



2021 Annual Report



Bringing Ethics Awareness and Training to our Communities

Visit us online at: www.sharedethics.com



2021 Annual Report

January 19, 2022

Dear SEAC Member Community Leader,

Thank you for your membership and commitment in the Shared Ethics Advisory Commission (SEAC).

As a reminder, SEAC represents you, the local government entities of Lake, Porter and LaPorte Counties who have voluntarily committed themselves to the Code of Shared Ethics and Values and who work together to achieve the Commission's primary goals of:

- Heightening awareness of ethical issues within municipal government.
- Assisting municipal employees with the practical tools to make ethical decisions.

We accomplish this mission through regular training sessions, training materials, advocacy articles and an ongoing collaborative effort to enhance ethical behavior within participating governments.

As required by Article 6(c) of our governing Interlocal Agreement, SEAC hereby submits this annual report to our member communities to share more details about our actions during 2021. I have organized the report into the following sections:

1. Structure and organization
2. Membership
3. Funding
4. Ethics Summit
5. Training
6. Candidate Ethics Pledge
7. Outreach and Media Coverage
8. 2021 and 2022 SEAC Goals

Thank you again for your membership and support of SEAC. Please feel free to reach out to me or your SEAC Commissioner with any questions.

Sincerely,

Daniel Klein, President SEAC
president@sharedethics.com
219-746-1445

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1. Structure and Organization

SEAC is working effectively and efficiently with the current committee structure established in 2019 including the Executive Committee, Training Committee, Communications Committee and Summit. These committees along with regular Commission and Executive Committee meetings have proven valuable in ensuring SEAC stays on track toward meeting our goals, while also discussing possible future projects and activities.

SEAC also continues to utilize NIRPC for administrative assistance and meeting location (2021 meetings were a combination of meetings held in person and virtually via ZOOM due to COVID19).

2021 SEAC Committee Structure

Executive Committee (Chair: President, Dan Klein)

- Members include:
 - Vice President (Rich Weigel)
 - Training Committee (Jamie Ward, Paula Carey)
 - Communications Committee (Julie McElmurry)
 - President Emeritus (Cal Bellamy)
- Focus on overall Commission management
- Strategic Planning

Training Committee (Chairs: Jamie Ward, Paula Carey)

- Focused on Train the Trainer, Trainer Refresh, Board and Commissions and Department Head training
- Conducts Employee Survey every few years
- Updates training as needed

Communications Committee (Chair: Julie McElmurry)

- Manages the Candidate Ethics Action Pledge process
- Drafts and manages distribution of Annual Report
- Manages website contractor
- Ensures all key documents are current
- Provides commissioners with communication schedule and materials

Summit (Chair: Rich Weigel)

- Plan and host the Summit
- All Commissioners assist with Summit work

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2. Membership

During 2021 we saw several changes to our Commissioners and Board of Delegates. Our member communities appointed six new Commissioners with three Commissioners resigning, and two new “At Large” Commissioners joined the group. Also, nine new Board of Delegates members were appointed with three members resigning.


Below is the most up-to-date list of member communities and their appointed Commissioners and Delegates. We currently have five communities in the process of finding new Commissioners and one community in the process of finding a new Board of Delegate member.

SEAC Commissioners and Joint Board of Delegates - Nov 11, 2021		
Community	SEAC Commissioner	Joint Board of Delegates Member
Burns Harbor	Howard Morgan	Jane Jordan
Cedar Lake	Bill Kuhn	Randy Niemeyer
Chesterton	Todd Elliott	James Ton
Crown Point		Andrew Kyres
Dyer	Julie McElmurry	Alan Brooks
East Chicago	Dick Morrisroe	Gilda Orange
Gary	Burgess Peoples	Cozey Weatherspoon
Hebron	Merlin Foresman	Don Ensign
Highland	Tim Huizenga	Michael Griffin
Hobart	Rich Weigel, Vice President	Deborah Longer
Lake County	Dan Klein, President	Jerry Tippy
Lake Station		Bill Carroll
LaPorte County		Joie Winski
Lowell	Manny Frausto	John Yelkich
Merrillville	Art Russell	Richard Hardaway
Munster	Michael McIntyre	Wendy Mis
Ogden Dunes	Kathy Kniola	Steve Grandfield
Portage	Releisa Parker	Sue Lynch, Vice President
Porter County	Courtney Smith	Laura Shur Blaney
Schererville	Lynn Volkmann	Janice Malinowski, President
St John		
Valparaiso	John Bowker	Peter Anderson
Westville		Lori Mercer
Whiting	Brian Lowry	Steve Spebar
President Emeritus, At Large	Cal Bellamy	--
At Large	Jamie Ward	--
At Large	Paula Carey	--
At Large	Michael Suggs	--
Advisor	Karen Marben	--
Advisor	Tom DeGiulio	--

*Peach highlighted rows are members currently with no Commissioners or Board of Delegate members

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We encourage those communities to fill their vacancies quickly. Below we have included information regarding the duties of these roles for reference.


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Commissioners

Qualifications:

1. Not an employee of the appointing entity.
2. "... persons who live, work in or hold property in Lake, Porter or LaPorte Counties, Indiana." *
3. "These members should be persons of good character" *
4. Past and current members have included private citizens active in their community, such as retired officials or judges, lawyers, educators, and clergy.


Appointment:

<u>Cities</u>	<u>Town</u>
Nominated by Mayor	Nominated and approved by Town Council
Approved by City Council	

Duties:

1. Faithfully attend regular Commission meetings (every other month) and also special meetings and Commission events as needed.
2. Actively participate in the discussion, planning and execution of the Commission's work.
 - Ethics Summit
 - Training activities
 - Ethics Pledge
 - Communication activities
3. Regularly update and maintain contact with community leadership and trainers serving your community.
4. Advocate and promote ethics in local government.
5. Committed to setting a strong example of integrity and high moral conduct.

*Interlocal Agreement


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Board of Delegates Members

Qualifications: Preferably an elected official from the member community, but a senior staff member is acceptable.

Appointment:

<u>Cities</u>	<u>Town</u>
Nominated by Mayor	Nominated and approved by Town Council
Approved by City Council	

Duties:

1. Faithfully attend Board of Delegate meetings (two to four meetings a year, called by the chairperson)
2. Elect a chairperson and determine which member community's clerk-treasurer will serve as fiscal administrator
3. Receive reports from the Commission on SEAC activities and programs
4. Review and set member community dues for the coming year
5. Review and approve SEAC's budget for the coming year
6. Advocate and promote ethics in local government.
7. Committed to setting a strong example of integrity and high moral conduct.

3. Funding

Member community dues continue to fund SEAC. During 2021 we were able to spend most of our budget with the major expenditures being our Board & Commission Training, the Summit, and a contract for new training videos. We expect 2022 to also be a full year!

Michael Griffin, Clerk-Treasurer of Highland, continues to support SEAC as the fiscal agent to manage fee invoices and issue all SEAC checks. We thank Michael for all of his service and advice.

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4. Ethics Summit

SEAC held its 10th Ethics Summit on October 29th. This free of charge event was open to the public and well attended with just over 115 attendees. It was sponsored by The Times and MonoSol. Our keynote speaker Violet Sistovaris, the prominent NIPSCO/NiSource executive, shared information about their ethics program and engaged in discussion about the similarities and differences between corporate and local government ethics training and management. Her presentation was well received. Attendees also participated in engaging conversation about various ethics dilemmas. Overall, a successful event! We expect the 2022 Ethics Summit to be held sometime in early Spring.



The poster for the 2021 Ethics Summit features the Shared Ethics Advisory Commission logo at the top. Below the logo, a photograph shows a person in a patterned shirt gesturing towards a group of people. The main title "2021 Ethics Summit" is prominently displayed in large white letters. Below the title, the date and time "FRIDAY, OCTOBER 29, 2021 :: 8-11AM" are listed, followed by the location "AVALON MANOR :: 3555 US 30, MERRILLVILLE IN". The keynote speaker, Violet Sistovaris, is introduced with her title "EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT CHIEF EXPERIENCE OFFICER - NISOURCE". Logos for sponsors "kuraray" and "MonoSol" are shown, along with "THE TIMES" and "nwi.com". A box on the left celebrates "10 YEARS of SEAC SUMMITS". On the right, a photo of Violet Sistovaris speaking is shown above the text "FREE EVENT Open to the Public". The bottom right section includes the RSVP deadline "by Friday, October 22" and the registration requirement "REGISTRATION REQUIRED!". The pre-registration website "sharedethics.com" is listed at the bottom right. A footer at the bottom left says "Visit us online at sharedethics.com".

Shared Ethics
ADVISORY COMMISSION
BRINGING ETHICS AWARENESS AND TRAINING TO OUR COMMUNITIES

2021 Ethics Summit

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 29, 2021 :: 8-11AM
AVALON MANOR :: 3555 US 30, MERRILLVILLE IN

Keynote Speaker
Violet Sistovaris
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT
CHIEF EXPERIENCE OFFICER - NISOURCE

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS of SEAC SUMMITS

Sponsored by:
kuraray **MonoSol**
THE TIMES **nwi.com**
MEDIA COMPANY

FREE EVENT
Open to the Public

RSVP:
by Friday, October 22
REGISTRATION REQUIRED!

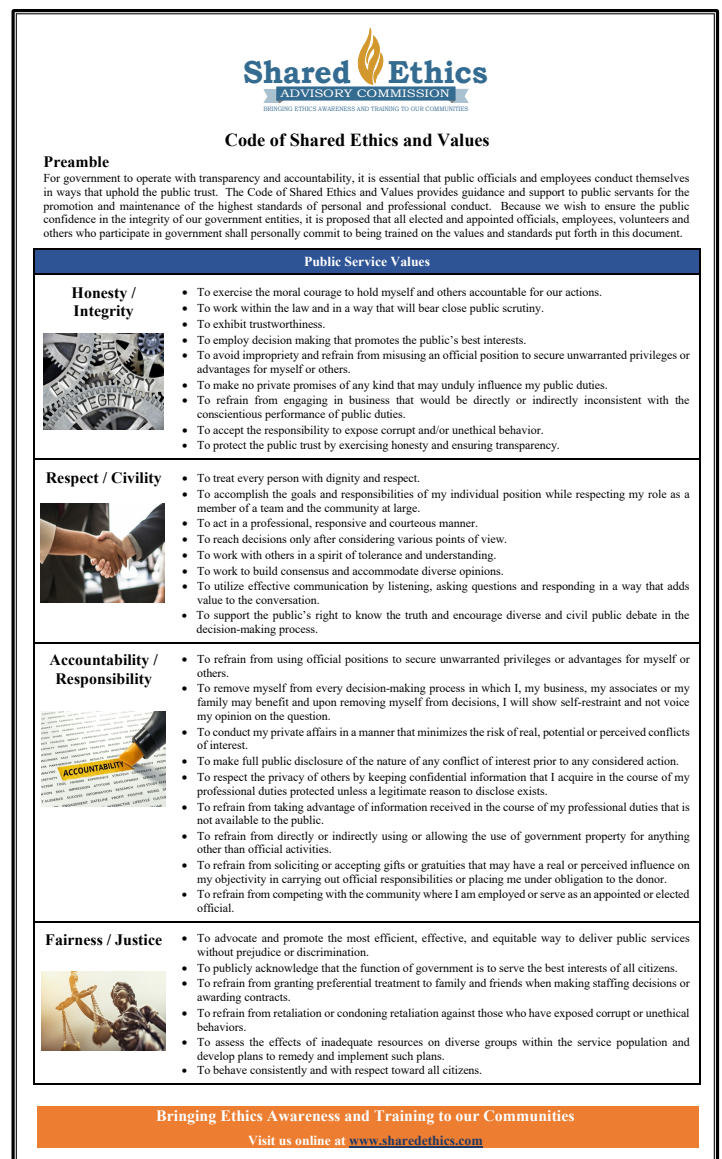
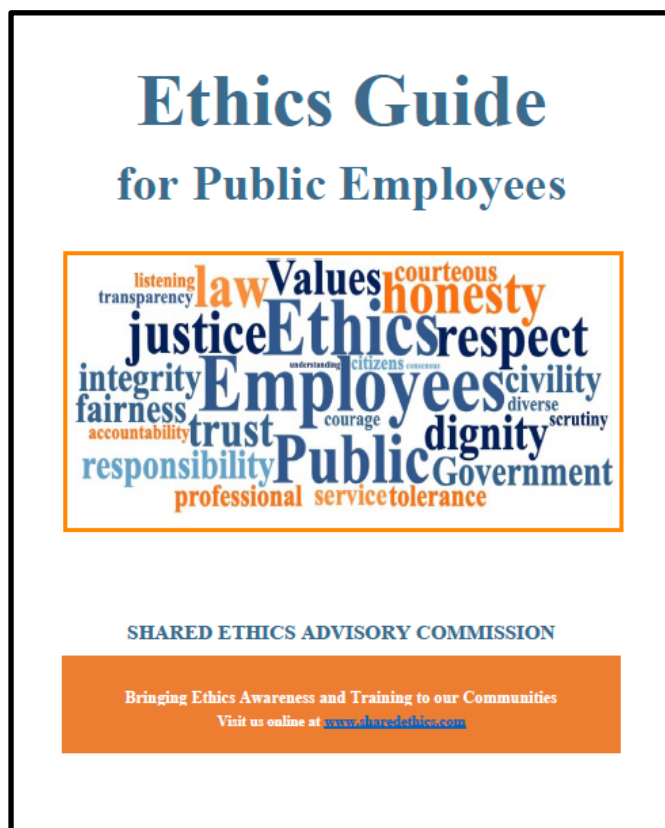
Pre-Register Online at:
sharedethics.com

Visit us online at [sharedethics.com](https://www.sharedethics.com)

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5. Training

The Training Committee was very busy in 2021. First, an Employee Ethics Guide was created to be distributed along with copies of the reformatted Code of Shared Ethics and Values to all current member community employees along with elected officials and other appointed board and commission members. The new ethics guide can also serve as an introduction to the Code and SEAC for new employees. We expect the Guide to be distributed in early 2022.





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Second, the Training Committee worked hard to pick a new vendor to provide updated, and relevant training videos to be incorporated into our municipal employee training curriculum. The vendor chosen is Traliant and the Committee is currently working to finalize the videos and curriculum updates. We hope to rollout the new curriculum to our member community trainers later in 2022.

And, third the Training Committee hosted Board and Commission Training on August 30th. There were over 40 attendees and David Limardi was well received as the presenter and facilitator of discussion.

**2021 Board and Commission
Ethics Training**

No cost to
SEAC
Member
Communities!

***The Pursuit of an Ethical
Organizational Culture***

Mr. David M. Limardi
Principal, Limardi Consulting, LLC

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>
Monday, August 30th	Dinner begins at 6:15 pm	Avalon Manor 3550 E. Lincoln Hwy Merrillville

Register online at
www.sharedethics.com
by **5:00pm** on **Friday, August 20th**

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6. Candidates Ethics Pledge

SEAC had a break in the Candidate Ethics Pledge process in 2021 as it was an off year for local elections. Local elections will occur again in 2022, so we will once again invite candidates for all county, city, town, and township offices in Lake, LaPorte and Porter Counties to sign the Candidate Ethics Action Pledge for both the primary election in May and the general election in November. As a reminder, the Pledge asks candidates to commit to providing ethics training for all employees whom they are responsible, to support a comprehensive ethics policy with vigorous enforcement, and to support whistleblower protection for employees filing ethics complaints.

7. Outreach & Media Coverage

The work of the Commission received widespread media coverage in 2021. Thanks are owed to local media for their strong support of our efforts to promote ethical decision making. Articles in print and other citations of media coverage are listed below. Please note that the print articles and the same articles from the Internet, where links are provided, may have slightly different titles, and some online articles may only be provided for a limited period.

SEAC Media Coverage in 2021	
January 31, 2021	NWI TIMES article by Cal Bellamy titled, "GUEST COMMENTARY: Ethics in government: Work in progress" https://www.nwitimes.com/opinion/columnists/guest-commentary/guest-commentary-ethics-in-government-work-in-progress/article_57841911-7b5a-5f02-ae7d-d31ec8880582.html
January 31, 2021	The Regional News and Westville Indicator article by Cal Bellamy titled, "Ethics in Government: Work in Progress" (LaPorte County newspapers available through Kiel Media).
July 15, 2021	The Regional News and Westville Indicator article by Cal Bellamy, titled, "Ethics in Local Government: An Update" (LaPorte County newspapers available through Kiel Media).
August 15, 2021	NWI TIMES article by Cal Bellamy titled, "GUEST COMMENTARY: Ethics in local government: An update" https://www.nwitimes.com/opinion/columnists/guest-commentary/guest-commentary-ethics-in-local-government-an-update/article_7bc9c87e-bf18-5c2e-83e1-165cffb0cda4.html
October 7, 2021	The Regional News and Westville Indicator article, "SEAC Hosts Ethics Summit on 10/29". (LaPorte County newspapers available thorough Kiel Media).
October 30, 2021	NWI TIMES article by Doug Ross titled, "WATCH NOW: Ethical dilemmas addressed at regional Summit" https://www.nwitimes.com/business/local/watch-now-ethical-dilemmas-addressed-at-regional-summit/article_df4814a0-364b-5a50-b8cd-e0deecbd0efd.html
November 28, 2021	NWI TIMES article by Richard Weigel titled, "Ethics issues tackled at 2021 summit" https://www.nwitimes.com/opinion/columnists/guest-commentary/ethics-issues-tackled-at-2021-summit/article_a5a0d7f7-6cbe-5afb-a89e-5b7ec6a800c7.html

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8. 2021 and 2022 SEAC Goals

SEAC is happy to share that we were able to complete most of our 2021 goals, especially given that most of our interactions during the first half of the year were virtual. We were excited about once again being able to provide training to the board and commission members of our communities and the public via our annual Summit. Great progress has also been made in our training curriculum area with the development of the Employee Ethics Guide and ongoing work to update our training videos and curriculum. Finally, SEAC has fewer vacancies in its Commissioner and Board of Delegate ranks which took hard work and cooperation from our member communities.

SEAC – 2021 Goals

1. Host Ethics Summit - *COMPLETED*
2. Provide regular updates via the media on Commission activities and goals - *ONGOING*
3. Host Board & Commission Training - *COMPLETED*
4. Refresh our municipal employee ethics training curriculum. – *ONGOING*
5. Initiate actions to reenergize our member community trainers and host Train the Trainer training as needed. – *MOVED TO 2022*
6. Reconnect with member communities to encourage participation - *ONGOING*
7. Focus on filling Commission vacancies and expanding Commission membership to municipalities who have yet to join, especially in LaPorte County - *ONGOING*



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SEAC approved the 2022 Goals as listed below at our January 2022 meeting. While continuing our hosting of the Summit and training, in 2022 we will be asking candidates to sign the Candidate Ethics Pledge and expect to complete the refresh and rollout of our improved municipal employee ethics training.

SEAC – 2022 Goals

1. Host Ethics Summit
2. Host Manager Training
3. Solicit signatures of the Candidate Ethics Action Pledge from primary and general election candidates and publicize the results
4. Finalize the refresh of the municipal employee ethics training curriculum and rollout to member community trainers
5. Provide regular updates via the media on Commission activities and goals
6. Continue the focus on filling Commission vacancies and expanding Commission membership to municipalities who have yet to join, especially in LaPorte County