

# CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY ETHICS BOARD MEETING MINUTES

DATE: May 18, 2022

LOCATION: Rooms 331 & 333, Gerace Office Building, 3 North Erie Street,  
Mayville, New York 14757

TIME: 3:00 - 4:48 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: John Hamels  
Diane Hannum  
John Marengo  
David Rowe  
Stephanie Stevens

OTHERS PRESENT: Steve Abdella from County Law Department  
Amanda Gallagher from the County Executive's Office  
Frank J. Gould from the County Legislature Office  
Christine Schuyler from County Department of Health and Human  
Services  
Sharon Smead  
PJ Wendel from County Executive's Office  
Kristen Wright from the County Law Department

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## CALL TO ORDER & PUBLIC NOTIFICATION:

Dave called the meeting to order at 3 p.m.

Amanda confirmed proper public notification was completed as the notice of today's meeting was sent out to the local media and posted on the county website on May 4, 2022. She also confirmed that the meeting appeared in the Post-Journal's "Briefly" section on May 13, 2022.

## APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

John H. motioned to approve the minutes from the March 16, 2022 meeting, which was seconded by Diane. All in favor.

STATUS OF ANNUAL CODE OF ETHICS TRAINING FOR COUNTY EMPLOYEES AND BOARD MEMBERS:

Amanda provided an update on the 2022 Code of Ethics Training. The annual training was required to be completed by March 31, 2022 for all county employees and county board members. County board members are required to sign off that they received the Code of Ethics Training Materials and county employees are required to complete the trainings in the NEOGOV LEARN Training System. Employees had 2 or 3 ethics-related trainings to complete in system in order to satisfy their training requirement. Training reminder emails were sent out on 3/21/22 to 20 department Heads for a total of 511 county employees who still needed to complete the training and to 7 department heads for a total of 70 board members who still needed to complete the training.

Amanda reported that all county board members successfully completed the training by the 3/31/22 deadline. There were 89 employees who did not timely complete the training, which includes 66 people without a known exception and 23 people with known exceptions. There were 1,348 county employees who were issued the trainings and about 93% completed the training on time and 7% did not. In addition, no one who was late this year was late last year with meeting their training requirement.

Amanda also reported that Failure to Timely Complete Training letters were sent out to 66 individuals so they could decide if they would like to pay a fine, attend an Informal Settlement Conference, or request a hearing before the Ethics Board for their cases. These were assigned Case Numbers 2022-03 through 2022-68. Of the 66 employees, 40 did not do any of the trainings assigned to them by the deadline and 26 did some of the trainings assigned to them.

John M. motioned to enter into executive session to seek legal advice from the county attorney, which was seconded by John H. All in favor.

Executive session started at 3:06 p.m. with Smead and Gould leaving the meeting.

John M. motioned to exit executive session, which was seconded by Dave. All in favor. Executive session ended at 3:16 p.m.

Smead and Gould returned to the meeting at 3:16 p.m.

Abdella and Wendel asked the Board to show some leniency this year as all of the employees who were late in completing the training had no issues with satisfying their training requirement in the past. They also requested the Board take into consideration that this was the first time employees had to use the NEOGOV LEARN Training platform to complete their Ethics Training requirement. The Board could also consider giving these employees a grace period.

John H. motioned to give a 30-day grace period where the Ethics Board would not pursue a case and anyone who selected to pay the fine will be reimbursed or have their check returned to them, which was seconded by John M. All in favor.

Schuyler also made an administrative suggestion to the Board to have any of its emailed correspondence come from a general Ethics Board email address.

Steve, Chris and PJ left the meeting at 3:37 p.m.

Gould left the meeting at 3:38 p.m.

REVIEW COORESPONDENCE:

The Board reviewed documentation concerning Opinion #2022-01.

John M. motioned to recommend that what the Ethics Board can look at there is no conflict and the Board will send a response to the appropriate party, which was seconded by John H. All in favor.

Smead left the meeting at 3:59 p.m.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATES:

Stephanie was successfully appointed to the Ethics Board. Her term expires on 1/31/2025.

RETURN TO STATUS OF ANNUAL CODE OF ETHICS TRAINING:

Case files 2022-69 through 2022-76 were assigned to Department Heads who had employees who did not timely complete the ethics trainings.

John H. motioned to have County Executive Wendel speak with department heads who had employees that did not timely complete the ethics training, which was seconded by Diane. All in favor.

The Ethics Board also requested:

- an Ethics Board email address be established to send its emailed correspondence through,
- the Human Resources Department give Department Heads access to the NEOGOV LEARN training platform so they can easily see when their employees have complied with training requirements, and
- starting in 2023, 10 days before the training deadline department heads will be given reminders on Ethics Board letterhead to give to any of their employees who have not completed the training yet.

The Board also reviewed Extension Request Forms for the Training. ERF-T-03 through ERF-T-14 were all approved by the Board.

RETURN TO REVIEW COORESPONDENCE:

John M. reported that no mail was received in the Board's P.O. Box.

Amanda reported that other than responses to the Failure to Timely Complete Training letters, the Board did receive two assessor disclosure statements, which were returned to the individuals as the Ethics Board is not the appropriate entity to submit those documents to as they should be filed with the municipality's ethics board or with the County Clerk's Office. She also received the training letter from the Human Resources Department about the annual ethics training.

STATUS OF FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE FORMS AND ANNUAL FILING:

Amanda reported that Statements of Financial Disclosure for everyone that was required to file by the annual filing deadline of April 30, 2022 were all received on time and we had 100% compliance. So far for 2022, a total of 263 forms have been received and approved by the Board. There are forms still pending review, but so far there are 23 forms that were found to be incomplete and those individuals will be notified soon to correct their forms.

Amanda also reported that Extension Request Form # EFR-D-01 was received and approved on 4/22/22.

Extension Request Form# ERF-D-02 was reviewed by the Board. It approved the extension, but requested a letter be sent to the individual to ensure timely compliance with future ethics deadlines.

REVIEW AND APPROVE 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

John H. motioned to approve the 2021 Annual Report, which was seconded by Diane. All in favor with Stephanie abstaining from voting as she was not a board member in 2021.

VOTE FOR BOARD CHAIR AND SECRETARY

John H. motioned to have Dave Rowe serve as Ethics Board Chair and John M. to serve as Secretary, which was seconded by Stephanie. All in favor.

NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting of the Ethics Board is scheduled for September 21, 2022 at 3 p.m. in Rooms 331 & 333 of the Gerace Office Building, 3 N. Erie St. in Mayville, N.Y.

MOTION TO ADJOURN:

Dave motioned to adjourn the meeting at 4:48 p.m., which was seconded by Diane. All in favor.

Minutes prepared by Amanda Gallagher and respectfully submitted to John Marengo.