



SEAC - Sept 18, 2024 - Meeting Minutes

Zoom Meeting Attendees

Courtney Smith	Cal Bellamy	Sandra Davis	Todd Larkin
Julie McElmurry	Cecile LaCombe Petro	Karen Marben	Richard Hardaway
Janice Malinowski	Sheryl Corey	John Seibert	Vanessa Allen-McCloud
Angie Carr	Julie Wendorf	Greg Wielogorski	Dale Combs
Ken Zubeck			

Summary

The team discussed the membership of the member municipalities and their representatives, the financial report as of the end of August, and approved the proposed budget for 2025 to be considered for approval by the Joint Board of Delegates (JBOD). They also discussed preparations for the upcoming Ethics Summit event, discussed the renewal of the Traliant (training video) contract, the potential need for an updated video for their training program and the upcoming general election candidate ethics pledge process.

Next steps

- Julie McElmurry to send PDF of Summit flyer along with email/talking points to all commissioners to use in updating their community leaders on SEAC activities.
- Commissioners to sign up for the Summit and promote it within their organizations.
- Cal and Julie Wendorf to contact Marlin Mitchell about facilitating the case study discussion at the Summit.
- Cecile to finalize Traliant contract renewal.
- Commissioners to provide Cecile with ethics training numbers and percentages for their municipalities.
- County commissioners (Courtney, Cecile and Angie) to request final candidate list for general election for use in the candidate ethics pledge process.
- Julie McElmurry will send a list of the Committee assignments to the team and any commissioner not already on a team needs to volunteer to join one.

July 2024 meeting minutes were approved (Richard Hardaway moving with Dale Combs seconding, all agreed)

Membership Update

Courtney and Janice discussed the progress of various municipalities and their representatives. They confirmed that East Chicago, Burns Harbor, and Chesterton should have representatives soon, with Chesterton's Clerk Treasurer, Courtney Udvare being a potential candidate for the JBOD. They also discussed the need to follow up with Highland for a potential representative – Cecile indicated that she'd follow-up with them. Cal agreed to continue to work with Portage and Lake Station. Vanessa was tasked with reaching out to Darren Washington, the current Gary JBOD member, directly. Angie confirmed that Joie Winski's replacement for the LaPorte County JBOD should be appointed soon. The team agreed to follow up with these municipalities and individuals to ensure their participation soon.



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Financial Update

The team discussed the financial report as of the end of August, with a focus on spending and upcoming expenses. They noted the budget approved for 2024 was \$40,800, and the new spending included Avalon fees for management training, new logo backdrops, and the last portion of Mary Frida Flores' project cost. Upcoming expenses included website support, the summit, a new tri-fold pamphlet, and ads in the paper. These expenses add up to \$37,721, well within the planned budget.

Janice then led a discussion about the possibility of rolling over the CD which will be maturing, with a decision to be made after consulting with Mark Herak. Given that the proposed budget for the next year is expected to be less than the current year's budget, the team was in favor of rolling over the budget. The team also discussed the need to change the taxpayer identification number on their CD accounts if Mark is no longer the fiscal agent.

The team discussed the proposed \$36,000 budget for 2025, which included expenses for the ethics pledge process, election ads, the summit, training, and website support. They also discussed the printing budget for new branded materials and updated ethics guides. Janice suggested increasing the budget to \$40,000 due to rising costs, but Julie McElmurry argued that \$36,000 with the already added cushions would suffice without the special project from 2024. Vanessa initiated a motion to approve the proposed financial budget for 2025 to be considered by the JBOD, which was seconded by Sheryl and approved unanimously. Janice was tasked with presenting the budget to the JBOD for their approval at the November meeting.

Summit Update

The team discussed the upcoming Ethics Summit, with Julie Wendorf confirming the keynote speaker and location. Julie McElmurry offered to draft a media release and mentioned that she would send a PDF of the summit flyer to the team. The team was urged to promote the summit and sign up for it, with Julie McElmurry emphasizing the need for more attendees.

The team discussed more preparations for the event. Sheryl and Janice volunteered for setup and clean-up. Materials like codes and posters will be distributed centrally on a table at the front of the room. They discussed the need for a branded tablecloth – and agreed that the two backdrops were enough.

Calvin proposed Marlin Mitchell to facilitate the case study discussion instead of Courtney who will be kicking off the meeting, introducing the keynote speaker and closing the meeting. The team discussed involving Vanessa in case Marlin was unavailable. Vanessa agreed. Calvin will check Marlin's availability with Julie Wendorf.

Training Committee Update

Cecile discussed the upcoming renewal of their Traliant contract, which is due in October. She also encouraged all ethics trainers to get their municipality employees trained, with a focus on providing feedback to communities on the number and percentage of employees trained. She mentioned that some communities, such as Ogden Dunes, have already completed training, while others, like Lake County, are still in progress. Cecile also mentioned upcoming training sessions for trainers and the availability of ethics guides and posters at the Northwest Indiana Regional Planning Commission in Portage.



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Cecile discussed the process of obtaining items and her role in training trainers. She confirmed distributing the Ethics Guide to employees and providing the Code to employees. Janice shared that the Ethics Code is posted by time clocks at the Schererville town offices. Cecile clarified that she only trains trainers, not employees. Vanessa mentioned her contact Jessica needs to familiarize herself with guides before Cecile's training session with Gary. Angie proposed separate trainings in Michigan City and LaPorte County before the snow season, which Cecile agreed to.

Julie McElmurry and Cecile discussed the need for an updated video for their training program, which had received feedback that it was outdated. Cecile mentioned that she had sent the link to the executive committee for review and was open to input from others. Julie McElmurry suggested that Cecile could get a couple of people from the training committee to review the new option. Cecile agreed and mentioned that she would send the link and password to those interested. Dale and Sandra also expressed their willingness to review the new video. The team agreed to review the new video and provide feedback.

Communications Committee Update

Julie McElmurry updated the team indicating that the Logo, Brand and Website Refresh project is complete. The new website is up and running and in maintenance mode with Mary Freda-Flore's support, the media rollout is complete, and the new trifold pamphlet has been designed and will be printed before the Summit.

She also reminded the team that the general election candidate ethics pledge process is starting with candidate emails and letters being sent out in late September, the pledge available on the website and newspaper ads planned for mid and late October.

The team reviewed the upcoming meetings including the Summit scheduled for October 24th and the next SEAC meeting scheduled for November 20th. Janice reminded the team that the JBOD meeting is scheduled for November 13th at 8:30am via Zoom with the goal to get approval for the 2025 SEAC budget.

The meeting adjourned at 9:40am (Julie McElmurry moving with Dale Combs seconding, all agreed)