



**ETHICS COMMISSION
MUNICIPAL OFFICE COMPLEX MEETING ROOM 1 WEDNESDAY,
AUGUST 27, 2025
7:00 P.M.
Public Hearing**

Minutes

1.) Call to Order

-Chairman Kevin Staehly called the Public Hearing on August 27th to order at 7:00pm.

-Chairman Staehly referenced Ccomplaint Petition 01-2025 submitted by Mr. Scott Jezek against Selectman Eric Dill.

-Chairman Kevin Staehly opened the floor for public comment at 7:03pm

-Resident Joan Dill stated that she felt the Commission was using guidance from Town Counsel as it related to executing the Code of Ethical Conduct Ordinance, citing the supplemental attached to the Special Meeting of August 4, 2025. Chairman Staehly affirmed. Ms. Dill requested copies of the Town Attorney's counsel for how the commission should proceed be made available to the assembled public.

-Chairman Staehly requested of Ms. Linda Zemienieski that physical copies of the above reference supplemental be made available to audience. Physical copies were printed and made accessible to the audience during the meeting around 7:09pm.

-Resident John Erickson posed questions about ethics training provided to town officials and if documentation of training is required. Also posed questions concerning the point of contact for who Town officials go to for direction or reference.

-Chairman Staehly responded that Code of Ethical Conduct is provided to all volunteers and appointed or elected government officials. They sign a receipt of having received and read that. There is no current official training but Freedom of Information Act seminars are available. They are not mandatory but encouraged and Chairman Staehly further advised that recent revisions were made to the Ethics Commission webpage in order to make information concerning FOIA and the Code of Ethical Conduct more accessible to the general public.

2. Reading of Complaint Petition

-Chairman Staehly gave an overview of Complaint Petition 01-2025 submitted on July 24th, 2025 by Mr. Scott Jezek, accepted by the Ethics Commission on August 4th, 2025 and the allegations outlined in the complaint:

Allegation #1 - Section 4-1: Persons governed by this Code shall not engage in or participate in any business or transaction, nor have an interest, direct or indirect, which is incompatible with the proper discharge of that person or persons' official duties in the public interest, or would tend to impair that person or persons' independent judgment or action in the performance of that person or persons' official responsibilities.

Allegation #2 - Section 4-3a: Persons governed by this Code shall not be financially interested or have any personal beneficial interest, in any contract or purchase order for any supplies, materials, equipment or contractual services furnished to or used by the board, agency or commission of which that person or persons is or are a member, or of which that person or persons is or are an employee(s). It is further provided, notwithstanding the above, that no member of the Board of Selectmen of the Town of East Haddam and no member of the Board of Finance of the Town of East Haddam shall be financially interested, or have any personal beneficial interest, either directly or indirectly, in any contract or purchase order for any supplies, materials equipment or contractual services furnished to or used by any board, agency, or commission of the Town of East Haddam.

Allegation #3 - Section 5: All appointed members of town boards and commissions, elected officials and department heads must recuse themselves from any decision that would incur a conflict of interest or potential conflict of interest. Failure to do so will constitute a violation of this code.

3. Presentation of Complainant

-Mr. Scott Jezek stated concerns about the Ethics Commission using the same attorney for counsel as the Board of Selectman.

-Chairman Staehly asked Linda Zemienieski to confirm if Attorney Timothy Herbst currently serves as the attorney for the Board of Selectman. Linda Zemienieski confirmed this was accurate.

-The Commission conferred on the merit of Mr. Jezek's concerns and the possibility that a continuance may be needed to seek outside counsel. Chairman Staehly stated there was consensus with the Commission that the raised concern should be taken into consideration and that outside counsel may need to be sought.

-Following a question put to her by Chairman Staehly, First Selectman Irene Haines stated the town attorney is routinely pulled in to advise on procedures for various boards and commissions, and that he represents the interests of the Town and its constituency, not solely the Board of Selectmen, as his primary duty and obligation.

- Mr. Scott Jezek reiterated his position that he felt outside counsel should be sought before proceeding.
- Information was collected from Ms. Zemienieski to determine next steps as well as a suitable date for a continuance.
- Chairman Staehly allowed further questions and comments from the audience.
- Audience members asked about next steps and raised discussion surrounding ability of the commission to hire an attorney to seek outside counsel, what type of attorney should be sought, funding to do so.
- Irene Haines, acting in a personal capacity, gave a positive character statement of Eric Dill and spoke against the complaint filed against him.
- Continuance was scheduled for Sept 29th @ 7:00pm in Meeting Room 1.

4. Continuance

- At 7:32pm, Chairman Kevin Staehly scheduled a continuance of the Public Hearing for September 29, 2025. No further business was conducted.

Participants unable to attend in person may view the meeting on YouTube Live at the following link:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCLZq-CmatoKY6FW829c6mBA?view_as=subscriber

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

For YouTube Live viewers, public participation will take place via written questions or comments by emailing:
Public.questions@easthaddam.org

Questions/comments may be sent prior to and during the meeting.