

## **TOWN BOARD WORK SESSION**

**JANUARY 23, 2013 AT 6:00 PM**

### **AT THE TOWN HALL**

Those Present:        Glenn E. Morey, Supervisor  
                             Donald F. Scheffler, Councilman  
                             Ellard L. Sovocool, Councilman  
                             Richard B. Gamel, Councilman  
                             Sheldon C. Clark, Councilman  
                             Fran Casullo, Attorney for the Town  
                             April Scheffler, Town Clerk  
                             Robin Cargian, Deputy Town Clerk

Also Present:         Elizabeth Snyder, Jen Schwade, Mike Goldstein

The purpose of the Work Session was to discuss the formation of a Board of Ethics. Attorney Casullo had provided the Board with an article that explained the basics of an ethics law, a model of a local ethics law, and copies of local ethics laws from the towns of Wellsville, Woodstock, and Vienna. Clerk Scheffler had provided a copy of an ethics law from the Town of Potsdam as well as the Town's Ethics Policy that was passed in February 2012.

Some of the local laws had a three-member board and some had a five-member board. The laws indicated that at least one member would be an elected or appointed employee of the Town. This was questioned as to whether an employee might be swayed to voted in favor of what the Town Board wanted or if it might look like that to the public. After referring to the enabling statutes of General Municipal Law it was found that the State law requires at least three members and at least one of them must be an employee of the Town.

The Board reviewed the various laws and pointed out sections that they liked and disliked. Some questions on certain wording and procedures arose. Supervisor Morey said he would like to see more definitions.

At the end of the discussion it was decided that we should have a five member ethics board, which would include one Town employee. Members will serve three-year, staggered terms. Attorney Casullo will take the best sections of each law and come up with a draft local law. He will also incorporate pertinent sections of the existing ethics policy and add some definitions. It was agreed by all that the local law should be kept to three or four pages and should be clearly written and easy to understand. He will have a draft ready before the February board meeting so that the Board can review and edit it, and then address any questions and discuss any changes.

Clerk Scheffler asked how the Open Meetings Law would apply and Attorney Casullo said he was sure that it would apply but he would look into whether there were any special rules for ethics boards, what the requirements are for notice of meetings, and whether they are allowed to go into executive session or not.

Supervisor Morey mentioned some people that he had in mind who might serve on the ethics board, but as yet he has only approached one of them. Councilman Scheffler also had some suggestions for possible candidates. Supervisor Morey asked Robin Cargian if she would consider being the employee representative.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:44 pm.

April L. Scheffler, RMC  
Town Clerk