

MINUTES OF NORWICH ETHICS COMMISSION MEETING
SEPTEMBER 11, 2023
CITY HALL, ROOM 319

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Scott Camassar, Vice Chair Karen Lucas and Robin Lawson

MEMBERS ABSENT: All present

ALTERNATES PRESENT: Robert Drozynski and Lori Ploof. Lori Ploof was seated as a regular voting member.

ALTERNATES ABSENT: All present

OTHERS PRESENT: John Iovino, Claire Bessette of The Day and Melinda Wilson, Recording Secretary

1. Call to order: Chair Scott Camassar called the September 11, 2023, meeting to order at 5:06 PM.
2. Determination of Quorum: It was determined a quorum was present.
3. Approval of Minutes: The February 13, 2023, minutes will be addressed at the next meeting.
4. Citizen Comment: None presented.
5. Old Business: None presented.
6. New Business:

a. Advisory Opinion 2023 – 2

Chair Camassar noted the Request for Advisory Opinion had been emailed to commissioners prior to the meeting. John Iovino was present to answer questions regarding his inquiry into potential ethics conflicts of his potential consulting position with Norwich Free Academy and run for a position on the Norwich Board of Education.

Discussion ensued. In response to questions from Chair Camassar and Ms. Lawson, Mr. Iovino offered background information. He has decades of historical knowledge to provide to the new Norwich Free Academy administration. He has not yet negotiated a contract to provide consulting services.

The Ethics Commission came to consensus that Mr. Iovino would not receive a fiduciary benefit under the potential arrangement.

On a motion by Robin Lawson, seconded by Lori Ploof, the Ethics Commission unanimously agreed no conflict of interest was found with John Iovino serving simultaneously in the two roles.

Chair Camassar informed the Ethics Commission he will draft a response including a suggestion to Mr. Iovino to be mindful of the Code of Ethics. He will share the response with the Ethics Commission membership prior to finalizing it.

b. Advisory Opinion 2023 - 3

Chair Camassar noted the Request for Advisory Opinion had been emailed to members of the Ethics Commission well in advance of the meeting. Alderman William Nash submitted a letter to the Ethics Commission in support of his request as to whether a Conflict of Interest (COI) would arise regarding an issue with him employment and service on the City Council. He is employed by M&M Group, 33 Wisconsin Avenue, Norwich. The owner of M&M, Michael Grill, is establishing a fire-for-hire private fire department in Norwich and outlying communities. Alderman Nash has requested clarification of a potential COI if he were to promote the program to the City Council and Public Safety Committee.

Discussion among the members of the Ethics Commission ensued. Consensus was reached.

On a motion by Robin Lawson, seconded by Karen Lucas, the Ethics Commission unanimously agreed the promoting the new business of his employer would present or appear to present a Conflict of Interest.

Chair Camassar informed the Ethics Commission he will draft a response to Alderman Nash including a suggestion to recuse himself of any vote on the matter by the City Council. He will share the draft with Ethics Commission members prior to finalizing it.

7. Adjournment: On a motion to adjourn by Robin Lawson, seconded by Karen Lucas, the meeting of the Ethics Commission unanimously adjourned at 5:25 PM.