



## SHELTER ISLAND BOARD OF ETHICS

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2 January 2023

Dear Supervisor Siller and Town Board members,

This is a brief annual report from the Shelter Island Board of Ethics. You reconstituted the board in 2022 after a period of inactivity. We appreciate your support for the critical work of assuring employee and public trust in ethical government work.

You appointed the members below on March 11 and April 8. We have met eight times in 2022.

As you know, the Town Code does not permit any public disclosure of our specific findings. In fact, it only allows us to provide ethics review upon request of an employee who may (or may not) be acting out of compliance with the ethics code. Even in that event, under the current code, disclosure of our findings is completely up to the employee in question. There is no complaint procedure, no enforcement mechanism; the process is wrapped in secrecy.

We are drafting and will soon recommend a new, better code, based on the state comptroller model ethics code for municipalities. It will fix the secrecy problem as well as include ethical standards from state law which have been absent in our local code.

We hope to have a public hearing and your review and adoption of this soon.

During 2022 we received six employee requests for ethics reviews. We examined the facts and legal standards in each of those. We determined that three of them required changed activity by the employees who sought our opinions, while the other three did not require any changes, and so advised them. In each case, the Board of Ethics was able to act by consensus.

The three that required changes included two town advisory committee members (who are considered employees) and one full-time salaried employee. As noted above, we cannot say who they are or describe these circumstances in ways that would identify them – or help advise other employees. As noted, there is no further enforcement or complaint mechanism under the current, inadequate town ethics code.

We appreciate your support for our work and for ethics in government.

Sincerely,

Duff Wilson (chairperson) on behalf of the Board of Ethics  
Deborah Grayson  
Shelby Mundy  
Robert Raiber