

BOARD OF ETHICS
MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING

AUGUST 29, 2023

A Special Meeting of the Board of Ethics of the Town of Wallingford was held on Tuesday, August 29, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. in Room 315 of the Wallingford Town Hall, 45 South Main Street, Wallingford, Connecticut.

Meeting called to order at 6:31 p.m.

In attendance: Members: Chairman Dean Warburton, Mary Paquette, Sean Doherty and Jon Venoit.

Also present: Craig Fishbein, Jason Zandri, Attorney Jeffrey Donofrio, Corporation Counsel Janis Small

1. Discussion regarding the hearing procedure for the complaint filed by Craig Fishbein against Jason Zandri, including the following:

a. Discussion of the procedures and sequence for the hearing;

Atty Donofrio asked if the parties would like to begin the hearing with opening statements. Both parties shared that they would like the option for opening statements based on the documentary evidence that is submitted.

Atty Donofrio shared the process of the hearing:

Complainant

Witnesses. Respondent can cross

Respondent

Witnesses. Complainant can cross

Complainant: Rebuttal

b. Discussion of the parties' witness lists, whether any subpoenas are requested and any other issues relating to witnesses;

Atty Donofrio asked both parties if they have witnesses they will be bringing. Both parties reserved the right to submit witnesses.

Atty Donofrio asked if both parties will be submitting subpoenas? Both parties responded, not at this time.

c. Discussion of the parties' exchange and pre-marking of exhibits and witness lists, and setting a deadline for the parties to complete same;

Atty Donofrio asked the parties to submit witness lists and documents (10) days prior to the hearing date. Parties are required to notify each other and Attorney Donofrio of any objections to proposed exhibits submitted within (5) days prior to the hearing. Both parties agreed.

d. Discussion of any preliminary matters raised by the parties;

Jason Zandri shared that he wants to focus on the 84 days that he was an officer of the Wallingford Grange, when the alleged violation of the Code of Ethics took place. Atty Donofrio responded that the hearing will be focused on what is contained within the complaint upon which the Board found probable cause and that the parties can present their respective arguments during the hearing on the merits.

Jason Zandri shared a social media photo with the complainant and Board of Ethics member Sean Doherty and asked if the Board of Ethics member had any bias towards the case. Sean Doherty responded that he did not have any bias towards the complainant and explained that invitations to tour the YMCA and Summer Camp activities were sent to all Town Councilors, Board of Education members, legislators and this was a photo taken from one of the visits. Sean Doherty shared that Jason Zandri also received the invitation and had the same opportunity for a tour and photo as the complainant. Attorney Donofrio inquired of Mr. Doherty whether the referenced professional activity would interfere with Mr. Doherty's ability to exercise independent judgment as a member of the Board of Ethics and Mr. Doherty confirmed that his independence remains intact.

e. Discussion of any matters regarding the hearing raised by the board;

No board members had any matters at this time.

f. Setting the hearing date;

It was determined that October 17, 2023, 6:30pm would be the date and time of the hearing. October 6, 2023 would be the deadline for both parties to exchange witness lists and exhibits and October 12 is the deadline for the parties to notify one another and Attorney Donofrio of any objections.

2. Adjournment.

Chairman Warburton thanked all parties for their time.

Mary Paquette made the motion to adjourn, seconded by Jon Venoit. All were in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 6:50 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Sean Doherty, Secretary