

**CITY OF NORWALK  
BOARD OF ETHICS  
REGUALR MEETING MINUTES – MARCH 26, 2026  
VIA ZOOM VIRTUAL CONFERENCE**

**ATTENDEES:** Amy Jackson Ayala, Catherine Williams, Lori Torrano, Pat Toni.

**STAFF:** Brian Candela.

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Candela called the regular meeting of the Board of Ethics to order at 7:00 p.m. on March 26, 2026.

**II. ROLL CALL**

Ms. Ayala, Mr. Toni, Ms. Torrano, and Ms. Williams were present, constituting a quorum.

**III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Mr. Candela stated that no members of the public were present and that no emails had been received in advance requesting to speak on any agenda items.

**IV. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**

A. Discuss and vote to approve the minutes from the January 22, 2026, regular meeting of the Board of Ethics

Mr. Candela shared the minutes from the January 22, 2026, regular meeting and asked if any revisions were needed. Ms. Ayala and Ms. Williams indicated that they saw no revisions needed.

**\*\*MS. AYALA MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 22, 2026, REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF ETHICS.**

**\*\*MS. WILLIAMS SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**\*\*THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The minutes were approved as presented.

B. Discuss and vote to approve the minutes from the February 26, 2026, regular meeting of the Board of Ethics

Mr. Candela stated that the February 26, 2026, meeting did not occur because a quorum was not achieved and therefore there were no minutes to approve. No action was taken.

**V. OLD BUSINESS**

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

Mr. Candela stated that the item was placed on the agenda to give the public an opportunity to speak, but no members of the public were present. No member of the Board of Ethics wished to speak on the Code of Ethics at this time.

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

Mr. Candela stated that the item was placed on the agenda to give the public an opportunity to speak, but no members of the public were present. Ms. Torrano raised a question about how the Board communicates with complainants when a complaint is dismissed after an initial review or after an investigating panel finds no probable cause. Ms. Torrano noted that the Board does not get into details with the complainant and that the current process in the Citizen's Guide sometimes does not convey that the complaint was taken seriously or that all points were examined, while still maintaining confidentiality. Ms. Torrano asked if there could be a way to assure complainants that the Board had looked at all of their points without disclosing confidential information.

A discussion followed. Mr. Candela explained the difference between an initial dismissal for lack of necessary components and the confidential investigating panel stage, where only the respondent can waive confidentiality. Mr. Candela described the typical process for an investigating panel, including interviews with the complainant, respondent, and other relevant parties, and review of all documents. Ms. Ayala stated that, in her experience, every complaint receives an audience, a conversation, and an investigation. Ms. Torrano agreed that the guide explains the process but emphasized that complainants who are very fired up sometimes feel that the decision was made flippantly.

Mr. Candela, Ms. Torrano, Ms. Ayala, and Mr. Toni discussed possible middle-ground language for decision letters when probable cause is not found, such as noting in general terms the number of people interviewed, the number of pages of documents reviewed, and the amount of time spent on the investigation, without identifying specific individuals or breaching confidentiality. Mr. Candela stated that he was staff and would follow whatever direction the Board preferred, and that the Board could develop standard language or a guide for future responses. The Board agreed to place this specific issue on the agenda for further discussion at the next meeting to reach consensus and possibly create sample language for decision letters. No action was taken.

## **VI. NEW BUSINESS**

#### A. Discuss and vote on Chapter 32 (Code of Ethics), Section 1 (Title; Administration)

Mr. Candela shared his screen and reviewed the proposed revisions to Section 1. He explained that the only change was to update the Board from five full members and two alternates to nine full regular members with no alternates, so that every member would have the same rights and responsibilities. Mr. Candela noted that the last amendment to this section had occurred approximately seven years earlier during a complete overhaul of the Code.

**\*\*MS. TORRANO MOVED TO APPROVE THE PROPOSED CHANGES TO CHAPTER 32, SECTION 1 (TITLE; ADMINISTRATION).**

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

**\*\*THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**\*\*MS. TORRANO MOVED TO SEND THE PROPOSED CHANGES TO CHAPTER 32, SECTION 1 TO THE ORDINANCE COMMITTEE FOR REVIEW AND HOPEFUL APPROVAL.**

**\*\*MS. WILLIAMS SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**\*\*THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

B. Discuss and vote on Chapter 32 (Code of Ethics), Section 3 (Definitions), Hearing Board and Investigating Panel

Mr. Candela shared his screen and reviewed the proposed revisions to the definitions of “Hearing Board” and “Investigating Panel.” He explained that all references to alternates were being removed because the Board would consist of nine full regular members. Mr. Candela further explained that the language was being updated to ensure that no more than two members of a hearing board or investigating panel would be registered members of the same political party, so that each panel would consist of one Republican, one Democrat, and one non-party member. This change aligned with the goal of having nine full members composed of three Republicans, three Democrats, and three non-party persons for equal distribution.

**\*\*MS. AYALA MOVED TO APPROVE THE PROPOSED CHANGES TO CHAPTER 32, SECTION 3 (DEFINITIONS), HEARING BOARD AND INVESTIGATING PANEL.**

**\*\*MS. TORRANO SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**\*\*THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**\*\*MS. TORRANO MOVED TO SEND THE PROPOSED CHANGES TO CHAPTER 32, SECTION 3 TO THE ORDINANCE COMMITTEE FOR REVIEW AND HOPEFUL APPROVAL.**

**\*\*MS. WILLIAMS SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**\*\*THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

C. Discuss and vote on Chapter 32 (Code of Ethics), Section 12 (Board of Ethics), Subsections A, B and C

Mr. Candela shared his screen and reviewed the proposed revisions to Section 12, Subsections A, B, and C2C. For Subsection A, he explained that the Board would now be comprised of nine full members with no more than three registered members of the same political party and no member being a city employee or officer. For Subsection B, he explained that the quorum would be updated from four to five members present and that all alternate references were being removed. For Subsection C2C, he explained that the language regarding an alternate serving in place of a recused member was being removed because there would no longer be alternates. Mr. Candela

noted that these changes supported the overall goal of nine full regular members with a balanced three-three-three political party distribution.

**\*\*MS. TORRANO MOVED TO APPROVE THE PROPOSED CHANGES TO CHAPTER 32, SECTION 12 (BOARD OF ETHICS), SUBSECTIONS A, B AND C.  
\*\*MS. WILLIAMS SECONDED THE MOTION.  
\*\*THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**\*\*MS. AYALA MOVED TO SEND THE PROPOSED CHANGES TO CHAPTER 32, SECTION 12 TO THE ORDINANCE COMMITTEE FOR REVIEW AND HOPEFUL APPROVAL.  
\*\*MS. TONI SECONDED THE MOTION.  
\*\*THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Candela stated that the approved proposed changes to Sections 1, 3, and 12 would be forwarded to the Ordinance Committee for its April 21, 2026 meeting. He encouraged any Board member who wished to attend the Ordinance Committee meeting to do so and offered to read into the record any written comments submitted by email if members could not attend.

## **VII. DISCUSSION**

No discussion items were raised.

## **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.

Mr. Candela stated that no ethics complaints had been received since the January 22, 2026, meeting. The Board did not enter executive session.

## **IX. ADJOURNMENT**

**\*\*MS. TONI MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.  
\*\*MS. WILLIAMS SECONDED THE MOTION.  
\*\*THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:41 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Courtney Baldwin  
Recording Secretary