

SHARED ETHICS ADVISORY COMMISSION

2010 Annual Report

Report to the Communities of
Crown Point, Highland, Munster, Schererville and Whiting

SHARED ETHICS ADVISORY COMMISSION

2010 Annual Report

We are pleased to submit this report to our member communities pursuant to Article 6 (c) of the Interlocal Agreement that established the Shared Ethics Advisory Commission (Commission). The Commission's principal activities during the calendar year 2010 are summarized in the following paragraphs of this report.

Commission Membership and Organization

As with many other items noted in this report, 2010 was a year of transition for the Commission itself. Two of our original members left the Commission, **Herman Barber** because of the press of other business and **Leroy Fassett** at the end of his term. These two members served the Commission very well and we are fortunate that their respective communities (Crown Point and Highland) identified able replacements who began their service in 2011. In addition, Whiting had previously identified a candidate for its seat. However, this individual was not able to serve. Mayor Stahura was able to identify another candidate, **Brian Lowry**, who was welcomed at the Commission's May meeting. The Town of Schererville reappointed **Tom Dykiel** as their representative. Calumet College President **Dennis Rittenmeyer** was chosen by the Commission to serve as an at large member succeeding IUN Professor **Anja Matwijkiw**.

Our Shared Ethics Officer **Lloyd Lowe**, who served the Commission with distinction, announced that he wished to retire and the Commission began a search for a successor. The new Shared Ethics Officer, **Joseph Pellicciotti**, was identified in late 2010 and formally accepted the position in early 2011.

The Commission, noting its solid financial situation and also hoping to stimulate additional community membership, modified our dues structure. Payment of the enrollment fees for new members was spread out over a two year period and the annual fee charged to member communities was reduced.

Employee Survey

Late in 2009, the Commission prepared and distributed a Municipal Employees Ethics Survey. More than 300 surveys were returned. Those responses were tabulated and analyzed by Professor Rick Hug of Indiana University

Northwest. We acknowledge with appreciation his generous and gratuitous work on this project. The Commission reviewed Professor Hug's findings and prepared a detailed report for our member communities, which was distributed mid-February 2010. The survey seemed to confirm the value of ethics training. Comparing those who were trained to those who were not, the results indicated employees receiving training were:

- More aware of the Ethics Code
- More likely to report unethical behavior
- More likely to know to whom to report questionable activity
- More likely to feel their concerns would be addressed

The Commission is planning to conduct another survey in 2012 following completion of training for all employees in member communities in 2011.

2010 Employee Training

The Commission's initial approach to training was to secure the services of national or local experts on ethics in government, schedule morning training sessions and invite our member communities to send their employees. Over the years, we have hosted several such sessions. They have value and we will offer such programs from time to time in the future. However, we also discovered limitations in this approach. We were attracting 60 or so participants, mostly supervisors and department heads. Our member communities have over 1,000 employees. To reach everyone (our stated goal), we decided to try a different approach. In 2010, we recruited two local ethicists (Jill Miller of Calumet College and Leslie Rittenmeyer of Purdue Calumet) to develop training programs based on our Code of Shared Ethics and Values. They designed four versions, varying in length from a half hour to an hour and a half. In addition, we acquired a twelve minute interactive video. Member communities were also asked to identify employees with communication skills who would work with our ethicists and be prepared to present these materials at various work sites in each community. We also set a goal that by mid-2011 each community would provide training opportunities for every single employee. Our communities have reported to us that this goal has been achieved.

New Community Recruitment

President Bellamy and Shared Ethics Officer Rowe met with the Mayor of Hobart and also the new East Chicago Mayor. Both expressed interest, but Mayor Snedecor asked that we return in 2011 for further discussions and Mayor Copeland also wished to wait a period of time until he had a better feel for the City's immediate needs.

Community Outreach

The Commission began discussing how to promote the concept of an "ethics culture" throughout Lake County and possibly all of Northwest Indiana. We planned to address this goal by inviting the broader community (the public and government and private sector leadership) to an event to discuss the importance of ethics in government. While much of the planning for this event occurred in 2010, the program itself was actually presented in March 2011 with about 300 leaders in attendance. We wish to acknowledge with appreciation the community organizations that co-hosted this event with us—the Lake County Advancement Committee and the Northwest Indiana Quality of Life Council—and also our generous corporate sponsors--BP, NIPSCO, TheTIMES and United States Steel.

Press Coverage

On August 26, 2010 an article appeared in the *Chicago Tribune* with the author expressing the view that Lake County, Indiana is more corrupt than Cook County, Illinois. Commission President Calvin Bellamy responded on September 17 by describing the work of the Commission. Also, President Bellamy wrote a column for *THE TIMES* of Northwest Indiana describing the positive results of our Municipal Employee Survey. On November 19, 2010, a *TIMES* editorial urged East Chicago to join the Commission.

Looking Forward

For 2011, the Commission established the following goals to advance ethics

in local government:

- Secure the appointment of a new Shared Ethics Officer.
(Already met at this writing.)
- Monitor member community training to achieve the goal of offering training to 100 percent of member community employees. (Already met at this writing.)
- Conduct a vigorous program of community outreach events and press coverage.
- Recruit new member communities.
- Prepare a brochure describing Commission activities for distribution to interested parties. (Already met at this writing.)
- Prepare a website for the Commission.

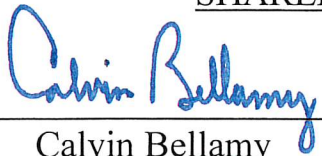
Conclusion

The Commission invites input and comments on this report and our role. Comments from member communities and the general public are always welcome as are suggestions about what additional activities we might address within our limited mandate of presenting ethics training to municipal employees. As a reminder, the Commission has no adjudicatory authority. This responsibility remains with each member community.

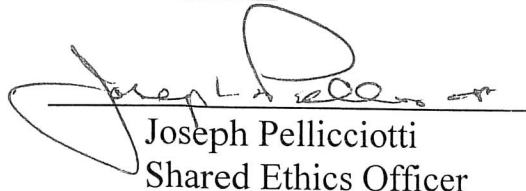
Dated this 17th day of August, 2011

SHARED ETHICS ADVISORY COMMISSION

By



Calvin Bellamy
Commission President



Joseph Pellicciotti
Shared Ethics Officer