

City of Valparaiso Ethics Commission Meeting Minutes
Thursday, April 8, 2014, 6:00-7:30pm, Valparaiso City Hall

Attending were Dorothy Bass (Chair), Bill Oeding (City Ethics Officer/Ex Officio), Mike Porter (member), Jon Schmaltz (Advising Attorney/Ex Officio), Tim Sutherland (Secretary), and Analisa Warring (member). Julie Harvey was unable to attend. Phil Wieland from the media (NWI Times) attended part of the meeting.

Chair Dorothy Bass called the regular open meeting to order, with a quorum present. The meeting's agenda and minutes (from the March 6 meeting) were both approved.

Bill and Tim reported they attended an excellent Shared Ethics Advisory Commission annual breakfast meeting in Merrillville on March 13 with keynote speaker Lee Hamilton. It was noted that the Porter County Board of Commissioners has voted to join the Shared Ethics Advisory Commission. It will be good to have this heightened ethics focus at the county government level.

The group then reviewed the Commission brochure and the shortened version of PowerPoint presentation slides and discussed any improvements needed; and then also used the opportunity to prepare for the next presentation to a City department or commission. The group agreed that the essence of the presentation is 1) to talk about what ethics is and what it means to you, 2) discuss how ethics relates to city government, 3) review the purpose of the Ethics Commission, and 4) emphasize the overall goal to build/maintain a community of trust. Analisa said she would forward "scenarios" or examples of real world ethical dilemmas that can also be used to elicit discussion at meetings and events. The group listed Board of Public Works, Board of Zoning Appeals, City Council, Park Board, Planning Commission, and Redevelopment Commission as groups to possibly receive a presentation in coming months.

The next meeting of the commission will be on Tues., May 13, at City Hall, with executive session at 6:00 (if needed) and regular session at 6:05. Tentatively it was decided that Analisa and Commission members would make a presentation to the Planning Commission meeting at 7pm (immediately following the Commission meeting).

Minutes submitted by Tim Sutherland.