

**TOWN OF WEST SENECA  
1300 Union Road  
West Seneca, NY 14224**

**ETHICS BOARD  
Work Session  
March 20, 2019**

Chairperson Carpenter called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

**ROLL CALL:**

Members Present – Chairperson Amy Carpenter  
William Bauer  
Jacqueline Felser, Town Clerk  
Theresa Funk  
James Lazaros  
Rodney Montgomery  
Karl Spencer  
Jon Minear, Deputy Town Attorney  
Members Absent - Tina Hawthorne, Town Attorney

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I. Introduction of Amelia Greenan

- Secretary Amy Kobler is stepping down as Secretary, due to conflicts
- Ms. Amelia Greenan has expressed an interest and was present to observe

II. The Academy for NYS' Local Officials

- Provides classes like "Protecting the Public's Interests: A Tutorial on Local Government Ethics and Transparency in the New York State"
- Ideal for newly elected officials and town board members
- Modules include: Conflict of Interest of Municipal Officers and Employees, Codes of Ethics and Other Local Actions, and Case Studies

III. Draft of Onboarding, New Hires, Newly Elected Officials and Volunteers

- Would like to see new hires, newly elected officials and volunteers receive an employee handbook (which does not seem to currently exist), a copy of the Ethics Code and copy of the 'Whistle Blower Policy'
- One source (that requires an annual fee) will collect internal employee information
- Any external citizens can go right to the county, if there are any issues
- Need to finalize composition
  - Suggestions: Deputy Town Attorney, Town Attorney, Committee Chairperson, and Human Resources
  - Would not go any further unless they discovered there was an issue
- Disclosure Form – Who would be required to complete?
  - All Elected Officials
  - Department Heads
  - Zoning Board of Appeals Members
  - Planning Board Members

- Board of Assessment Review Members
  - Ethics Board Members
  - Finance Department
- Deputy Town Attorney Jon Minear discussed the contractor disclosure forms for the town engineer
- What other boards to include?
  - Add the Environmental Commission
- Electrical Inspector and Code Enforcement Officers should fill out one of the disclosure forms
- Town Clerk Jacqueline Felser and Chairperson Amy Carpenter will put a list together of everyone who collects a paycheck
- Clerk Felser suggests ethics board reviews forms annually and the forms are to be then filed with the Town Clerk
  - Exact change "said forms shall be reviewed annually by the Ethics Board and then filed with the Town Clerk and HR"
- Does HR keep a file on Elected Officials? To be clarified. If not, board would like HR to have a file on elected officials.
- Include HR when presenting to the Town Board
- Oath book should be signed
- Include online annual harassment training (HR handles this)
- Ethics Board should also take training and possibly have a file where certificates of training completion are kept

#### IV. Draft Town of West Seneca Ethics Board

- Presenting to Town Board Meeting with all Ethics Board Members

#### V. Next Meeting will be a formal meeting and will include changes to the drafts

#### VI. Town Code and Removal of a Member

- Mr. Minear – "continuity is huge"
- Chairperson Carpenter suggested making a recommendation to Town Board
- Mr. Minear - not seeking to regulate; rather, seeking a more clear definition of the role of Ethics Board Members

#### VII. Whistle-blower Policy Discussion

- Investigations behind closed doors; Board can subpoena people
- Recommended keeping names private
- Power is investigating unethical complaints

The next meeting will be an Ethics Board Meeting  
April 18<sup>th</sup> at 6pm