

SHARED ETHICS ADVISORY COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes
March 21, 2018

Pledge and
Call to Order:

President Klein called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Introductions:

In attendance were Commission members Calvin Bellamy, Art Burkman, Patricia Earnest, Connie Gramarossa, Dan Klein, Bill Kuhn, Julie McElmurray, Michael McIntyre, Art Russell, Courtney Smith, Lynn Volkmann and Jamie Ward. Others present included Karen Marben, Tom DeGiulio and Mary Thorne.

Dyer Representative: Julie McElmurray was introduced as the representative to the Commission from Dyer.

Approval of Minutes: On a motion by Commissioner Burkman and a second by Commissioner Lynn Volkmann, the Commission voted to accept the minutes of the January 17 meeting as presented.

Financial Report: Commissioner Bellamy said there is a significant amount of reserves. SEAC did not do a budget last year. The Board of Delegates will meet on April 13; they approve the budget. Commissioner Bellamy said SEAC has only spent about \$1,200 since January, but the Summit is coming up. SEAC still has \$20,197.93 left from the previous approval by the Board of Delegates. The "legacy" money received from the initial communities should be used for something significant.

President's Report: NIRPC bills the SEAC quarterly, with the next quarter billing coming in April. The cost of the work contracted with NIRPC was covered for the last two years by the Discovery Alliance grant. Karen Marben acquired a \$2,500 NIPSCO community outreach grant this year. The Alliance said we should use \$6,500 on the summit with the balance on the website. The summit expense will be about \$6,000. Next year we will be doing the employee survey. Commissioner McElmurray will ask Rick at NIPSCO about other grant opportunities.

Commissioner Bellamy said he met with Mark Krentz and will make a follow up visit. Commissioner Gramarossa said Tom Dermody will be running for mayor of La Porte next year. Commissioners Bellamy and Klein visited US Attorney Tom Kirsch, who has committed to speak at next year's summit. He is sending a couple of his staff to the summit this year.

A third invitation email was received for World Civility Day at the Welcome Center from Chuck Hughes. Communities contribute to our organization for training purposes and we should stay true to our mission. On a motion by Courtney Smith and a second by Julie McElmurray, the Commission voted to decline the invitation for World Civility Day. President Klein said

he will email the invitation out for the April 12 event if anyone wanted to attend on their own.

2017 Annual Report: Commissioner Bellamy said the report was distributed and approved at the last meeting and also distributed to every county commissioner, county councilman, mayor, council president and town manager.

Marketing Committee Report:

Commissioner Bellamy said the Commission's two big projects are the Summit and the Candidate's Ethics Action Pledge. The three counties provide ballot lists and SEAC received the names of about 380 candidates. Another invitation will go out in about two weeks to those who have not yet responded. Incumbents still need to sign the pledge, even if they have previously signed one. A letter was sent to the six county chairmen for both parties. The deadline is April 20. President Klein will send a copy of the pledge to the Commission who should, in turn, encourage their incumbents to sign.

Over 200 people have made reservations for the summit thus far. It will be held at the Avalon. Father Link is the keynote speaker; he has a ministry at Michigan City State Prison. There will be some case studies with the use of keypad polling to identify the most serious ethics issues. NIRPC staff maintains our master mailing list and Lake County Advancement Committee sends our invitation to their mailing list. We also asked the Lake County Bar and Lakeshore, Valparaiso and Crossroads Chambers to send them out as well.

Training Committee Report:

Commissioner Ward said he will send his reply to an email sent by the Commission via email to all the Commission members. Training municipal employees who then train their co-workers. We train the trainers within each of the communities. The next training session will be on April 26 from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. at NIRPC. The Commissioners will share this information with their communities to see if they have a need for trainers. There is a training manual notebook to help them train their staff. A survey will be provided next year to see how we are doing. Commissioner Ward will provide a list of each community's trainers.

On the evening of September 27, Board and Commissioner training will be held. Mr. Dworkin will provide training this year in Lake County, location to be determined.

Strategic/Future Direction Report:

Commissioner Smith said the committee met on January 25 in Merrillville. They edited the mission statement. It now reads, "Bringing commitment to ethical behavior through training, serving and engaging our communities." The vision statement reads, "A future where northwest Indiana has developed into a region known for strong ethical behavior." Our values are essentially the SEAC Code of Ethics, which is on the website at sharedethics.com. Discussion also focused on 2018 goals. This is the year for employee ethics training and we will operationalize it with the April

26 Train the Trainers session to help communities bring in new trainers. The surveys will come back to us in 2019.

The financial sustainability cycle will remain at two years, with the survey every three years. We need grant writers who can apply for available grants. Opportunities include Anderson Foundation, Legacy Foundation, the Porter County Community Foundation, the Crown Point Legacy Foundation and the Dean and Barbara White Foundation. We will need grants to keep our sustainability. We spent \$20,000 last year and we only brought in \$11,000 in grants. We will run out of money in seven years.

The committee discussed a shared ethics officer as is called for in our interlocal agreement. The position has been open for the last two years so we need to determine if an advisor is really necessary. Commissioner Bellamy explained that the advisor did a lot of administrative support for which we have now contracted with NIRPC. There may be some sort of continuing education opportunity or occasional guest commentary. Rick Hugg, retired IUN professor, might be a good candidate. He does all the calculations for the survey and will emcee the Summit.

Commission Member
Expectations:

Commissioner Smith said a lot of communities have been asking for training for elected officials. Training for elected is a big gap but not a part of our purveyance. That might be something for AIM. We have no authority to tell them to do any training. Commissioner McElmurray said she gave a very short presentation on SEAC to her town council, which was well-received. President Klein suggested the committee review our position and report back at the next meeting.

Taking SEAC to
The Next Level:

President Klein shared a paper on the commission members, their qualifications and their duties to bring awareness of the SEAC to their communities. The website is being updated. His suggestion to create a member page with a photo and short biography justifying their appointment to the SEAC was met with mixed feelings. No contact information would be provided. Opposition was mainly that it is a privacy issue and that it wasn't necessary and also that SEAC members could be inundated with calls about illegal activities within their governmental office which SEAC can't take any action. A disclaimer would have to be added. President Klein will email the Commissioners.

Adjourn:

On a motion by Commissioner Smith and a second by Commissioner Burkman, President Klein adjourned the meeting at 9:50 a.m.