

MACOMB TOWNSHIP ADVISORY ETHICS COMMITTEE MEETING

WHERE: MACOMB TOWNSHIP TOWNHALL BOARD ROOM
54111 BROUGHTON MACOMB MI 48042
WHEN: MARCH 22, 2018 @ 7:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: STEVEN FERRARI
JAMES GELIOS
RICHARD MEIERLE
ROBERT MONTILLA
RICHARD PAUL
TOM SOKOL

ABSENT: None

Meeting was started at 7:00 p.m. by Facilitator Richard Paul.

Guest Speaker Dr. Donald Amboyer

Introductions by the board to guest speaker Dr. Don Amboyer.

Dr. Amboyer gave a summary of his credentials and his experience serving on the Macomb County Ethics Board for the past 6 years. There was a lengthy discussion with several questions by the board members answered. Dr. Amboyer made several suggestions concerning the drafting of the ordinance and what it needed to be successful. His suggestions included being specific in violations, build trust with the elected officials, violation consequences and rules of procedures, terms to be clearly stated. The goal of this ordinance is to prevent unethical behavior, to be a deterrent.

New Business

Discussion and comparison between Huron Township and Macomb County Ethics Ordinance. Members spoke about the pros and cons of each. Also discussed was an Ethics ordinance from Wisconsin, some of its highlights. The members decided to look at all the ordinances and decide which parts of each to use to develop an Ethics ordinance for Macomb Township.

Per discussion with the members and Dr. Amboyer, it was determined that a provision for a "whistleblower" provision should be separate from the ethics ordinance, as that can be handled by state law. The subject of retaliation discussed and can be implemented into the ethics ordinance. Also discussed was a provision to allow for advisory opinions by the board as well as all those affected by the ethics ordinance being educated and made aware of the ethics ordinance once adopted.

It was also determined that all those affected by the ethics, besides elected officials, includes appointees, employees; anyone who receives compensation from the township.

Terms of office for the Ethics board should be staggered within a time frame to be determined by the Township Board of Trustees. A township ordinance supersedes a township procedure.

Other items discussed included standards of conduct, specific definitions, nepotism, conflict of interest, personal gain, campaign contributions, etc.

A provision to include the sheriff department to investigate a complaint received once the ethics board determines there is cause to believe an offense has occurred. A provision to allow the ethics board to subpoena witnesses if needed as well as access to independent legal counsel should the need arise.

Time constraints for the filing, investigating procedure discussed.

Board stated the hearings are to be administrative in nature, to be clearly defined in the ethics ordinance.

Public Portion

Resident Kathy Western asked about the status of volunteers and vendors concerning an ethics ordinance to Dr. Amboyer. Dr. Amboyer stated if they receive compensation from the township, they would be considered appointees and would be subject to this ordinance. The key being anyone that gets paid by the township or has any dealings with the township government.

The board stated next meeting to go over both the Huron Twp and Macomb County ordinance to determine what to keep and delete from each, to build the Macomb Township ordinance. Member Gelios stated he would check on getting access to a computer for next meeting to aid in this project. He will also forward the last meeting minutes to the township clerk for record keeping.

Member Sokol will be the facilitator next meeting and will supply an agenda.

Finally, motion by Paul seconded by Sokol to approve the meeting minutes of March 6. Motion carried.

The next meeting will be April 12th at 7:00 p.m.

Meeting was adjourned by facilitator Paul at 9:05 p.m.



James Gelios, Recording Secretary