



SEAC – January 15, 2025 - Meeting Minutes

Zoom Meeting Attendees

Courtney Smith	Cal Bellamy	Sandra Davis	Todd Larkin
Julie McElmurry	Cecile LaCombe Petro	Karen Marben	Richard Hardaway
Neil Stout	Sheryl Corey	Abbe Trent	Dr. Vanessa Allen-McCloud
Angie Carr	Ken Zubeck	Julie Wendorf	Dale Combs
John Seibert			

Summary: The meeting focused on the approval of the 2024 Annual Report, 2025 Goals and 2025 leadership roles within the Shared Ethics Advisory Commission (SEAC), with discussions on membership outreach efforts, and the plans for 2025. The team also discussed plans for a 20th anniversary celebration, including potential Summit speakers, commemorative pins, and a Board & Commission Member training event. Lastly, they explored the idea of a training program for trainers, the potential impact of a new Indiana legislative bill regarding ethics training for elected officials.

Next steps

- Membership
 - Neil to reach out to Mayor Banta of Portage regarding SEAC membership and appointments.
 - Cecile to continue to follow up with St. John town manager about SEAC Commissioner appointment and Cal to focus on recruiting SEAC representatives from St. John after Highland is settled.
- Summit and 20th Anniversary Plans
 - Sheryl to get quotes for SEAC logo pins and 20th anniversary pins from Kristen at Spark Marketing. Julie Mc to provide SEAC logo file to Sheryl if needed.
 - Cal to try contacting SEAC founders to compile a complete list of founding members.
 - Julie W. and team to continue brainstorming and planning for 20th anniversary summit.
- Training Plans
 - Cecile to schedule a Training Committee meeting in late spring to discuss the trainer training event.
 - Cecile to work with Gary on scheduling a second train-the-trainer session for late spring.
 - Cecile to finalize contracts for the May 29th board and commissioner training event at Avalon.
 - Julie Mc to complete the flyer for the May 29th event once she receives the picture from David.
 - Commissioners to contact their communities for updated lists of assigned ethics trainers and number of employees trained.
 - Angie to send over biographical information on potential speaker Trudy Menke.
- Communications
 - Julie Mc to send out contact list and committee assignments to commissioners along with talking points for commissioners to share with their communities.
 - Calvin to draft a letter to the authors of the ethics training legislation bill.
 - Commissioners to mark March 19th on their calendars for the next meeting and tentatively mark May 29th on their calendars for the Board & and commission training.



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The meeting was called to order at 8:30am with the reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. Courtney then moved on to discuss the November 2024 minutes, which were approved unanimously (motion by Richard Haraway, seconded by Dr. Vanessa Allen-McCloud).



2025 Annual Items: Courtney presented the proposed 2025 SEAC Goals (see below) to the group, which were approved unanimously (motion by Sandra Davis, seconded by Richard Hardaway). Julie Mc presented the 2024 Annual Report (available on the website) to the group, which was approved unanimously (motion by Dale Combs, seconded by Sheryl Corey). After some discussion, Cal moved that Courtney continue as SEAC President and Julie W. continue as SEAC Vice President and Richard Hardaway seconded; it was approved unanimously.

Membership Update: Courtney led the discussion on membership, with multiple follow-ups for current community members without Joint Board of Delegates (JBOD) or commissioners, as well as initiating connect with non-member communities. Neil Stout, the newest commissioner from Burns Harbor, was introduced.

The team discussed outreach efforts to Portage, East Chicago, Lake Station, and St. John, with a focus on securing a citizen appointed as a commissioner and elected official to the Board of Delegates. Courtney mentioned that she had reached out to East Chicago and Lake Station, while Neil and Calvin planned to reach out to Portage. Cal discussed potential candidates for the Highland Council and plans to focus on St John once the Highland issue is resolved.



Financial Update: Julie Mc presented the financial update; the final report from 2024 which was as expected. There has been no spending so far in 2025. She also reviewed the 2025 budget, highlighting that the dollars budgeted for the candidate ethics pledge were available for use for the potential trainer event or the 20th anniversary given that there is no election in 2025. Julie Mc also reminded the group that Mark Herak, Highland Clerk Treasurer has handed off the SEAC financial duties to Courtney Udvare, Chesterton Clerk Treasurer as of Jan 1st.

Summit Update: Julie Wendorf announced the successful summit in the fall and plans for the upcoming 20th anniversary celebration at the 2025 Summit. Discussion included potential keynote speakers and ideas for making the event special. The team discussed the idea of creating 20-year pins for members of the Commission, with Karen suggesting a cost of around 54 cents per pin. They also considered the idea of a founder's award, with Cal expressing concerns about finding folks to award each year. However, Julie W. suggested that this could be a one-time 20th anniversary award, and that they could reach out to the founders for a complete list of names. The team also discussed the possibility of Lee Morris receiving a founder's award, with Dr. Vanessa supporting this suggestion. The team discussed various ideas for commemorating the 20th anniversary. The team agreed to continue brainstorming and to lock down a speaker by early summer. Sheryl was tasked with researching quotes for the pins. The date for the summit was not yet confirmed, but it was suggested to be in late October or early November.

Training Committee Update: Cecile discussed plans for a 2025 Board and Commission Member training, tentatively scheduled for May 29th. The training, to be led by David Limbardi, will focus on case studies and engaging with the group on being an ethical board member and commissioner. The event will be free and open to member community new and existing board members and commissioners. The training will be held at Avalon and the team will send out flyers once the contracts are signed.

Cecile proposed a training program for trainers, aiming to improve their effectiveness in engaging trainees. She suggested this could be held in the Fall. Cecile also offered to conduct 'train the trainer' sessions in late spring and encouraged new members to contact her for more information.

Communications Committee Update: Julie Mc mentioned that the annual report was completed, and they are exploring ways to commemorate the 20th anniversary via the website and social media. Julie Mc also mentioned that they may need to adjust or create a new contract with Mary Freda-Flores for any significant work related to the anniversary. She will send talking points to the team for sharing with their communities.

New Business: Julie W. shared information regarding a bill, House Bill 1429, being considered by the Indiana legislature and its potential impact regarding ethics training for elected officials, suggesting that the team should keep track of its progress. The group agreed that Cal will draft a letter to the bill's authors, expressing their support for the training.

The next meeting is scheduled for March 19th, and a board and commission training is tentatively planned for May 29th. The meeting was adjourned at 9:35am unanimously (Motion by Neil Stoudt, seconded by Richard Hardaway).



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