

MINUTES OF THE SKOKIE OFFICIALS ETHICS COMMISSION
OF THE HEARING HELD WEDNESDAY, JUNE 7TH, 2023

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 PM. Present were Chairman Mr. Minkus, Mr. Leonard Matanky, Mr. Richard Lanford of the Commission, and Attorney James Ferolo for the Commission.

There was roll call, unanimous approval of the minutes of the May 3rd meeting, and a motion made and passed unanimously to approve the rules regarding procedures for the hearing relating to the pending Ethics Commission Complaint.

Public Comment was heard. Comments were made by Kim Polka and Judy Mandel. The former urged the Commission to pay attention to even the appearance of impropriety or ethical violations – hold our Village Officers to certain ethical standards – while acknowledging we (the Commission) operate within the walls of codes and laws. The latter commented that there’s a “fuzzy thing” between who’s a Village Officer and who’s an employee.

The Evidentiary Hearing on James Johnson’s April 12, 2023 Ethics Complaint Commenced

The hearing was transcribed by a court reporter thus it will not be recounted in these minutes. The hearing began with Mr. Dorf’s motion to dismiss the complaint on the basis that Mr. McCarthy’s as an Officer of the Village is not subject to the Prohibited Political Activity prohibitions contained in the Village Code. Attorney Mr. Ferolo addressed this stating in the Village Code the Prohibited Political Activity provisions of the State Law are made applicable to Village Officers; thus, the prohibitions do apply to Mr. McCarthy.

Both Mr. Johnson and Counsel for James McCarthy provided Opening Statements.

Complainant’s Presentation consisted of testimony from James Johnson and Maggie Van der Meer. Both were cross examined by counsel for James McCarthy.

Respondent’s Presentation consisted of testimony from Julian Prendi, Director of Finance for the Village of Skokie, and from James McCarthy. Both were cross examined by James Johnson.

Closing Statements were given by both sides.

At 8:50 PM the Officer Ethics Commission left to enter Executive Session pursuant to a motion to enter into Executive Session under Sections 2(c)(4) and 2(c)(21) of the Open Meetings Act. The motion was unanimously approved by a roll call vote.

At 9:23 PM the Commission returned to open session pursuant to a voice vote. It then voted unanimously to dismiss the Ethics Complaint by a roll call vote finding that James McCarthy was not guilty of a violation of the Skokie Code of Ethics as alleged in the Complaint. The Commission then voted unanimously by roll call vote to direct counsel for the Commission to draft a Written Decision in accordance with its deliberations and decision to dismiss the pending Complaint. The meeting was adjourned pursuant to motion at 9:26 PM.

Approved this 5th day of July, 2023.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Richard Lanford, Secretary
