

City of Valparaiso Ethics Commission Meeting Minutes Tuesday, November 11, 2014, 5:30-6:30pm, Valparaiso City Hall

Attending were Analisa Warring (Chair), Bill Oeding (City Ethics Officer/Ex Officio), Dr. James Old (member), Mike Porter (member), Tim Sutherland (Secretary), and Dr. Rob Walsh (new member). Jon Schmaltz (Advising Attorney/Ex Officio) was unable to attend. No one attended from the media.

The Commission met first in Executive Session. At 5:35 Chair Analisa Warring called the meeting to order, with more than a quorum present. The prior meeting minutes from October 7, 2014 were approved, and well as the proposed agenda for the current meeting.

The group welcomed new member Dr. Rob(ert) Walsh. Analisa and Bill met with Rob prior to the meeting to provide orientation information about the Commission and its work. The Commission website has been recently updated (<http://www.ci.valparaiso.in.us/index.aspx?NID=116>), and Rob's contact information needs to be added.

With the Commission back to a full membership, the group revisited plans to begin meeting with various city departments and commissions for 5-15 minute brief presentations about ethics. Previous Chair Dorothy Bass met with the City Council, Mayor Costas, and the City's Leadership Team. The previously created PowerPoint presentation is available. Additional groups suggested for visits include Board of Zoning Appeals, Parks Dept., Planning Commission, and Redevelopment Commission. In addition to visits other ways to publicize the importance of ethics are through Employee Handbook, Employee Newsletter, City Newsletter, survey of employees, and through more formal ethics training sessions for employees (with perhaps a "trainer the trainer" component). Visibility from the Commission to promote ethics is important. Perceptions are often as important as following written rules when it comes to ethical behaviors.

The group discussed possible membership in the Northwest Indiana Shared Ethics Commission. The Valpo Ethics Commission has been active for many years, and has been an example for many other area communities, however the Commission to date has not joined the regional group. Bill stated that the Mayor's position is that it is up to the Valpo Commission to decide if there is value to join the regional group, and indicated if so there would be funding to pay the membership fee. Cal Bellamy from the Shared Ethics Commission will be invited to attend a Valpo Commission meeting early in 2015.

The group adjourned at approximately 6:30pm. The next meeting of the Commission will be on Tuesday, January 13, at City Hall, with executive session at 5:30 (if needed), and regular session at 5:35. Minutes submitted by Tim Sutherland.