

## **TOWN OF WOODSTOCK ETHICS BOARD 2025 ANNUAL REPORT**

The Ethics and Disclosure Law of the Town of Woodstock (the “Ethics Law”), 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 2025 annual report:

### **CURRENT MEMBERS AS OF JANUARY 19, 2026:**

Allison Dodd - Serving 3-year term (2025-27)  
Paul Washington – Serving 3-year term (2025-27)  
Neil Ratner – Serving 3-year term (2024-26)  
Iris York – Serving 3-year term (2026-29)

### **ELECTION OF OFFICERS:**

There is no obligation under the Ethics Law to have a secretary, but we are required to elect a Chairperson. The Ethics Board re-elected Paul Washington as Chairperson in January 2025 and elected Iris York as Secretary. While the responsibility for taking minutes rotates among members of the Ethics Board, the Secretary takes the lead in interacting with the Town Supervisor’s and Town Clerk’s offices with respect to scheduling meetings, posting minutes, and administering the disclosure form process.

### **ANNUAL DISCLOSURE FORMS:**

The Ethics Board performed its review of disclosure forms. The Ethics Board is pleased to report that, as in 2023, all Town Board members and the vast majority of Town Employees (especially paid Employees) submitted completed disclosure forms in 2025.

Attached as Appendix A to this report is the list of Town employees from whom the Ethics Board did not receive disclosure forms during 2025. There are also employees from whom we did not receive forms in 2024. As suggested in our 2024 annual report, the Town Board may wish to take into account a repeated failure to submit forms by volunteers when considering the reappointment of these individuals to Town committees, boards, and commissions. The Town Board may also want to consider how to ensure that paid Employees submit their forms.

During 2025, the Ethics Board received several disclosure forms in which the Town Employee indicated that they had another affiliation with the Town or an outside organization. In each instance, the Ethics Board determined that the affiliation *itself* did not violate the Ethics Law, but it could do so if circumstances evolved to create a conflict of interest, or the reasonable appearance of a conflict of interest, that would require recusal under the Ethics Law. Beginning in 2025, the Ethics Board sent letters to each of these individuals thanking them for disclosing the affiliation and encouraging them to contact the Ethics Board for further guidance if a situation arises that could create the reasonable appearance of a conflict of interest.

### **ETHICS INQUIRIES:**

The Ethics Board received two cases during 2025. As of the date of this report, the Ethics Board has resolved one of those cases with a determination that no potential violation of the Ethics Law occurred, while the other case (where a potential violation occurred) is still open.

## **ETHICS LAW UPDATES:**

In 2025 there were no changes to the Ethics Law, which was last updated in December 2022.

## **2025 MEETINGS:**

The Ethics Board met eight times during 2025: January 20, February 17, March 17, May 19, June 19, September 15, November 3, and December 8. At our meeting on December 8, to support the smooth transition of responsibilities, we held a constructive discussion with the Supervisor-elect to discuss scope and administration of the Ethics Law, the role of the Town Supervisor and the Town Supervisor's office's with respect to the Ethics Law, and the Ethics Board's prior recommendations to the Town Board.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**Town Elected Official Code of Conduct.** As we noted in our annual reports to the Town Board for 2023 and 2024, over time we have received a number of complaints alleging harassing, intimidating, or otherwise inappropriate conduct by elected Town officials. This type of conduct falls outside the scope of the Ethics Law. Further, when engaged in by elected Town officials, this type of conduct also falls outside the scope of the Town's Employment Practices Compliance Handbook (the "Handbook"), which explicitly excludes elected Town officials.

Thus, in our 2023 and 2024 annual reports, and in our presentation to the Town Board in June 2024, we recommended the Town Board consider adopting a general code of conduct that applies to itself and to other elected Town officials. The Town Supervisor asked the Ethics Board to recommend the topics that could be included in such a code of conduct.

In December 2024, we submitted our recommendations to the Town Board. At a meeting with Supervisor-elect in December 2025, we offered to resubmit our recommendations whenever the Town Board is ready to consider them.

**Town Employee Training.** Further, as we have noted in our reports to the Town Board for the past **seven** years (2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024), the Ethics Board receives complaints alleging conduct that did not violate the Ethics and Disclosure Law, but that may violate the Handbook.

As we have repeatedly suggested, we strongly encourage the Town to provide training on both the Handbook and the Ethics Law not only to paid employees, but also to those who serve voluntarily on Town boards, committees, and commissions. This training should explain the different types of conduct covered by the Handbook and the Ethics Law, and the processes for reporting violations of each. As we have stated in the past, the Ethics Board stands ready to work with the Town in developing and assisting in providing this training, which should include specific examples drawn from prior Ethics Board decisions.

We provided this training in our presentation to the Town Board in June 2024, but have not been asked since that time to assist in broader training for Town employees. At our meeting with the Supervisor-elect in December 2025, we offered to assist in the development of a training module on the Ethics Law for Town Employees.

Respectfully submitted by the Woodstock Ethics Board – January 20, 2026

## APPENDIX A to 2025 Annual Report of the Ethics Board

### **VOLUNTEER TOWN EMPLOYEES**

#### **Board of Assessment Review**

Stephan Pittelman

#### **Climate Smart Task Force**

Jonathan Heppner

Jessica Lunt

Bob Wolff

#### **Comeau Stewardship Advisory Committee**

Kaitlana Viglielmo

#### **Commission for Civic Design**

Cornelia Rosenblum

#### **Complete Streets Committee**

Kevin Bliss

Robyn Pollins

Mary Smith

#### **Housing Committee**

Deborah DeWan

Sabina Barach

Rebekah Brooks (form also not received in 2024)

Lisa Kirk (form also not received in 2024)

#### **Human Rights Commission**

Angela Ford Pasternack

#### **Tree Committee**

Carol March

Ed Sanders

#### **Youth Task Force**

Jason Glaser (form also not received in 2024)

Jacque Maganaro

Ben Schachter

#### **Woodstock Environmental Commission**

Evan Newman

Stacey Anderson

Susan Paynter

#### **Zoning Revision Committee**

Conor Wenk (form also not received in 2023 and 2022)

## **PAID TOWN EMPLOYEES**

### **Town Dispatch**

William Busch IV  
Christopher Ferris  
Dominic Nicholas  
Derek Olinsky  
Patrick Rose

### **Police**

Trevor Bailey  
Cheryl Benjamin (form also not received in 2023 and 2024)  
Tiffany Claud (form also not received in 2024)  
Tiffany Crozier (form also not received for 2023)  
Gabrielle LaLima  
Anthony Smith.