



REGULAR MEETING – BOARD OF ETHICS AGENDA

MARCH 26, 2026, 7:00 PM
BY ZOOM VIRTUAL MEETING

To allow public access, anyone may access a meeting by telephone and/or Zoom, or a recording in the City of Norwalk YouTube channel. Specific instructions and links can be found at norwalkct.gov/meetings.



Members of the public may call in to participate. Callers will not be able to see the meeting participants. All participants will be muted upon entering the meeting. To speak, dial *9 on the phone and you will be called on by the host of the meeting during the public comment section. All speakers must state their name and address. Comments must be on a topic on the agenda, and are limited to three minutes. Anyone disrupting the orderly conduct of the meeting, including by using threatening, hateful, or sexually-explicit language, will be removed. Please find the information using the link above.



Members of the public who wish to provide "live comments" may also use the Zoom meeting platform. All participants will be muted upon entering the meeting. To speak, click the "raise your hand indicator" and you will be called by the host of the meeting during the public comment section. All speakers must state their name and address. Comments must be on a topic on the agenda, and are limited to three minutes. Anyone disrupting the orderly conduct of the meeting, including by using threatening, hateful, or sexually-explicit language, will be removed. Please find the information using the link above.



Members of the public who wish to provide public comment are encouraged to submit those via email in advance of the meeting. For these comments to be included into the record, they must be submitted by 12:00 p.m. the day of the meeting. Please email Brian Candela at bcandela@norwalkct.gov with the subject line "Public Comment" to provide written public comment prior to the meeting.

- I. **CALL TO ORDER**
- II. **ROLL CALL**
- III. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**
- IV. **ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**
 - A. Discuss and vote to approve the minutes from the January 22, 2026 regular meeting of the Board of Ethics
 - B. Discuss and vote to approve the minutes from the February 26, 2026 regular meeting of the Board of Ethics
- V. **OLD BUSINESS**
 - A. Discuss Code of Ethics – City Code – Chapter 32: <https://ecode360.com/27048731>
 - B. Discuss the Citizen’s Guide to the Code of Ethics: <https://www.norwalkct.gov/DocumentCenter/View/888/Citizens-Guide-to-Code-of->

VI. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Discuss and vote on Chapter 32 (Code of Ethics), Section 1 (Title; Administration)**
- B. Discuss and vote on Chapter 32 (Code of Ethics), Section 3 (Definitions), Hearing Board and Investigating Panel**
- C. Discuss and vote on Chapter 32 (Code of Ethics), Section 12 (Board of Ethics), Subsections A, B and C**

VII. DISCUSSION

VIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- A. If any ethics complaints are received prior to the meeting, it is anticipated that the Board of Ethics will enter into executive session to consider same.**

IX. ADJOURNMENT

**CITY OF NORWALK
BOARD OF ETHICS
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES - JANUARY 22, 2026
VIA ZOOM VIRTUAL MEETING**

ATTENDEES: Patricia Agudow, Michelle Sawyer, Amy Ayala, Kitty Sang, Kathryn Williams - Murchinson.

STAFF: Brian Candela.

I. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Board of Ethics was called to order at approximately 7:05 PM by Ms. Agudow.

II. ROLL CALL

Roll call was taken and a quorum was confirmed.

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No members of the public were present, and no written public comments were received prior to the meeting.

IV. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

A. Approve the minutes from the December 2, 2025 special meeting of the Board of Ethics

****MS. SAWYER MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 2, 2025, SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF ETHICS, AS AMENDED TO CORRECT THE SPELLING OF MR. NICHOLAS COLAZAR'S NAME (REMOVING THE EXTRA "K") AND THE SPELLING OF MS. CATHERINE WILLIAMS MERCHANT'S NAME.**

****MS. AYALA SECONDED THE MOTION.**

****THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. THE MINUTES WERE APPROVED AS AMENDED.**

V. OLD BUSINESS

A. Discuss Code of Ethics – City Code – Chapter 32

Mr. Candela noted that this item is placed on the agenda to allow members of the public to comment on Chapter 32 of the City Code. No members of the public were present and no prior comments were received. No board members had comments on this item.

B. Discuss the Citizen's Guide to the Code of Ethics

Mr. Candela noted that this item is placed on the agenda to allow members of the public to comment on the Citizen’s Guide. No members of the public were present and no prior comments were received. No board members had comments on this item.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

VII. DISCUSSION

A. Discussion of ongoing and future projects for 2026

Ms. Agudow opened discussion on priorities for 2026, emphasizing the need to conduct live ethics training sessions for elected officials, city staff, and the public, using the previously recorded materials posted on the website. She noted that recent leadership transitions in city departments may cause some delay but stressed the importance of proceeding.

Ms. Sawyer suggested starting the process by meeting with the new Chief of Human Resources and Personnel to discuss how the Code of Ethics is currently used in onboarding, whether it is part of the process, and how the Board can collaborate to ensure employees and officials are aware of the Code and its importance. She also highlighted the value of advisory opinions as a tool for guidance and potential immunity when obtained in advance.

Mr. Candela agreed and offered to send an email to the Chief of Human Resources on behalf of the Board once the members finalize the language. He suggested including links to the Board’s website, PowerPoint presentations, videos, the City Code, and the Citizen’s Guide to facilitate integration into onboarding materials. He also noted potential benefits of ethics training for professional credit requirements and the importance of employees understanding the Code as a resource.

Ms. Agudow and Ms. Sawyer agreed that beginning with the HR Director would help inform future plans and avoid creating a plan that does not align with city priorities.

Mr. Candela raised the possibility of amending Chapter 32 of the City Code to increase the Board from seven to nine members (with two alternates). He explained that this would provide additional capacity, reduce workload on current members, prevent burnout, and ensure adequate bipartisan representation for investigative panels. He indicated he would contact the Ordinance Committee Chair to gauge interest and would seek feedback from Board members before proceeding.

The Board discussed the possibility of holding one daytime seminar for city staff and one evening seminar for the public, with at least one session recorded for later viewing. Mr. Candela emphasized the importance of making training accessible to both staff and residents.

The Board agreed to continue placing the Code of Ethics and Citizen’s Guide on future agendas to encourage public participation.

VIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

A. If any ethics complaints are received prior to the meeting, it is anticipated that the Board of Ethics will enter into executive session to consider same.

No ethics complaints were received prior to the meeting. No executive session was held.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

****MS. SAWYER MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.**

****MS. AYALA SECONDED THE MOTION.**

****THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:33 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Courtney Baldwin,
Recording Secretary

**CITY OF NORWALK
BOARD OF ETHICS
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES - FEBRUARY 26, 2026
VIA ZOOM VIRTUAL CONFERENCE**

ATTENDEES: Brian Candela, Amy Jackson Ayala, Patricia Agudow, Pat Toni.

I. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Board of Ethics scheduled for 7:00 p.m. on February 26, 2026, via Zoom virtual meeting was not called to order due to lack of quorum.

II. ROLL CALL

Three members were present: Ms. Amy Jackson Ayala, Ms. Patricia Agudow, and Mr. Pat Toni. Mr. Brian Candela was also present in a staff/support capacity. A quorum of four members was required but not achieved.

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No public participation occurred, as the meeting was not called to order.

IV. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

A. Approve the minutes from the January 22, 2026 regular meeting of the Board of Ethics
No action was taken on the minutes, as the meeting was not called to order.

V. OLD BUSINESS

A. Discuss Code of Ethics – City Code – Chapter 32
No discussion occurred, as the meeting was not called to order.

B. Discuss the Citizen’s Guide to the Code of Ethics
No discussion occurred, as the meeting was not called to order.

C. Discussion of ongoing and future projects for 2026
No formal discussion occurred under this agenda item. Informally, while waiting to determine if a quorum would be achieved, the members present were advised that an email would be sent to city leadership regarding a vacancy on the Board of Ethics. Mr. Brian Candela also indicated that he would reach out to the Ordinance Committee regarding a potential change to increase the board's composition from seven to nine members. Any proposed language for such a change would be brought to the Board of Ethics first for review, possible revisions, and a vote at a future meeting.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

No new business was addressed, as the meeting was not called to order.

VII. DISCUSSION

No formal discussion occurred. Informal conversation among the members present included topics such as the upcoming Mayor's Ball invitation and availability, weather conditions in Florida, and general casual remarks while awaiting a possible fourth member.

VIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

A. If any ethics complaints are received prior to the meeting, it is anticipated that the Board of Ethics will enter into executive session to consider same

No executive session was held, as the meeting was not called to order and no complaints were indicated.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

At approximately 7:10 p.m., with only three members present and no quorum achieved, the scheduled meeting of the Board of Ethics was canceled. No official business was conducted, no votes were taken, and no formal actions occurred.

The next regularly scheduled meeting is anticipated at the end of March 2026.

Respectfully Submitted,
Courtney Baldwin
Recording Secretary

City Code

Code of Ethics - Chapter 32

<https://ecode360.com/27048731>

Citizen's Guide to the Code of Ethics

<https://www.norwalkct.gov/DocumentCenter/View/888/Citizens-Guide-to-Code-of-Ethics-2021?bidId=>

§ 32-1. Title; administration. [Amended 7-23-2019]

This chapter shall be known and referred to as the "Norwalk Code of Ethics." The Common Council of the City of Norwalk shall be charged with the administration of the Norwalk Code of Ethics. Accordingly, there shall be established an independent committee of nine ~~five~~ members ~~and two alternates~~ to be known as the "Board of Ethics." The Board of Ethics (the Board) shall be appointed by the Common Council and comprised as provided for in § 32-12 of this chapter.

§ 32-3. Definitions. [Amended 7-23-2019]

As used in this chapter, the following terms shall have the meanings indicated:

HEARING BOARD — Shall be comprised of three members of the Board of Ethics ~~or, in the event of a conflict or vacancy, one or more of the alternates to the Board of Ethics~~ who shall be appointed by a majority vote of the Board of Ethics. In the event the Board of Ethics members have a conflict or an interest in the complaint at issue, the Common Council, by majority vote, may appoint one or more City officials, who are electors of the City of Norwalk, to serve on a Hearing Board for that particular complaint. Once impaneled, the Hearing Board shall continue to serve until it completes the hearing process specified in this Code of Ethics. No more than two members of a Hearing Board shall be registered members of the same political party. The Hearing Board shall be permitted to hold a public hearing(s) and to determine whether there is Clear And Convincing Evidence that the respondent has violated the Code of Ethics.

INVESTIGATING PANEL — Shall consist of three individual electors, from the City of Norwalk, each of whom shall be appointed by the Board of Ethics to investigate an ethics complaint and to determine whether there is Probable Cause to proceed to a public hearing on such a complaint. No two members of an Investigating Panel shall be registered members of the same political party; ~~and the Investigating Panel shall include an unaffiliated voter.~~

§ 32-12. Board of Ethics. [Amended 6-11-2019; 7-23-2020]

- A. Appointment of members. The Board of Ethics shall be comprised of ~~nine five~~ full members ~~and two alternate members~~, each of whom shall be electors of the City of Norwalk. No more than ~~three two~~ of the members of the Board ~~and one of the alternates~~ shall be registered members of the same political party, and no member of the Board of Ethics shall be an Employee or Officer of the City. Each member shall serve for a three-year term and, in the event of a vacancy on the Board of Ethics, a replacement shall be appointed to serve the balance of the term. All appointments to the Board of Ethics shall be made by the Common Council and shall require the affirmative vote of 11 members of the Common Council.
- B. Organization. The Board of Ethics shall elect a Chairperson. The Board of Ethics shall keep minutes of its meetings, which shall be filed in the office of the City Clerk, and the Board of Ethics shall hold meetings at the call of one full member of the Board and at such times as a majority of the full members of the Board of Ethics may determine. ~~Five Four~~ members present, ~~including sitting alternates~~, shall constitute a quorum in order for the Board of Ethics to conduct official business. ~~An alternate serving in place of an absent member of the Board of Ethics shall have all of the powers and responsibilities as a full member during the meeting at which such alternate member shall sit.~~
- C. Powers and duties. The powers and duties of the Board of Ethics shall include: rendering advisory opinions, investigation of complaints, and hearings on complaints; notification to the Mayor, City Clerk, Corporation Counsel and any other Officer as it deems appropriate of its memorandum of decision on any complaint; annual reports to the Mayor, Common Council, and Corporation Counsel on its activities and recommendations; annual educational programs on the Code of Ethics for municipal Officers, Employees, and Agencies; and such other powers and duties as may be set forth herein. Further, the Board of Ethics shall promote a culture and operating environment of high ethical standards throughout the City of Norwalk by educating, informing and encouraging Officers, Employees, residents and vendors of the City of Norwalk to become aware of the Code of Ethics to ensure that their public actions and activities are in compliance with the Code of Ethics.
- (1) Advisory opinions. The Board of Ethics, when requested to do so in writing by any Officer, Employee, Agency, or upon its own motion, may render advisory opinions concerning Officers and Employees and other issues with respect to this Code of Ethics. Such an advisory opinion shall be binding on the Board of Ethics, until amended or revoked, and reliance on a controlling advisory opinion in good faith is an absolute defense in any action or proceedings brought under the provisions of this Code of Ethics. Within 120 days of valid receipt of such a request, the Board of Ethics shall render its advisory opinion or its decision not to consider such request, and shall file such opinion or decision with the office of the City Clerk, and such opinion or decision shall be available to the public. The opinion or decision so filed may contain such deletions as the Board of Ethics may in its sole discretion deem necessary to prevent disclosure of the identity of the Officer or Employee involved.
 - (2) Probable Cause hearings and subsequent procedures.
 - (a) Filing of the complaint; notification and amendment. Any Person, including a member of the Board of Ethics, may submit a written complaint, in a form

prescribed by the Board of Ethics and signed under penalty of false statement, alleging a violation of this Code of Ethics by an Officer or Employee or an Individual who was an Officer or Employee within the preceding year. The complaint shall contain the specific act or acts which allegedly constitute the violation.

(b) Review of complaint.

[1] Upon receipt of a complaint, the Board of Ethics shall review the complaint and determine whether it warrants acceptance. If a majority of the members of the Board of Ethics present at the meeting reviewing said complaint determines that acceptance is not warranted, then it shall notify the Complainant that it has refused to accept the complaint without establishing an Investigating Panel. If the Board of Ethics refuses to accept a complaint, it shall issue a written explanation of the reasons for such rejection.

[2] The basis for which the Board of Ethics may refuse to accept a complaint may include, but not be limited to: (i) the number of complaints filed and the total number of pending complaints by the Complainant; (ii) the scope of the complaint; (iii) the nature, content, language or subject matter of the complaint; (iv) the nature, content, language or subject matter of other oral and written communications to the Board of Ethics from the Complainant; and (v) a pattern of conduct that amounts to an abuse of the ethics complaint process or an interference with the operations of the Board of Ethics.

[3] Upon the rejection of a complaint, if the Board of Ethics makes a finding that the complaint was vexatious and brought in bad faith it may provide appropriate relief commensurate with the conduct, including but not limited to, an order that the Board of Ethics need not accept future complaints from the Complainant for a specified period of time.

(c) Appointment of Investigating Panel. An Investigating Panel shall be appointed within 21 days after the next regularly scheduled Board of Ethics meeting following receipt of a complaint by the Board of Ethics. No member of the Investigating Panel shall serve or have served within one year as an Officer or Employee from the Agency at which the Complainant or Respondent serves or formally served within one year as an Officer or Employee. The Investigating Panel members may delete, defer or reject any part of a complaint that does not conform to the requirements specified by the Board of Ethics. If any member of the Board of Ethics initiates or is involved in a complaint, he or she will recuse himself or herself from the Board of Ethics for the purposes of that complaint, including the appointment of the Investigating Panel and any Hearing Board, ~~and an alternate of the Board shall serve in his or her place as to all further proceedings on that complaint.~~