

TOWN OF WOODSTOCK ETHICS BOARD

2013 ANNUAL REPORT

The Ethics and Disclosure law of the Town of Woodstock, Section VIII Ethics Board, C Powers and Duties, number 8 requires the Ethics Board to "...prepare and submit an annual report to the Town Board summarizing the activities of the Ethics Board, listing any recommended changes to the text or administration of the Local Law." Herewith is our report and recommended changes to the Law.

At the January 2013 meeting, we welcomed new member Allison Dodd, who was appointed to a 3 year term: 2013,14,15.. Toby Heilbrunn had been reappointed to another 3 year term: 2013,14,15. Teri Reynolds, Chairperson was appointed to complete the term of Joan Krotenberg who had resigned (2013). Fran Breitkopf, Vice Chairperson is completing her term of office (2013).

In February, Michael Goodman who had been Secretary resigned. Michael had been appointed to a 3 year term, in March 2012. Allison was elected to be our Secretary. In July, Neil Ratner, MD was appointed to complete Michael's term of office (2013, 2014) .

Fran, Toby and Teri attended the NYS Association of Towns conference in NYC. While there, we were in contact with lawyers regarding the "Gifting" section of our Ethics Law, which a member of the Town Board had suggested changing.

We contacted these individuals after the conference and received valuable information that would guided us in rewriting that section of our Ethics Law. In May, we presented our findings, the attorneys' suggestions, and our suggested changes to the Town Board. The Town Board did not accept our proposed changes. They developed their own changes after receiving our information.

With our 2012 Annual Report, we had included proposed changes to clarify Section 8 article B 8 of our Ethics Law, regarding terms of office for Ethics Board members. No action was taken by the Town Board. We had also submitted a flow chart, and explanation of the filing process, and a form for one to use in filing an inquiry with the Ethics Board. This was done for David Eckroth's project. We had hoped that the information would be posted on the town's website. To date, it has not. We are again submitting this information.

With one of our inquiries, this year, an individual noted that there was no contact information for the Ethics Board on the town's website. This was eventually corrected.

We had 21 meetings which involved three inquires from the public. Two inquiries were resolved without any necessary involvement of the Town Board.

One inquiry - -case 2013-1, from which one of our members, Allison Dodd, recused herself. This case necessitated referral to the Town Board for implementation. No action was taken by the board. We sent a letter to the Supervisor as per section 71-8 (D). In his reply, we did not receive an answer as to why no action was taken by the board (as required by law). This case remains open.

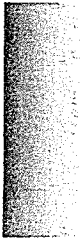
In regards to case 2013-1, the Ethics Board must maintain confidentiality in situations such as this and we cannot rebuke any remarks that have been made by the individuals involved in this case. It was not our choice to make this case public.

Annual Disclosure forms were discussed in relation to personnel appointed after January 30, 2013. Section 71-7 B(2) of the Ethics Law states employees must file a disclosure statement with the Town Clerk "within 30 days of taking office." This has not been done in the past. We spoke to Town Clerk Jackie Earley regarding this. She agreed with our findings and distributed forms to employees who were appointed after 1/30/13. She and her staff are developing a plan to include the Disclosure Statement in the packet given to newly appointed employees (paid and volunteer) who are appointed after 1/30 of subsequent years. This does not interfere with the annual disclosure statement that is distributed in January of each year.

Included with this report, along with the filing process to be included in the Town's website, are changes to language in the present Ethic Law. Changes are in bold italics lettering.

Respectfully submitted,

Woodstock Ethics Board
12/6/13



WOODSTOCK, N.Y.

COLONY OF THE ARTS

www.WoodstockNY.org Website

WOODSTOCK ETHICS BOARD FLOW CHART

If you are a Woodstock resident and have an inquiry about a town employee, paid or volunteer, or official that you think is appropriate for the Ethics Board to review and wish to bring to the attention of the Ethics Board, you must put the issue into written form. It must contain as much information as possible. Forms are available from the Town Clerk or on line at www.woodstockny.org or you may use your own letter. All correspondence must include the problem, the person's name that you have a question about and your name, address, phone number and email address. Your inquiry should be mailed to the Woodstock Ethics Board, 45 Comeau Drive, Woodstock NY 12498 and **mark it confidential**.



The Ethics Board will meet and discuss the issue, decide how to further proceed and research



The Ethics Board may meet with the person making the inquiry



The Ethics Board may meet with the person about whom the inquiry is made



The Ethics Board will review and consider all information that was submitted and either render a decision or request further information



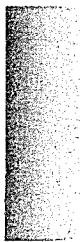
When the Ethics Board reaches a decision, both parties will be notified.
The supervisor and Town Board, if appropriate, may be notified.



The Ethics Board's decision is a recommendation to the Town Board. Only the Town Board can enforce a determination of the Ethics Board. The Ethics Board is an advisory board.



All information is kept confidential.
The Ethics Board's final determination is given to the Town Board, when appropriate



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WOODSTOCK ETHICS BOARD

45 Comeau Drive, Woodstock, NY 12498

845 679 8672 X4

www.WoodstockNY.org Website

WOODSTOCK ETHICS BOARD PROCESS

If you are a Woodstock resident and have an inquiry regarding the ethical behavior of a town employee or official that you want the Ethics Board to review, the following is the process.

You must explain your inquiry in written form, with as much information as possible. If you do not supply enough relevant information that you have personal knowledge of, the Ethics Board will return your inquiry with a request for more details.

Inquiry forms are available from the Town Clerk, at 679-2113 extension 4 or on line at www.woodstockny.org, or you may use your own letter. All correspondence must include the problem, the person's name that you have a question about and your name, address, phone number and email address.

Your inquiry should be mailed to the Woodstock Ethics Board, 45 Comeau Drive, Woodstock, 12498 and write the word "**confidential**" on the envelope.

The Ethics Board will meet to investigate and discuss the issue and decide how to further proceed. The Ethics Board, if it deems necessary, will meet with the person making the inquiry and /or the person about whom the inquiry was made. Interviews will include only one person at a time.

The Ethics Board will review and consider all information that was submitted and either render a decision or request further information

When the Ethics Board reaches a decision, the appropriate party(s) will be notified.

All information is kept confidential.

Only the determination of the Ethics Board is passed on to the involved parties and if appropriate, the Supervisor.



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WOODSTOCK ETHICS BOARD

45 Comeau Drive, Woodstock New York 12498

www.WoodstockNY.org

INQUIRY FORM FOR WOODSTOCK ETHICS BOARD

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____

Phone number _____ Email address _____

Please describe the nature of your inquiry, include names, dates and all other details that will help to define the problem. (use the back of this form if necessary)

Please send this to the Woodstock Ethics Board, 45 Comeau Drive, Woodstock N.Y. 12498.

Mark the envelope... Confidential.

We will contact you for an appointment to meet with us as soon as possible.

After a complete investigation we will notify you regarding our decision on this matter.

You can find a copy of the Woodstock Ethics Law on the town's website at www.woodstockny.org and on the left side, scroll down to Town Code (Laws), then click on Town of Woodstock Code, follow those direction and then click on Chapter 71 Ethics or you can click on the following on the left side of the page..."Laws", Woodstock Town Code, then Town of Woodstock Code and finally, Chapter 71 Ethics, or call the Town Clerk for a printed copy at 679-2113 extension 4

Teri Reynolds
Chair, Woodstock Ethics Board