

MACOMB TOWNSHIP ETHICS BOARD
Minutes – February 11, 2021
Held Virtually by Zoom
6:00 PM

PRESENT: Tom Champion, Chairman
Tony DeVillano, Co-Chair
Ron Papa, Secretary

ALSO PRESENT: Terri Kowal, Township Liaison
Beth Wheeler, Asst. Township Liaison

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Champion at 6:04 pm.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. ROLL CALL

The roll was called by Secretary Papa. All members were in attendance.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by DeVillano, Seconded by Papa.

Roll Call:

Ayes: Delvillano, Papa, Champion

Motion Carried.

5. NEW BUSINESS

Discussion of Model Ethics Ordinance - State of MI

Mr. Papa pointed out that the Model mentions that the Ethics Ordinance can be either punitive or inspirational. He would like to see the “aspirational” aspect of the ordinance be used rather than punitive.

Mr. Champion stated that he had found an additional source for the Board to use. It is a paper written by the Michigan Attorneys Association for Municipalities regarding ethics. He would like the Board to read that also, and perhaps between that document and the State Model we could come up with amendments to our ordinance and rules of order.

The present ordinance was discussed among the members. The general consensus was that the current one was weak in areas and missed some necessary steps.

Mr. Papa pointed out that he had drafted a document that included items he'd like included with the ordinance.

The Board wishes to review the ordinance section by section. Mr. Papa questioned at which point of the review he should add his sections for discussion: section by section or the whole document at the end? Liaison Kowal stated perhaps we could discuss it concurrently with the sections, and add them in where appropriate.

Mr. DelVillano agreed that the ordinance should be dissected section by section.

Mr. Papa mentioned that the previous Ethics Committee, who helped draft the ordinance, had reached out to Macomb County and has some input from the County Ethics Committee. They are a good source for forms, etc..

6. OLD BUSINESS

7. * PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were two attendees on zoom, but no comments.

8. BOARD COMMENTS

9. MACOMB TOWNSHIP LIAISON UPDATE

Mrs. Kowal handed out copies of sections of the union contracts for the Board to read at their leisure. She pointed out that the limit of the value of gifts in the contract is \$100. She feels that is significantly higher than other municipalities. Mr. Chapman agrees that she should check and see what others allow. Mrs. Kowal reminded the members that they are a recommending body to the Board of Trustees as far as punitive assessments against employees or elected officials. The Board can reveal their findings and conclusions to the Board of Trustees and they alone have the authority to administer punishment. Mr. Champion stated we may wish to implement a "fine" scale, such as the county has. Mrs. Kowal replied that fines would also need to come to the Board of Trustees.

Mrs. Kowal suggested the Ethics Board decide soon about the value of allowable gifts, as a recommendation can be made to be considered in negotiations with the unions. Some of the contracts expire in June.

The next meeting will be on February 25, 2021.

10. ADJOURNMENT

The Chair called for a motion for adjournment.

Motion by DelVillano, seconded by Papa.

Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 6:46 pm.

Ron Papa, Secretary

Date