ETHICS COMMISSION
MUNICIPAL OFFICE COMPLEX
MEETING ROOM 3
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2021
7:00 P.M.
SPECIAL MEETING

DRAFT MINUTES

1. Call to Order
   – Chairman Bruce Gelston called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.
   - Attendance: Bruce Gelston, Chairman; John Crovo; Paul Stuhlman; Kevin Staehly
   - In-Person audience attendance included Ms. Valerie Almada and Ms. Linda Zemienieski, in her capacity as Secretary to the Board of Selectmen

2. Approval of Minutes: Special Meeting of July 19, 2021
   - A copy of the draft minutes for the 7/19/2021 Special Meeting was circulated to the members for review.
   - **Paul Stuhlman motioned to accept the minutes of the 7/19/2021 Special Meeting without amendment**
   - **Chairman Bruce Gelston seconded the motion.**
   - **Motion passed 3 Ayes with Kevin Staehly abstaining**

3. Unfinished Business
   - There was no unfinished business to address

4. New Business

   A. Election of Vice Chairman and Secretary
      a. Kevin Staehly volunteered to act as Secretary for the Commission.
         i. **Paul Stuhlman made a motion to accept Mr. Staehly as Secretary**
         ii. **Bruce Gelston seconded the motion**
         iii. **There being no discussion, the motion passed unanimously**
      b. John Crovo volunteered to act as the Vice Chairman for the Commission.
         i. **Mr. Stuhlman made a motion to accept Mr. Crovo as Vice Chairman**
         ii. **Chairman Gelston seconded the motion**
         iii. **There being no discussion, the motion passed unanimously**
   B. Commission Appointment Discussion and Recommendation
      a. Ms. Valerie Almada introduced herself to the Commission and discussed her background and interest in serving on the Commission. She confirmed her eligibility for the Commission's vacancy and Ms. Zemienieski acting in her capacity as Secretary to the Selectmen affirmed the eligibility.
      b. Brief introductions were made by each of the Commission members to Ms. Almada and a general discussion of the role and purpose of the Commission took place.
      c. Mr. Crovo made a motion to recommend to the Board of Selectman the appointment of Ms. Almada to the vacated position on the Ethics

Commission, a three-year term expiring June 30, 2022 (non-calendar due to the resignation of former Chairman Scott Jezek from that position).

d. Mr. Stuhlman seconded the motion.

e. Chairman Gelston, in discussion, called attention to his neighborly relationship to Ms. Almada and recused himself from voting.

f. There being no additional discussion, the Commission voted with 3 Ayes to recommend Ms. Almada to the Board of Selectman for the aforementioned term.

C. Other Discussion

a. Ms. Almada asked during her appointment discussion whether there were any proactive measures or initiatives that were taken by the Commission to make employees of the Town aware of the Ethics Commission. Ms. Zemienieski advised that the Code of Ethical Conduct is included in all employee packets as part of the Employee Handbook for the Town.

i. Ms. Zemienieski further advised that Ethics Complain Forms are available online for any East Haddam citizen to access and submit to the Commission

ii. As part of her response to Ms. Almada's question, Ms. Zemienieski called attention to the high turn-over of volunteers for town commissions and advised that unlike Town employees, these individuals were not given a copy of the Code of Ethical Conduct. She added that her opinion was that it was here that communication between the Commission and other commissions and their chairs could be improved.

b. Mr. Crovo proposed the idea of working with the new administration after the November election to increase awareness about the Commission. No action was to be taken at this time.

c. Chairman Gelston asked Ms. Zemienieski if the Connecticut State Board of Ethics participates in any training with the Commission. Ms. Zemienieski stated that to her knowledge they had not presently but future collaboration may be possible.

d. In response to a question from Mr. Stuhlman about educating the general public about the Ethics Commission, Ms. Zemienieski advised starting with Town Employees, then Volunteers such as those on other commissions, and then offering a workshop or forum to the general public.

D. Next Meeting Date (TBD)

a. Ms. Zemienieski advised the Commission and Chairman Gelston that the Commission has traditionally met twice annually. She further advised that the Chairman should submit dates for Regular Meetings for 2022 before January 1st, 2022.

b. A general discussion took place about the Commission members' schedules, room availability, and that a December Special Meeting may be held as needed after the new administration had transitioned into office pending the outcome of the November 2, 2021 municipal election. No action was taken to set a date, at this time.

5. Audience of Citizens

- There was no discussion or comments from the public present. No digital correspondence from the Livestream was received.

6. Adjournment

- Mr. Crovo made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:32 pm.
- Chairman Gelston seconded the motion.
- Unanimous Aye.

A video recording of this meeting is available digitally on YouTube at the following link:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DVoFO4Lp-JU

You may also access the Town's YouTube Channel from the Town's website:
www.easthaddam.org

Respectfully submitted, Kevin Staehly