GREENWICH BOARD OF ETHICS

Minutes of Regular Meeting Held on June 8th, 2022

Members Present: Paul de Bary, Chair, Jennifer Cohen, Secretary, Robert Grele, Robert Sisca, Rev. Stephanie Johnson

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Joe Williams, Deputy Director, Greenwich Library and Joseph Siciliano, Director of Parks and Recreation, and (from 5:41 on) Jackie Budkins, Town Clerk, and Pat Sesto, Director of Environmental Affairs

The executive session was called to order at 5:11 P.M. by the Chair, who noted that a quorum was present. The Chair welcomed the participants and indicated that this was a regular meeting of the Board and an agenda for the meeting had been posted on the Town bulletin board and in the Agenda and Minutes pages on the Town website in accordance with FOIA requirements.

The first order of business was approval of the minutes of the Board’s regular meeting on April 6th, 2022. The Chair confirmed that all members of the Board had received copies of the draft minutes and asked if there were any comments or corrections. There were no comments or corrections. The Secretary then moved adoption of the minutes and the minutes were adopted unanimously, with the exception of Rev. Johnson abstaining because she had not attended the meeting. The Chair directed that a copy of the final minutes as approved be posted in the Agenda & Minutes Center on the Town Website, attached as an Exhibit to the draft minutes of this meeting when filed with the Town Clerk and posted to replace the draft minutes for the April 6th Meeting in the Agenda and Minutes Center.

Chair then reported that he would be sending a reminder notice to Town Officers to file disclosure statements by the end of July that a draft of a presentation containing a flow chart describing the Board’s procedures that had been prepared by Board member Jennifer Paul Cohen. The draft presentation had been circulated to all the members for review. The Chair asked each of the members to comment. After a brief discussion, there was a consensus that it would be useful to post the presentation among the Board of Ethics pages on the Town website. On behalf of all the members, the Chair thanked Ms. Paul Cohen for her excellent work.

The Chair then reviewed the progress made by the various Board members in surveying Town Officials to get a better understanding of the Town’s practices with respect to referrals and
recommendations. He summarized the Board’s results thus far as finding a broad consensus with respect to an unwritten policy not to make specific referrals and recommendations. Necessary exceptions had been found, however, in relation to public health and safety emergencies. In some cases, such as the Police Department’s duty wrecker assignments, procedures were formalized, but it was appropriate to recognize that in emergency situations, Town representatives needed the freedom to make the decisions they thought practical to address the issue at hand. In addition, an exception was needed for situations where Town employees or agents were used to perform public health and safety functions that were best contracted and paid for by the persons most directly benefitted. There were also situations in which the Town was expected to serve as a resource for information and provide guides and listings, such as the resource guide for seniors prepared by the Commission on Aging or the recent list of vaccination and testing sites for Covid-19 prepared by the Health Department in response to inquiries.

The Chair then thanked the liaisons who were present for attending the meeting and asked for any feedback from them. Mr. Williams indicated that the Library considered it part of its mission to recommend books of topical interest to Town residents and to sponsor book talks and other informational events. Ms. Sesto confirmed that the public expected the Town to assist them, particularly in regard to making applications and seeking approvals. A discussion of the various approaches used by different departments ensued and the question of whether a Town-wide policy would be useful to establish a framework that could protect the Town from possible liability. Ms. Budkins reported that the Clerk’s office provided a listing of Constables and Justices of the Peace on its web pages, but did not otherwise make referrals or recommendations. The Chair noted that interagency referrals to other Town departments, as well as federal and state agencies and certain non-profit social services providers, was another exception to the general rule that the Board saw a need for.

After receiving and discussing these comments, the members of the Board thanked the liaisons present for their input and promised to keep them informed about the progress of the project.

The Chair then indicated that all matters listed on the agenda had come before the Board and moved to adjourn the meeting which was approved unanimously at 6 Following the Board’s review and discussion of these matters, there was no further business to be dealt with in executive session and the executive session was adjourned by unanimous consent at 6:03 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Cohen, Secretary
Minutes of Regular Meeting
On
April 6th, 2022

Were approved in final form at the June 8th meeting and are not included to avoid duplication.
DATE: JUNE 8TH, 2022
Regular Session

MOTION/RESOLUTION: (1) APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING ON APRIL 6TH, 2022

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