

# GLASTONBURY ETHICS COMMISSION

## MEETING MINUTES

MONDAY, April 1, 2024, 7:00 PM

TOWN HALL, Meeting Room A  
2155 MAIN STREET, GLASTONBURY

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Oppenheimer at 7:05 P.M.

### 1. Roll Call

#### *Present*

Brooke Oppenheimer, Chair

James Hagen, Vice Chair

Al Herzog

Angela Bull

Nancy Thomas, Alternate {excused}

Wes Schlauder, Alternate {appointed as a full voting member}

Also present was Jean M. D'Aquila, counsel to the Ethics Commission.

*Motion by:* Commissioner Bull

*Seconded by:* Commissioner Hagen

To appoint Wes Schlauder, Alternate, as a full voting member.

*Result:* Motion passed unanimously {5-0-0}.

### 2. Review and approval of minutes of January 8, 2024 meeting

The Commissioners reviewed the minutes of the January 8, 2024 meeting, as posted on the Town website.

*Motion by:* Commissioner Hagen

*Seconded by:* Commissioner Schlauder

*Result:* Motion to approve the minutes passed unanimously {5-0-0}.

### 3. Review of Request for an Advisory Opinion #24-1

Ms. D'Aquila explained that Mr. Cofiell is a member of the Board of Fire Commissioners, who is also the owner of a power equipment business that sells and services many of the Town's different departments. In his request for an advisory opinion, he noted that he does not make any

of the day-to-day purchases for the fire department. Mr. Cofiell has identified what could be a conflict of interest and is asking the commission to weigh in on this matter.

Ms. Oppenheimer stated the Mr. Cofiell reported in his inquiry that the expenses and purchases are handled by the Fire Chief's office, not the Board of Fire Commissioners. Ms. Bull asked if Mr. Cofiell has oversight of their budget through his position on the Board. Mr. Schlauder asked if the Board has oversight over the hiring of the Fire Chief. Even if he does have that oversight, Mr. Schlauder questions its relevance, but it could be perceived by the public as a conflict of interest. Ms. Oppenheimer agreed.

Ms. D'Aquila stated that no conclusion needs to be reached tonight. She will look into answering the following questions that were raised:

1. As a member of the Board of Fire Commissioners, does this member have influence or participation in the budget? And if so, to what level.
2. Does this member have oversight over the appointment of the Fire Chief?

Ms. D'Aquila suggested looking at section 2-65, subsection c, regarding conflict of interest. In this case, there is no indication if Mr. Cofiell has brought this matter before his fellow board members, so that would be the first step. She suggested that, if a vote ever came before the board to purchase orders from his business, that he recuse himself. Ms. Bull would like to advise the member to recuse himself whenever a potential conflict of interest, or the perception of one, appears. Ms. D'Aquila noted that the commission can ask Mr. Cofiell to pay attention to particular sections of the code that might come into play.

She then suggested the following language as a motion:

*Be wary should something come before you in your capacity as a member of the Board of Fire Commissioners where there is a potential for a real or perceived conflict of interest because the matter could impact your business, consider recusing or seeking further guidance from this commission.*

#### **4. Possible action on Request for an Advisory Opinion #24-1**

**Motion by:** Commissioner Bull

**Seconded by:** Commissioner Schlauder

To include a note of thanks to Mr. Cofiell, and advice on reporting the potential conflict of interest to fellow commissioners on the Board of Fire Commissioners, as well as the suggestion that if something comes before the Board of Fire Commissioners that is a real or perceived conflict of interest because the matter could impact Mr. Cofiell's business, to consider recusing himself or seeking further guidance from this commission. See in particular sections 2-64 through 2-66 of the Ethics Code regarding conflicts of interest.

**Result:** Motion passed unanimously {5-0-0}.

**5. Other business**      *None.*

**6. Adjournment**

**Motion By:** Commissioner Bull

**Seconded By:** Commissioner Hagen

Moved that the Glastonbury Ethics Commission hereby adjourns its regular meeting of April 1, 2024 at 7:29 p.m.

**Result:** Motion to adjourn passed unanimously (5-0-0).

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Lilly Torosyan**  
**Recording Clerk**

**Brooke Oppenheimer**  
**Chair**