ETHICS COMMISSION
MUNICIPAL OFFICE COMPLEX
MEETING ROOM 3
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 24, 2024
6:00 P.M.
REGULAR MEETING

MINUTES

1. Call to Order
   - Chairman Kevin Staehly called the meeting to order at 6:10 PM.
   - Janie Pittendreigh; Valerie Almada; Kevin Staehly, Chairman in attendance.
   - Linda Zemienieski present in the audience.

2. Approval of Minutes: Special Meeting of November 29, 2023
   - A copy of the draft minutes for the 11/29/23 Special Meeting was circulated for the members to review.
   - **Motion was made by Ms. Almada to approve the minutes of the 11/29/2023 Special Meeting without amendment.**
   - **Ms. Pittendreigh seconded the motion.**
   - **Unanimous aye.**

3. Unfinished Business

   A. Commission Membership
   - The commission discussed the application to join the Ethics Commission received from Ms. Rebecca Skinner and her interview at the prior Special Meeting on November 29, 2023. This would be to serve a three-year term, concluding in June, 2026.

   - **Motion was made by Ms. Almada to appoint Rebecca Skinner to the Ethics Commission** effective upon the Board of Selectmen's acceptance of Ms. Skinner's application.

   - **Ms. Pittendreigh seconded the motion.**

   B. A discussion took place regarding the appointment of Vice-Chaiman.

   - **Motion was made by Ms. Pittendreigh to appoint Ms. Almada as Vice Chairman of the Ethics Commission** effective upon the Board of Selectmen's acceptance.
   - **Mr. Staehly seconded the motion.**
   - **Unanimous aye.**
   - Ms. Almada accepted as a temporary role, in addition to acting as Secretary for the Commission, until the Commission is once again fully-staffed.

   C. Mr. Staehly's and Mr. Stuhlman's terms on the Commission expire in June, 2024 . It was decided to defer discussion of term re-appointments to the May, 2024 meeting.

   D. Ms. Zemienieski reported on the status of the distribution of the East Haddam Code of Conduct Forms.

- Ms. Zemienieski advised that members of all the Commissions had received the forms and most had been signed and returned. She plans to follow up with any members who have yet to sign and return their forms.
- Ms. Zemienieski noted that all sworn members of the East Haddam Board of Selectmen have received and signed the Code of Conduct.

4. New Business

A. There was a general discussion regarding the public seminar held in November on the topic of the Freedom of Information Act. Mr. Staehly, Ms. Pittendreigh and Ms. Almada each attended and found it to be valuable. It was noted that a recording of the seminar is available on-line, for future viewing.

B. A discussion ensued regarding the well-defined parameters of the Code of Ethics and the potential for misunderstanding of the Commission's role. The Commission also discussed potential updates or additions to the Town webpage to provide clarification to the public. Mr. Staehly will follow up with Ms. Zemienieski on the potential to pursue.

C. Other Discussion

Ms. Zemienieski was consulted regarding term lengths. Ms. Zemienieski noted that when a new member is replacing a current member, the new member completes the term of the member whom they "replace". This is normally shorter than the three-year term. After this time, the member is eligible for re-appointment to a three-year term.

5. Audience of Citizens

Ms. Linda Zemienieski was in attendance for some the meeting and provided general advice to the Commission throughout the meeting as questions came up. She also advised that there was no digital correspondence from the Livestream received.

6. Adjournment

- **Motion made by Mr. Staehly to adjourn the meeting at 6:37 PM.**
- **Seconded by Ms. Pittendreigh.**
- **Unanimous aye.**

A video recording of this meeting is available digitally on YouTube at the following link:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sUqOu_P_b6k

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

Respectfully submitted,
Valerie Almada, Secretary