



SEAC - May 20, 2026 - Meeting Minutes

Zoom Meeting Attendees

	Member Community	Commissioner	Attended?
1	Burns Harbor	Neil Stout	Y
2	Cedar Lake	Sheryl Corey	Y
3	Crown Point	Julie Wendorf	N
4	Dyer	Julie McElmurry	Y
5	East Chicago	NO COMMISSIONER	N
6	Gary	Dr Vanessa Allen-McCloud	Y
7	Hebron	Thomas Chihocki	N
8	Hobart	NO COMMISSIONER	N
9	Lake County	Cecile LaCombe Petro	Y
10	Lake Station	NO COMMISSIONER	N
11	LaPorte County	Angie Carr	N
12	Lowell	Cyndi Hughes	N
13	Merrillville	Richard Hardaway	Y
14	Munster	Michael McIntyre	N
15	Ogden Dunes	Todd Larkin	Y
16	Portage	NO COMMISSIONER	N
17	Porter County	Courtney Smith	N
18	Schererville	Sandra Davis	Y
19	St John	NO COMMISSIONER	N
20	Valparaiso	Brian Nosbusch	Y
21	Whiting	Tim Wajvoda	Y
**	President Emeritus, At Large	Cal Bellamy	Y
**	Advisor, At Large	Michael Suggs	N
**	Advisor, At Large	Karen Marben	Y
**	Advisor, At Large	Tom DeGiulio	N
**	GUEST - Portage	Karen Anderson	Y
**	JBOD President	Janice Malinowski	Y

Summary: The May 2026 Shared Ethics Advisory Commission (SEAC) meeting, where Julie McElmurry, acting as chair in place of the absent Courtney Smith (President) and Julie Wendorf (Vice President), led the group on reviewing the organization's financial status, approving the March 2026 meeting minutes, and discussing upcoming events and projects including Management Training, Candidate Ethics Pledge and Summit. The conversation ended with discussion around Julie Mc's resignation and work distribution, and of missing commissioners and delegates from various municipalities.

Next steps

- Cal - Follow up with Julie Wendorf regarding keynote speaker selection for the Summit including an update on former Governor Holcomb's potential participation.
- Cal - Speak with Michigan City mayor's administrative assistant at Friday's training about expediting commissioner and Joint Board of Delegates appointments.
- Cecile - Add Vanessa (Dr.) and Richard Hardaway to the training registration list for Friday's event.
- Cecile - If Julie Wendorf does not respond about making copies of the training evaluation, make copies herself for distribution.



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- Cecile - Schedule and conduct train-the-trainer sessions for Lake County (June 2) and coordinate with the city of Gary for a future session; follow up with other communities as requested.
- Janice - Check with Courtney Udvardi (JBOD Treasurer) regarding payment status of 2026 dues from East Chicago, Lake Station, and Merrillville; follow up as needed.
- Richard - Reach out to Michael Griffin (Merrillville) to ensure Merrillville's 2026 dues are paid.
- Janice - Coordinate with Courtney U. regarding Michigan City's enrollment fee and annual payment.
- Janice - If needed, approve the Avalon bill payment via email once invoice details are confirmed.
- Julie Mc - Send nonprofit tax documentation to Cecile for Avalon billing purposes.
- Julie Mc - Send talking points about SEAC to commissioners for use with their local leadership.
- Executive Committee: Meet to discuss dividing up Communications Committee and other responsibilities and reach out to members for additional support following Julie Mc's resignation.
- Commissioners (all): Consider stepping up to take on responsibilities vacated by Julie Mc's resignation, as requested by Cecile and Calvin.

The meeting was called to order at 8:30am. Julie Mc kicked off the meeting by leading all in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance and then the March 2026 meeting minutes were approved unanimously (motion by Cecile, seconded by Vanessa). All SEAC meeting minutes are available on the website at sharedethics.com.

Financial Update: Julie Mc presented a 2026 YTD financial report showing current expenses and upcoming costs, including website licensing, stamps for ethics pledge letters, and management training event fees. The group discussed outstanding dues from various municipalities, with Janice agreeing to follow up on payments from East Chicago, Lake Station, Merrillville, and Michigan City. The meeting also touched on upcoming expenses, including a \$4,000 payment for a Friday training presentation and an approximately \$6,000 bill from Avalon.

Summit Update: Cal will follow-up with Julie Wendorf regarding the next steps mentioning outreach to the governor and plans to follow up before reaching out to other potential speakers. A date for the Summit will be set once a speaker is chosen; it is expected to happen in late Fall.

Training Committee Update: Cecile, Training Committee Chair, discussed preparations for the upcoming Management training event on Friday, with 134 people registered across various communities including Cedar Lake, Crown Point, Dyer, Gary, and others. Cecile announced that the nationally known speaker will present on workplace ethics and her documentary "It's All the Queen's Horses," though Karen Marben noted that some potential attendees may miss the event due to the holiday weekend. The training is scheduled to start with registration at 9 AM, followed by a speaker at 10 AM and lunch at 12 PM. Setup will begin at 8:30 AM.

Julie Mc discussed the NEW resolution required ethics training for Dyer's appointed board and commission members, which will be conducted by Cecile and Julie Mc next Thursday evening due to the unavailability of regular trainers. The training will cover government rules, meeting procedures, and the ethics code along with ethics cases discussion.

Cecile also announced upcoming train-the-trainer sessions in Lake County on June 2nd and a potential session in Gary, encouraging communities to schedule their training early to avoid summer vacation conflicts.



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Communications Committee Update: Julie Mc reported that the candidate ethics pledge process was completed with 61% participation, noting that signatories from the primary election won't need to sign again for the general election.

Julie Mc announced this would be her final meeting as both a Dyer Commissioner and Communications Committee chair, citing family obligations and expressed her gratitude for the support she had received from the commission over her eight years of service. She has provided the Executive Committee a list of her duties to assist with redistributing the work. All the related documents and files are stored on the SEACdocs Google drive.

The conversation ended with questions about the process for appointing a new commissioner in Dyer and Richard's inquiry about resignation timing for his upcoming role as Lake County Councilman-elect - according to Cal he can continue as a Merrillville Commissioner.

Membership Update: The group discussed transitions in leadership roles and ongoing challenges in filling commissioner positions across various communities. Julie Mc has announced her resignation from the Commission, and the group discussed how to redistribute her responsibilities, with Cal and Courtney planning to meet to divide up functions and seek additional help from members. The group reviewed the status of commissioner appointments across different municipalities, noting ongoing challenges in East Chicago, Hobart, Lake Station, and St. John, while Michigan City has recently joined and is working on appointments.

Next meetings and adjournment: The next meeting is scheduled for July 15th. The meeting was adjourned around 9:40am via unanimous approval (motion by Richard and seconded by Sandra).