

Town of Red Hook Ethics Board Minutes

Friday, November 19, 2010

Attendance: Fred Cartier, Susan Goldstein, Linda Keeling Gail Nussbaum, Susan Simon and Christine Chale- Attorney of the Town, Harry Colgan –liaison with the Town Board

Guests: William O’Neill, (Brenda Cagle and Brent Kovalchik were invited in to be asked a couple of questions to clarify issues later in the meeting. They were not present when Linda Keeling and Bill O’Neill were making their statements to the Board.)

Location: Town Hall, Conference Room

Call to Order: Chairman Fred Cartier called the meeting to order at 8:05 am.

Agenda

1-Presented the draft minutes for the October 15, 2010, passed unanimously on motion by Susan Goldstein and seconded by Susan Simon after several corrections were made.

2- Chris Chale distributed material on Ethics from the controller’s office of New York State for our reading.

3- The Board has received a notarized “Complaint by Linda Keeling against Councilman Bill O’Neill for personal verbal attacks and that he threatened to remove Linda Keeling from the Ethics Board.” (3-2010)

Discussion:

Linda Keeling recused herself as a Member of the Ethics Board because she filed the Complaint.

The Chairman invited each of the parties to make statements for about 5-10 minutes.

Following their presentations, questions and discussion were made between them, and the Ethics Board.

On Motion by Susan Simon and seconded by Susan Goldstein the Ethics Board moved to go into Executive session, passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Susan Simon to close the Executive session, seconded by Gail Nussbaum, passed unanimously. Following the Executive session, Linda Keeling was not available as she had previously recused herself from the meeting.

The Ethics Board invited Brent Kovalchik and Brenda Cagle, who were at the Task Force meeting on November 12, 2010, to join the meeting to answer a couple of questions:

“Can you tell us what you heard and saw in relationship to anything that Mr. O’Neill said in relationship to Linda Keeling’s position on the Ethics Board and in terms of the style of the interaction between the two at the meeting on Friday 12th of November?” Brenda Cagle stated, “ for the Ethics part of the question, Linda expressed that when the report of the Intermunicipal Task Force is presented to the Town Board that Harry Colgan and Bill O’Neill should not vote on it as Linda felt it would be a conflict of interest.”

“Secondly, what were your observations about the interactions in that meeting between Linda Keeling and Bill O’Neill?” Brenda Cagle, stated, “that he was harsh, he knows my feelings, and Linda Keeling was animated as well.” Brent Kovalchik explained that, “Bill O’Neill was frustrated about misinformation about the Task Force’s projects that had been disseminated by Linda Keeling.” Linda Keeling had admitted earlier, that she operates as a paid lobbyist for persons she would not name.

“Bill did confront her with direct questions as to the way they spread their information and its truthfulness. The tone was “confrontational dialogue,” said Brent.

Both agreed that there was no physically or threatening behavior as Bill O’Neill and Linda Keeling sat across the table from each other, Finally, did you hear any personal comments about her person being threatened- both responded “no.”

There were no further questions and were thanked by the Board as they left the room.

Susan Goldstein moved that we go into Executive session to continue our discussions, seconded by Susan Simon, passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Gail Nussbaum to close the Executive session, seconded by Susan Goldstein, passed unanimously.

Susan Goldstein made the motion that Complaint (3-2010) -The Ethics Board finds that the Complaint (3-2010) is unfounded with no validity to the complaint; further there was no threat to Linda Keeling’s position on the Ethics Board; and further there was no personal or physical attack or threat made by Mr. O’Neill. Seconded by Susan Simon, passed unanimously.

Other Business:

Next Meeting: The next meeting, if needed, would be in February, 2011.

Meeting Ended: Susan Simon motioned to end the meeting, Gail Nussbaum seconded passed unanimously. The meeting ended at 9:25 a.m.

Fred C. Cartier
Ethics Board Chairman and Recording Secretary
Revised by,
Toni Cochran
Recording Secretary