono independent counsel to the Board of Ethics since 2010. His advice and counsel have been indispensable and very helpful to the board

IV. 2014 PRIORITIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Code of Ethics Promulgation and Training

In 2010, a New York State Ethics audit found the Town to be deficient in the area of ethics training. To date a great deal of progress has been made, but more is required in order to reach all who need the training. Although significant progress has been made, the Ethics Board will continue to work with the office of the Town Attorney to continue the successful progress and the board will continue to monitor the progress of this activity in 2015.

B. Joint Meeting

The Board of Ethics and the Supervisor of the Town of Greenburgh have proposed a joint meeting of the Board of Ethics and the Greenburgh Town Board to explore areas of concern.

C. Mini Task Force

A joint mini task force has been proposed by the Board of Ethics to create and develop criteria for placement of notices on the Town website.

C. Update of the Code of Ethics

The Board will continue to update the Code of Ethics, section 570-6.

Dated: February 26, 2015

Respectfully submitted,

GREENBURGH BOARD OF ETHICS

Glenn Eisen (2015); Consent by Proxy
Doris Friedman (2018)
Thomas Hopkins (2016), Consent by Proxy
Carol Sarcinella (2018)
John Sganga (2019)

Jack McLaughlin, former Chair, collaborated on this Report as to Parts I and II.

cc: Joseph Malara, Esq., Counsel