

CITY OF STAMFORD
Board of Ethics

ANNUAL ADVISORY REPORT

Pursuant to
Section 19-4.E(2) of
The Stamford Municipal Code of Ethics

June 17, 2014

This Annual Advisory Report (the “Report”) has been prepared by the Board of Ethics of the City of Stamford (the “Board”), and is delivered to the Mayor and the President of the Board of Representatives pursuant to Section 19-4.E(2) of The Stamford Municipal Code of Ethics (the “Code”). It is for the period beginning June 30, 2013 (the date of the Board’s last Annual Report) and ending June 17, 2014 (the “Report Period”).

The Board engaged in the following activities during the Report Period:

1. New Board Members.

During the Report Period, the Board welcomed two new members: Adam Vandervoort and Michael Thomas.

2. Advisory Opinions.

During the Report Period, the Board received five requests for and issued five advisory opinions. Three of the requests involved questions of potential conflicts of interest concerning whether the officer’s employment, a spouses employment or their other municipal service would create a conflict of interest with their service, voting or other participation on a municipal board or commission. The other two requests involved questions regarding the Code’s prohibition on officer’s receiving gifts and the propriety of attending events in their official capacity at which food and entertainment will be provided to them.

3. Formal Complaints.

During the Report Period, the Board received and responded to one formal complaint. The Investigating Panel assigned to the complaint found probable cause to hold a hearing but, pursuant to a provision recently added to the Code, the Investigating Panel entered into a stipulated agreement with the respondent, which obviated the need for a hearing.

4. Training

During this past summer, the Board received Freedom of Information training; initial training for the three members that joined last year and a refresher for the remaining members. The Board will schedule another training session this summer. Chairperson Bader attended a Connecticut Conference of Municipalities seminar entitled: *Ethics, Accountability, and Conflicts of Interest* in February.

5. Administrative

The Board was delighted to be assigned dedicated administrative support to assist the Board in its work. Beginning July 2014, in order to accommodate anticipated requests for Advisory Opinions in a predictable and timely manner, the Board will schedule to meet on the first Monday of each month at 7PM. If there are no open issues to address, this scheduled meeting may from month to month be cancelled. The specific dates of these regularly scheduled meetings will be posted to the Stamford Government Center website.

6. Drafting Guidelines

Given the number of recent requests for advisory opinions concerning whether an officer or employee may attend events at which food, beverages or entertainment are provided to that officer or employee, the Board has undertaken to review the Code and to provide a set of guidelines that can be accessed on our web page to help individuals interpret section 19-9(B)(3) of the Code.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board has been reviewing the Code and has met with Corporation Counsel in order to recommend to the Board of Representatives changes and clarifications to provisions of the Code. The Board has not completed drafting its recommendations but intends to have a set of recommendation for review by the Board of Representatives and the Mayor shortly.