

Town of Riverdale Park
Ethics Commission Meeting Minutes
August 11, 2021
7:00 p.m.

In Attendance

John Wells, Chair
Corey Beauford
Andrea Huberty (left at 8:02 p.m.)

Frederick Sussman, Town Attorney
Jessica Barnes, Director of Administrative Services/Town Clerk

Absent

April Engram, Alternate

Call to Order

Mr. Wells called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

Roll Call

Agenda Approval

Mr. Beauford made a motion to approve the August 11, 2021, agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Huberty Vote: 3-0 (Favorable)

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Huberty made a motion to approve the June 30, 2021, meeting minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Beauford. Vote: 3-0 (Favorable)

Unfinished Business

Review of CY2020 Financial Disclosure Statements

Town Attorney Fred Sussman provided an overview of the Review Summary of outstanding issues with CY2020 FDS.

Town Attorney Sussman discussed his concerns regarding Schedule A relating to real property interest for Colleen Richardson. Mr. Wells stated that the form was completed under oath and unless it was brought to the Commission's attention that she was a tenant or owned a home, the Financial Disclosure Statement was sufficient. Ms. Huberty agreed and stated that the form was complete as submitted. Mr. Beauford also agreed.

Position Statement for Financial Disclosure Statements

The Commission reviewed the position statement drafted by Ms. Barnes. Mr. Wells asked if the Commission was comfortable with the position statement as drafted. Ms. Huberty asked about the use of “shall” versus “must” and Ms. Barnes explained her word choice. Ms. Huberty did not have any additional concerns. Mr. Beauford stated that he had reviewed the draft position statement and had no concerns.

Town Attorney Sussman stated that the position statement, as written, did not address the Board of Code Appeals. Ms. Huberty stated that it would make sense to have all Town Boards and Commissions, including the Ethics Commission, complete a long-form Financial Disclosure Statement. Mr. Wells agreed and Mr. Beauford stated that the Ethics Commission should promote the highest standards of transparency possible. Mr. Wells asked the Commission members to reflect on the minutes from previous meetings and stated that the Commission would revisit the topic at a future meeting. Mr. Wells stated that changes could be made to the draft position statement to reflect the will of the Commission.

Hearings

There were no hearings scheduled for the August 11, 2021, Ethics Commission meeting.

New Business

Ward 1 Special Election Financial Disclosure Statement Review

Town Attorney Fred Sussman provided an overview of his review of Ifiok Inyang’s Financial Disclosure Statement.

By consensus, the Commission accepted the Financial Disclosure Statement as sufficient.

Ms. Barnes reminded the Commission that the candidate filing deadline was August 17th and the Commission may need to meet again to review other Financial Disclosure Statements.

Discussion of Long Form Financial Disclosure Statements

Mr. Wells stated that the Commission had identified several revisions needed to the long form to clarify the type of information that the Commission was seeking. Ms. Huberty suggested that the Commission members each compile a list of comments for a discussion in September.

Ms. Barnes stated that she would create a Dropbox folder for documents for the Commission to review such as examples provided by Town Attorney Sussman.

Other Business

Mr. Beauford reminded the Commission that the determination of the Chair and Vice Chair of the Ethics Commission needed to be done at an upcoming meeting.

Next Meeting

The Ethics Commission will meet virtually on Tuesday, August 17th at 7:00 p.m. to review Financial Disclosure Statements submitted by candidates for the Ward 1 Special Election.

The Ethics Commission will meet virtually on Wednesday, September 22nd at 7:00 p.m. to finalize the Position Statement for Financial Disclosure Forms as it relates to Boards and Commissions, to discuss changes to the Long Form Financial Disclosure Statement, and to designate the Chair and Vice Chair of the Commission for the next year.

Adjournment

By consensus, the meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m.