

ETHICS COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING

February 10, 2022
Via Teleconference

FINAL MINUTES

A special meeting of the Ethics Commission was held virtually on Thursday, February 10, 2022, at 5:00 pm. A recording of the meeting can be found on the following link:

[Meeting Recordings - Town of Fairfield, Connecticut \(fairfieldct.org\)](https://www.fairfieldct.org/MeetingRecordings)

Members Present: Chairman Alex Trembicki, Nancy Billington, Brian Cantor, Dana Kery and Craig Van Steenberg

1. Chairman Trembicki called the meeting to order at 5:01 pm

2. Consideration of Request for Advisory Opinion by Town Attorney, James T. Baldwin

Previously James T. Baldwin, submitted an e-mail request to Ethics Commission Chairman Trembicki, dated December 5, 2021, asking for the Commission's opinions on two (2) possible scenarios that could arise in the future. Scenario A would be where a member of a town board/commission is also an expert in the field associated with the board/commission and Scenario B would be where a member of a board/commission is a professional in the field associated with board/commission that is issuing a Request for Proposal (RFP) for professional services and the member wishes to submit a proposal under the RFP process to do the work.

Also, previously, Attorney Baldwin participated in a Special Meeting teleconference (on December 16, 2021) and asked the commission to hear, consider and act upon his request. He gave no opinion to the commission at that time. Upon completion of the Special Meeting teleconference, there was a consensus of the Commission that an additional Special Meeting was required.

During the February 10, 2022 meeting, Commissioner Cantor referred to the minutes of an Ethics Commission Meeting held on August 28, 2017 where the recusal of Town Commission members was discussed. Commissioner Cantor asked the Commission to consider whether members of various Town Commissions and/or Committees should recuse themselves from voting on matters where there may be the perception of a conflict of interest. Chairman Trembicki agreed that it is not in the best interest of a Town Commission and/or Committee to have the appearance that any member of a Commission/Committee is benefiting personally from any Commission/Committee decision(s).

There was a consensus of the Commissioners that "dual representation", as in serving on a Town Commission/Committee while also providing service to a private client that could benefit from any Commission/Committee decisions, is not advised.

Chairman Trembicki has volunteered to draft a letter advising Attorney Baldwin, as to the Standards of Conduct expected of Town Commission/Committee members, as they relate to recusal. The letter will include the recommendation that procedures should be put in place by the Town Attorney's office should the scenario arise where a recusal would be in the best interest of the Town. It would be the expectation of the Ethics Commission that the Town Attorney will render an opinion and further advise the Commission.

Another Special Meeting is anticipated and potentially scheduled for March 2022, to consider the opinion of the Town Attorney as it relates to Chairman Trembicki's letter, yet to be drafted.

3. Adjournment

A motion was made by Commissioner Billington and seconded by Commissioner Cantor to adjourn the meeting at 5:18 pm. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by

Craig Van Steenbergen/Secretary Ethics Commission