



# Town of Shelburne, Vermont

CHARTERED 1763

P.O. BOX 88 5420 SHELBURNE ROAD SHELBURNE, VT 05482

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Clerk/Treasurer (802) 985-5116	Town Manager (802) 985-5111	Zoning & Planning (802) 985-5118	Assessor (802) 985-5115	Recreation (802) 985-5110	FAX Number (802) 985-9550
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Shelburne Ethics Committee  
Draft Meeting Minutes  
November 4, 2016

Attendance: Committee Members Lee Suskin, Tom Little, Bill Deming  
Also present: Peter Frankenburg, Town Finance Officer

- 1) Call to Order. Lee Suskin, Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:14 am.
- 2) Review of Agenda. The Committee reviewed the proposed Agenda and made no changes to it. A copy of the Agenda is attached to these Minutes.
- 3) Public Comment. No one from the general public appeared and spoke.
- 4) Review of Minutes of September 13 and 14, 2016 Meetings. The Committee reviewed the draft Minutes of its last two meetings, September 13 and 14, 2016, and approved them.
- 5) Discussion of Planning the Committee's FY 2017 Budget. The Chair invited Peter Frankenburg to explain how the Town budget supports the Committee; there is a \$1,500 line item for expenses of all Committees, Boards and Commissions for, e.g., attendance at a training session. The Ethics Committee's expenses would come out of that budget line item. The Board of Civil Authority has a line item under the Town Clerk's portion of the budget.

Chair Suskin asked about how the Committee would go about hiring an attorney for advice in the event that the Committee had to hold a contested hearing. Peter suggested that the Committee Chair could check in with the Town Manager or Selectboard and likely receive clearance to hire an attorney. There was discussion about whether and how much the Committee should ask for in a line item. Tom suggested that an alternative would be to establish a clear and workable process for the Committee to request funds for Committee expenses. Peter said that it would not be advisable for any committee to budget funds each year and never spend them. He also indicated that the Town will pay legitimate expenses incurred for Committee business.

Tom suggested that the Committee advise the Selectboard and Town Manager if the Committee ever needs to incur expenses in the context of holding hearings, and then proceed to incur them on the understanding that the Town will pay them. Moved, seconded and approved.

- 6) Review of the Ethics Ordinance. The Chair led a discussion of the ordinance and at a high level the role and purpose of the Committee. Is the Committee functioning successfully? There have been no complaints filed. Do townspeople know that the Committee exists? Are there unreported issues that

should be addressed? Should the Committee have authority to issue advisory decisions? Are we a “watchdog” committee? Likely the answer is ‘no,’ as the Committee is designed to react to filed complaints. The members agreed to continue this discussion at the next Committee meeting.

7) Next Meeting. The Chair will call a special meeting of the Committee for later in the month to continue these discussions.

8) Clerk of the Committee. The Committee reviewed this part of the ordinance. Tom said that serving as Clerk *pro tempore* is not a burden and he agreed to continue to serve in that capacity. The Chair will ask the new Town Clerk to attend a future Committee meeting to get her acquainted with the Committee’s work.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:09 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas A. Little  
Clerk *Pro Tempore*