

## **Ethics Committee - Town of West Seneca**

### **June 15th, 2015@ 5:45pm**

Members present- George P. Clifford, Chairman  
Amy L. Carpenter  
Susan Kims  
James E. Manley  
Shawn P. Martin  
Jacqueline A. Felser, Town Clerk  
John J. Fenz, Town Attorney  
Katie Hourihan, Secretary

Members absent- Edward F. Gehn Jr.

The meeting was held at the West Seneca Town Hall, 1250 Union Road, West Seneca and called to order by Chairman Clifford at 5:45 P.M.

Motion by Mr. Manley, seconded by Mrs. Kims, to approve the minutes for January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2015 meeting. Mr. Martin pointed out Chairman to be changed to the singular form and not plural in the minutes. Chairman Clifford also stated to correct the word “down” to “done” on page 2, paragraph 4 when referring to Mr. Fenz statement. Motion to accept.

## Approval of the March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2015 minutes and the April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2015.

Mrs. Carpenter to review the minutes for March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2015. Mr. Martin pointed out Chairman to be changed to the singular form and not the plural form. Mrs. Kims added on page 2 to change the letter from "written by Mrs. Kims" to "written to Mr. Fenz" and also when referring to Mr. Elling in the next paragraph, "found to violate the town", change to "found NOT to violate the town". Chairman Clifford stated a motion to approve the minutes.

## Disclosure Statements

Discussion of the disclosure statements Mr. Fenz provided to the Ethics board from various surrounding towns. Chairman Clifford stated Aurora and Tonawanda does not have a disclosure, but they do have a disclosure of interest. Clarence has a disclosure. Elma does not have one and Lancaster and Orchard Park do have a disclosure statement.

Mr. Martin reported that he believes the disclosure statements seem to be too inclusive. Town of Clarence is very inclusive. When there is an interest in something, it should be disclosed in writing

especially when regarding contracts or business with the town and legislation. Chairman Clifford responded for Mr. Martin to elaborate when he said it is too inclusive.

Mr. Martin stated his concerns when it comes to disclosures of Town matters vs. private work matters, non-town related. He gave the example of his private practice clients being disclosed and violating the rights of his clients as according to HIPA laws. It could be a problematic issue and some private businesses do not pertain to town business.

Mrs. Carpenter then stated where one would draw the line between spouse and family. If a spouse was doing business with the town, the town should be aware of such.

Mrs. Felser reported that when it came to who should file financial disclosure, all elected officials, department heads, Zoning and Planning Board members, and Board of Assessment Review. Other boards such as the Library Board and even the Ethics Board shouldn't need to provide one. Mrs. Felser agreed that if that person is doing business with the town, it needs to be disclosed.

Mr. Manley stated he does not agree with annual disclosure statements.