

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF WARWICK

BY-LAW NUMBER 19 of 2019

Being a By-law to adopt a Code of Conduct for Members of Council and Local Boards

WHEREAS Section 8 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, S.O. 2001, c.25, provides a Municipality has the capacity, rights powers and privileges of a natural person;

AND WHEREAS the *Modernizing Ontario's Municipal Legislation Act, 2016* (Bill 68) was enacted and includes amendments to the *Municipal Act* and the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act* coming into force on March 1, 2019;

AND WHEREAS the establishment of a Code of Conduct for Members of Council reflects the principles of transparent and accountable government;

AND WHEREAS ethics and integrity are essential to the effective and fair operation of government and to the assurance of public confidence and trust in government and in the political process;

AND WHEREAS elected officials are expected to perform their duties in a manner that promotes public confidence and avoids the improper use of their office;

AND WHEREAS there are important conduct obligations established in the *Municipal Act, 2001*; *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*; *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*; and the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* to which Council and Council Members must adhere, a Code of Conduct further ensures that Members of Council share a common basis and understanding for acceptable conduct in addition to the statutory obligations;

AND WHEREAS the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Warwick deems it expedient to adopt a Code of Conduct for Members of Council and Local Boards;

NOW THEREFORE the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Warwick hereby enacts as follows:

1. CODE OF CONDUCT

That the "Code of Conduct", attached hereto as Schedule "A" to this by-law be approved;

2. SEVERABILITY

In the event that section or sections of this by-law are found by a Court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid or ultra virus, such section, sections or parts thereof shall be deemed to be severable, with all other sections or parts of this by-law remaining in the full force and effect.

3. EFFECTIVE DATE

THAT this By-law shall take effect as of March 1, 2019.

READ a first and second time this 4th day of March, 2019.

READ a third time and finally passed this 4th day of March, 2019.

Mayor – Jackie Rombouts

Administrator/Clerk – Amanda Gubbels

Schedule "A" to By-law 19 of 2019

THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE MEMBERS OF COUNCIL AND LOCAL BOARDS OF THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF WARWICK

1. PURPOSE AND PRINCIPLES

- 1.1 The Code sets out and identifies the Township's expectations for its Members and establishes rules for appropriate conduct.
- 1.2 The public expects the highest moral and ethical standards of conduct from Members that it elects. The behaviour and actions of Members is expected to reflect the principles of accountability, transparency, and public trust. Adherence to these standards will protect and maintain the Township's reputation and integrity.
- 1.3 The key statements of principle that underline this Code are as follows:
 - a) the decision-making process of Council is open, accessible and equitable and respects the Township's governance structure;
 - b) public office is not to be used for the personal financial benefit of any Member;
 - c) Township residents should have confidence in the integrity of their local government and of their Members; and
 - d) the conduct of each Member demonstrates fairness, respect for differences and a duty to work with other Members together for the common good.

2. DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 In this Code:
 - a) "**Applicant**" means a person who has applied for an investigation by the Integrity Commissioner of an alleged contravention of the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*;
 - b) "**Application**" means a written request for an investigation with respect to an alleged contravention of the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act;
 - c) "**Clerk**" means the Clerk of the Township or his/her designate;

- d) **“Code”** means the **“Code of Conduct for Council Members”** as established by Council pursuant to Section 223.2 of the Municipal Act, 2001;
- e) **“Complainant”** means a person who has filed a complaint in accordance with this Code;
- f) **“Complaint”** means a written objection filed with the Integrity Commissioner pursuant to this Code respecting a Member;
- g) **“Confidential information”** means any information in the possession of or received in confidence by the Township that the Township is prohibited from disclosing or has decided to refuse to disclose under the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act or other legislation, which includes but is not limited to:
 - (i) information that is disclosed or discussed at a meeting that is closed to the public pursuant to subsection 239(2) of the Municipal Act, 2001;
 - (ii) information that is given verbally in confidence in preparation for or following a meeting that is closed to the public pursuant to subsection 239(2) of the *Municipal Act*, 2001;
 - (iii) personal information as defined in subsection 2(1) of the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*;
 - (iv) advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege or information that concerns litigation or potential litigation, including matters before administrative tribunals, affecting the Township;
 - (v) information that concerns any confidential matters pertaining to personnel, labour relations, or items under negotiation;
 - (vi) price schedules in contract tenders and information about suppliers provided in contract tender or requests for information, quotation or proposal submissions, if such information is given in confidence, implicitly or explicitly;
 - (vii) sources of complaints where the identity of the complainant is given in confidence; or
 - (viii) any information lawfully determined by the Council to be confidential or required to remain or be kept confidential by legislation or order.

- h) **“Council”** means the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Warwick;
- i) **“Gift”** means cash, fees, admission fees, advances, vouchers, invitations, objects of value, services, offers, personal benefits, travel and accommodation or entertainment that are provided to and retained by a Member, that could be seen to be connected directly or indirectly to the performance of the Member’s duties;
- j) **“Harassment”** or **“Harass”** involves engaging in a course of behaviour, comment or conduct, whether it occurs inside or outside the work environment, that is or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome. It includes but is not limited to any behaviour, conduct or comment by a Member that is directed at or is offensive to another person:
 - (i) on the grounds of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, age, handicap, sexual orientation, marital status, or family status, as well as any other grounds under the provisions of the Human Rights Code; or
 - (ii) which is reasonably perceived by the recipient as an intention to bully, embarrass, intimidate or ridicule the recipient.
- k) **“Integrity Commissioner”** means the Integrity Commissioner appointed by Council pursuant to Section 223.3 of the Municipal Act, 2001;
- l) **“Local Board”** is hereby defined as in Section 1(1) and Section 223.1 of the Municipal Act, as amended.
- m) **“Meeting”** means any legally-constituted meeting of Council or a Local Board;
- n) **“Member”** means a member of Council including the Mayor, or a member of a local Board;
- o) **“Social media”** means web-based applications and online forums that allow users to interact, share and publish content such as text, links, photos, audio and video;
- p) **“Staff”** means direct employees of the Township whether full-time, part-time, contract (including employees of staffing agencies) or casual (including students and volunteers);
- q) **“Township”** means the Corporation of the Township of Warwick; and

- r) “**Township property**” includes, but is not limited to, all real and personal property, facilities, vehicles, equipment, supplies, services, staff, documents, intellectual property, computer programs or technological innovations belonging to the Township.

3. APPLICATION

- 3.1 This code applies to all Members of Council and Local Boards.

4. STATUTORY OBLIGATIONS AND CODE OBLIGATIONS

- 4.1 Members of Council have the privilege of attaining elected office. That privilege carries significant responsibilities and obligations with respect to the public trust. In order to strengthen the role of Council and to enhance public trust with respect to the obligations of its Members, this Code is established to govern and regulate the ethical conduct of all Members. This Code also supplements other existing Federal and Provincial legislation and Township by-laws and policies that govern Members' conduct which include but are not limited to the following:

- *Criminal Code of Canada*
- *Municipal Act*
- *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*
- *Municipal Elections Act*
- *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*
- *Ontario Human Rights Code*
- *Planning Act*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act (Violence and harassment in the workplace)*
- *Township of Warwick By-Laws*

5. CONDUCT OF MEMBERS

- 5.1 A Member shall at all times conduct themselves with propriety, decency and respect and with the understanding that all members of the public, other Members and staff are to be treated with dignity, courtesy and respect, recognizing that a Member is always a representative of the Township and of their elected office. A Member shall at all times conduct themselves with decorum and in accordance with the Township's Procedural By-law during any meetings and in a manner that demonstrates fairness, respect for individual differences, and an intention to work together for the common good and in furtherance of the public interest.

6. COMPLIANCE WITH THE CODE OF CONDUCT

6.1 This code applies to every Member. This Code shall be applied to Members of Local Boards, who are not Members of Council, with necessary modifications applied in the discretion of the Integrity Commissioner.

6.2 A Member shall:

- a) observe and comply with every provision of this Code, as well as all other policies and procedures adopted or established by Council affecting the Member, acting in his or her capacity as a Member;
- b) respect the integrity of the Code and inquiries and investigations conducted under it; and
- c) co-operate in every way possible in securing compliance with the application and enforcement of the Code.

6.3 No Member shall:

- a) undertake any act of reprisal or threaten reprisal against a complainant or any other person for providing relevant information to the Integrity Commissioner or any other person; or
- b) obstruct the Integrity Commissioner, or any other municipal official involved in applying or furthering the objectives or requirements of this Code, in the carrying out of such responsibilities, or pursuing any such objective.

7. TRANSPARENCY AND OPENNESS IN DECISION MAKING

7.1 Members shall:

- a) conduct Council business and their duties in an open and transparent manner so that stakeholders can understand the process and rationale which has been used to reach decisions;
- b) ensure the public has input and receives notice regarding Council's decision making processes in accordance with the Procedural By-law;
- c) ensure compliance with the *Municipal Act*, *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*, *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, and other applicable legislation regarding open meetings, accountability and transparency.

8. ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND CONFIDENTIALITY

8.1 A member shall:

- a) only be entitled to have access to information in the possession of the Township that is relevant to matters before Council or a Committee or that is relevant to their role as Members of Council. Otherwise, they have the same access rights to information as any member of the public; and
- b) have a continuing obligation to keep information confidential, even if the Member ceases to be a Member.

8.2 No Member shall:

- a) obtain access, or attempt to gain access, to confidential information in the custody or control of the Township except in accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act;
- b) disclose, release or publish by any means, including social media any confidential information acquired by virtue of his or her office, in any form, except when required or authorized by Council or otherwise by law to do so;
- c) provide to any other person to disclose, release, publish any confidential information acquired by virtue of his or her office, in any form, except when required or authorized by Council or otherwise by law to do so;
- d) use confidential information for personal or private gain or benefit, or for the personal or private gain or benefit of any other person or body; or
- e) disclose or discuss, through written, electronic or verbal communication, to any individual or corporate third party, any information that has been or will be discussed at a closed session meeting of Council or a Committee until such time that Council or a Committee has determined or has been advised by staff that the matter, or any part of the matter, can be made public subject to review by the head or designate under the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act or if directed to do so by a court.

9. UNDUE OR IMPROPER USE OF INFLUENCE

9.1 No Member shall use their status as a Member of Council to improperly influence the actions or decisions of staff or others to the private

advantage of the Member or his or her family, employees or business associates.

9.2 This applies to but is not limited to:

- a) attempts to secure preferential treatment beyond activities in which Members normally engage on behalf of their constituents as part of their official duties.
- b) the holding out of the prospect or promise of future advantage through a member's supposed influence within Council in return for a member's action or inaction.
- c) acting as a paid agent of a third party before Council or its committees or any agency board or commission of the Municipality or before staff for purposes of influencing a decision favourable to the third party

10. STAFF AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS

10.1 Only Council as a whole and no single Member including the Mayor, has the authority to direct employees, approve budgets, policy, and other such matters, unless specifically authorized by Council.

10.2 A Member shall:

- a) respect staff and acknowledge that staff is required to provide objective advice while remaining neutral, carry out directions of Council as a whole, and administer the policies of the Township without undue influence from any Member.
- b) respect the administrative structure and direct any staff performance concerns through the appropriate supervisory staff.

10.3 No Member Shall:

- a) maliciously or falsely impugn the professional or ethical reputation of any staff;
- b) compel staff to engage in partisan political activities, or subject staff to threat or discrimination for refusing to engage in such activities; or
- c) use their authority or influence to threaten, intimidate, or coerce staff or improperly interfere the lawful exercise of the duties of staff.

10.4 All Members shall have respect for the professional capacities of the staff of the Municipality. No member shall maliciously or falsely injure the professional or ethical reputation, or the prospects or practices of staff.

10.5 No member shall compel staff in engage in partisan political activism to be subjected to threats or discrimination for refusing to engage in such activates. No member shall use, or attempt to use, their authority or influence for the purpose of intimidating, threatening, coercing, commanding or influencing any staff member with the intent of interfering with that persons duties, including any duty to disclose improper activity.

11. GIFTS AND BENEFITS

11.1 No Member shall accept a gift or personal benefit that is connected directly or indirectly with the performance of their duties unless authorized by one of the exceptions below.

11.2 Members of Council shall not accept gifts that would, to a reasonable member of the public, appear to be in gratitude for influence, to induce influence, or otherwise to go beyond the necessary and appropriate public functions involved.

11.3 For these purposes, a gift, benefit or hospitality provided with the Member's knowledge to a Member's spouse, child, or parent, or to a Member's staff that is connected directly or indirectly to the performance of the Member's duties is deemed to be a gift to that Member.

11.4 Notwithstanding Section 11.1 to 11.3 the following exceptions are applicable:

- a) gifts received as an incident of protocol or social obligation that normally accompany the responsibilities of elected office;
- b) gifts that are not connected directly or indirectly with the performance or duties of office;
- c) compensation authorized by law;
- d) a reimbursement of reasonable expenses incurred in the performance of activities connected with a legitimate municipal purpose;
- e) political contributions that are otherwise offered, accepted and reported in accordance with applicable law;
- f) services provided without compensation by persons volunteering their time;
- g) a suitable memento of a function with nominal value, honouring the Member or the Township;

- h) food, lodging, transportation and entertainment provided by provincial, regional and local governments or political sub-divisions of them, and by the federal government or the government of a foreign country;
- i) food, beverages and/or admission fees provided by banquets, receptions or similar events if attendance is the result of protocol or social obligation consistent with the responsibilities of office, and the person extending the invitation has done so infrequently and that person or a representative of the organization is in attendance;

12. USE OF TOWNSHIP PROPERTY AND SERVICES

12.1 A Member shall:

- a) only use Township property, equipment, services and/or supplies other than for purposes connected with the discharge of their municipal duties or associated community activities of which Council has been advised and approved.
- b) not obtain any personal financial gain or advantage from the use of Township property.
- c) not obtain financial gain from the use of municipally developed intellectual property, computer programs, technological innovations or other patentable items.

13. USE OF MUNICIPAL INFORMATION

- 13.1. No member shall use information gained in the execution of his or her duties that is not available to the general public for any purposes other than his or her official duties.
- 13.2. No member shall disclose or release by any means to any member of the public, any confidential information acquired by virtue of his or her office, either oral or written, except when required by law and authorized by Council to do so.
- 13.3. No member shall use confidential information for personal or private advantage or gain or, for the gain of relatives or any person or corporation (other than the Municipality).
- 13.4. No member shall access or attempt to gain access to confidential information in the custody or under the control of the Municipality unless it is necessary for the performance of his or her duties.

14. POLITICAL ACTIVITY

14.1 Members may not use Township resources for any type of political activity during a municipal election and at any other time, including promoting or opposing the candidacy of any person to elected office in any municipal, provincial and federal campaign.

15. HARASSMENT

15.1. No member shall bully or harass any other member, any staff, or any member of the public.

16. ENCOURAGEMENT OF RESPECT FOR THE TOWNSHIP AND ITS BY- LAWS

16.1. A Member shall:

- a) encourage the public, prospective contractors and members of the public, and their colleagues to abide by the Township's by-laws and policies, including this Code; and
- b) accurately communicate the decisions of Council even if they disagree with the majority decision of Council, and by so doing affirm the respect and integrity in the decision-making processes of Council.

17. SOCIAL MEDIA

17.1. A Member shall:

- a) adhere to any and all Township policies and guidelines, regarding social media use; and
- b) always identify themselves without any attempt to cover, disguise or mislead as to their identity or status as an elected representative of the Township when using social media.

17.2 No member shall:

- a) use social media to publish anything that is dishonest, untrue, offensive, disrespectful, constitutes harassment, is defamatory or misleading in any way.

18. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

18.1. No member of council shall discharge any official duty or participate in any meeting of Council or its committees where they have a real or apparent conflict of interest.

19. CONDUCT TOWARDS THE PUBLIC

19.1. In their interaction with the public, Members shall conduct themselves with decorum at all times and shall not engage in rude or intimidating behaviour towards members of the public.

19.2. No member shall bully or harass a member of the public.

20. ROLE OF THE INTEGRITY COMMISSIONER

20.1. The Township shall appoint an Integrity Commissioner, under Section 223.3 of the *Municipal Act*, 2001, who is an independent officer and who will report directly to Council and be responsible for carrying out his or her functions in accordance with the *Municipal Act*, 2001 and any other functions assigned by Council, in an independent manner.

20.2. The Integrity Commissioner shall provide the following services:

- a) the application of the Code of Conduct for Members of Council and the Code of Conduct for Members of Local Boards or of either of them.
- b) the application of any procedures, rules and policies of the municipality and Local Boards governing the ethical behaviour of Members of Council and of Local Boards or of either of them.
- c) the application of sections 5, 5.1 and 5.2 of the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act* to Members of Council or of Local Boards.
- d) requests from Members of Council and of Local Boards for advice respecting their obligations under the Code of Conduct applicable to the member.
- e) requests from Members of Council and of Local Boards for advice respecting their obligations under a procedure, rule or policy of the municipality or of the local board, as the case may be, governing the ethical behaviour of Members.
- f) requests from Members of Council and of Local Boards for advice respecting their obligations under the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*.
- g) the provision of educational information to Members of Council, Members of Local Boards, the municipality and the public about the

municipality's Code of Conduct for Members of Council and Members of Local Boards and about the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*.

21. COMPLAINT/APPLICATION PROCESS

- 21.1. A complaint that a member has contravened the Code may be initiated by any person, any Member of Council, or by Council as follows:
- a) a complaint shall be made in writing and shall be sent directly to the Integrity Commissioner by mail, e-mail, fax or courier;
 - b) a complaint must be signed and dated by the complainant who shall be an identifiable individual (complaints may not be submitted by any group, organization or corporation);
 - c) a complaint shall include:
 - (i) an explanation, with specific reference to sections of the Code, as to why the issue raised is alleged to be a contravention of the Code;
 - (ii) any evidence in support of the allegation; and
 - (iii) any witnesses in support of the allegation must be identified.
- 21.2 If filed with the Integrity Commissioner after March 1, 2019, an Application to the Integrity Commissioner to inquire into an alleged contravention of Sections 5, 5.1 or 5.2 of the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act* ("MCIA") may be made by an elector as defined in Section 1 of the MCIA or by a person demonstrably acting in the public interest, as follows:
- a) an application shall be made in writing and shall be sent directly to the Integrity Commissioner by mail, e-mail, fax or courier;
 - b) an Application must be signed and dated by the complainant who shall be an identifiable individual (complaints may not be submitted by any group, organization or corporation);
 - c) an Application shall include:
 - (i) An explanation with specific reference to sections of the MCIA, as to why the issue raised is alleged to be a contravention of the Act;
 - (ii) any evidence in support of the allegation;

- (iii) any witnesses in support of the allegation must be identified; and
 - (iv) a statutory declaration attesting to the fact that the applicant became aware of the alleged contravention not more than six weeks before the date of application in accordance with Section 223.4.1 (5) & (6) of the Municipal Act, as amended.
 - d) An Application may only be made within six weeks after the applicant became aware of the alleged contravention and otherwise in compliance with Section 223.4.1(5) & (6) of the Municipal Act, as amended.
- 21.3 The Integrity Commissioner shall undertake an initial review of a complaint that has been filed and shall determine whether the matter relates to non-compliance with the Code or other corporate policy applying to Members. The Integrity Commissioner shall have no power or jurisdiction to investigate or otherwise deal with the complaint, if the complaint is not alleging a contravention of the Code or other corporate policy applying to Members or if the complaint relates to the following matters:
- (i) **Criminal Matter** – if the complaint relates to an allegation of a criminal nature consistent with the Criminal Code, the complainant shall be advised that pursuit of such an allegation must be made through the appropriate police service;
 - (ii) **Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy** – if the complaint relates to a matter under the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, the complainant shall be referred to the Clerk.
 - (iii) **Municipal Elections Act** – if the complaint relates to the enforcement of the Municipal Elections Act, the complainant shall be referred to the Compliance Audit Process if the matter relates to campaign finances or to such other avenues of investigation as dictated by that Act.
- 21.4 If the Integrity Commissioner determines they do not have jurisdiction as described in Section 16.3 the Integrity Commissioner shall advise the complainant in writing accordingly.
- 21.5 The Integrity Commissioner may dispose of a complaint on the basis that it is not within the jurisdiction of the Integrity Commissioner in a summary manner and may do so confidentially or report same to Council. The Integrity Commissioner may also seek further information or clarification from the complainant and shall endeavour to apprise the complainant of

subsequent steps and the processing of the complaint and any ensuing investigation.

- 21.6 If the Integrity Commissioner is of the opinion that a complaint is frivolous or vexatious or is not made in good faith, or that there are no grounds or insufficient grounds for conducting an investigation, the Integrity Commissioner may choose not to investigate or, if already commenced, may terminate any investigation, or may dispose of the complaint in a summary manner. The Integrity Commissioner shall advise the complainant in writing of his or her decision and reasons for not undertaking an investigation or terminating it.
- 21.7 If the Integrity Commissioner has decided to commence an investigation of a complaint (except where otherwise required by the *Public Inquiries Act*, 2009, if applicable), the Integrity Commissioner shall provide a copy of the complaint and supporting evidence to the Member whose conduct is in question with a request for a written response to be provided within ten (10) days. The Integrity Commissioner may provide the response from the Member to the complainant with a request for a written reply also within ten (10) days.
- 21.8 The Integrity Commissioner shall review the written responses and may, if necessary discuss the matter with anyone that the Integrity Commissioner considers is relevant to the complaint. The Integrity Commissioner may access and examine any of the information described in subsections 223.4(3) and (4) of the *Municipal Act, 2001* and may access any Township workplace relevant to the complaint, including any documents or records under the custody or control of the Township.
- 21.9 Before finalizing a report to Council which recommends sanctions, the Integrity Commissioner shall provide the Member with the basis for their findings and any sanctions that may be recommended. The Member shall have the opportunity to comment further, either in writing, verbally or in person to the Integrity Commissioner on the proposed findings and sanctions.
- 21.10 Upon conclusion of a complaint investigation, the Integrity Commissioner shall:
 - a) issue a report to Council on the findings of the investigation and, where there is a finding of contravention of the Code, the report shall contain the detailed findings, any recommended sanctions, or any settlement; and

- b) provide a copy of the final report to the Member at the same time as the final report is made available to the Clerk and to the complainant at the same time as the report becomes public.
- 21.11 Upon conclusion of an Application investigation, the Integrity Commissioner may, if he/she considers it appropriate, apply to a Judge under section 8 of the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act* for a determination as to whether the member has contravened Section 5, 5.1 or 5.2 of the Act.
- 21.12 The Integrity Commissioner shall:
- a) advise the applicant if he or she will not be making an application to a judge; and
 - b) after deciding whether or not to apply to a judge, provide a written report providing reasons for the decision.
- 21.13 The Integrity Commissioner's report on a complaint shall be placed on an agenda for consideration at a public meeting of the Committee of the Whole or Council, in accordance with the Procedural By-law, as determined by the Clerk in consultation with the Integrity Commissioner.

22. PENALTIES

- 22.1 Upon receipt of a final report and the recommendations of the Integrity Commissioner, Council may, where the Integrity Commissioner has determined there was a violation of the Code, impose either of the following two (2) penalties:
- a) a reprimand; or
 - b) suspension of remuneration paid to the Member in respect of his or her services as a Member for up to ninety (90) days.
- 22.2 Council may also take the following actions:
- a) removal from Membership of a Local Board;
 - b) removal as chair of a Local Board;
 - c) request the repayment of reimbursement of monies received;
 - d) request the return of property or reimbursement of its value;

23. INVESTIGATION OF ALLEGATIONS OF BREACHES OF THE CODE

- 23.1 The Integrity Commissioner for the Municipality, appointed pursuant to 223.3 (1) of the Municipal Act, is responsible for the conduct of investigations of breaches of this Code. Complaints about and investigations of allegations of Code breaches or violations shall be conducted in accordance with ss. 223.3 to 223.5 of the Municipal Act, 2001.
- 23.2 In all cases, the Integrity Commissioner shall first do an initial assessment in Accordance with schedule A-2 in order to determine whether or not to proceed with an investigation.

24. REPORTS

- 24.1 With respect to investigations, the Commissioner shall report his opinions and recommendations to Council in accordance with s. 223.4(5) and s.223.6(2) of the Municipal Act, 2001. The Commissioner shall report on investigations whether or not in his opinion a breach of the Code has occurred and on recommendations to rectify a breach where it has occurred.
- 24.2 With respect to refusal to investigate, after an initial assessment done in accordance with Schedule A-2, the Commissioner shall indicate his determination to the person who has alleged a breach and the reasons for his determination and shall similarly report to the Clerk. The Commissioner shall not provide a separate report to Council on such refusals.
- 24.3 The Commissioner shall provide a brief annual report to Council on his activities during the year including refusals to investigate, on investigations and their outcomes and on any matters of interest respecting the development of ethics issues in municipal government.
- 24.4 The Commissioner may periodically report to Council on the operation of this Code of Conduct and make recommendations for change as appropriate.

25. COUNCIL DECISION

- 25.1 The Integrity' Commissioner's reports shall be available to the public.
- 25.2 Despite s. 25.1 above, subject to s. 239 of the *Municipal Act*, 2001 the Commissioner's reports may be considered in camera where appropriate prior to a decision being rendered by Council in open meeting.
- 25.3 All decisions of Council taken in respect of these reports must be taken in open Council.

25.4 Council shall render a decision regarding the Integrity Commissioner's recommendation(s) no later than 30 days after the submission of a Commissioner's report.

25.5 The decision regarding implementation of any recommended action by the Integrity Commissioner is at the sole discretion of Council with a simple majority vote in accordance with the Procedural bylaw and said decision shall be final.

26. ADVICE

26.1 Members of Council may consult with or seek advice from the Integrity Commissioner concerning conduct matters in accordance with this Code.

26.2 Members may not seek advice of a matter which is the subject of an ongoing investigation of the matter by the Integrity Commissioner.

27. OBSTRUCTION AND REPRISAL

27.1 Members of Council shall respect the integrity of the Code of Conduct and investigations conducted under it. Any reprisal or threat of reprisal against a complainant or anyone else for providing relevant information to the Integrity commissioner is prohibited. Withholding or destruction of documents or any other obstruction of an investigation is prohibited. The Commissioner shall report such breaches to the Council with recommendations above.

28. INTERPRETATION

28.1 This code shall be interpreted as follows:

- a) the headings in the Code form no part of the Code but shall be deemed to be inserted for convenience of reference only;
 - (i) all changes in number and gender shall be construed as may be required by the context;
 - (ii) the reference to any Township official shall be deemed to include the Township official who performs the duties of such referenced person from time to time, including their delegates;
 - (iii) the reference to Integrity Commissioner shall be deemed to include any person who has been delegated powers and duties by the Integrity Commissioner in accordance with subsection 223.3(3) of the Municipal Act, 2001;

- (iv) the reference to a statute or regulation, except as may be otherwise provided, shall be deemed to include such statute or regulation as may be amended or re-enacted from time to time or its successor legislation, and, in each case, the regulations made from time to time pursuant thereto;
- (v) the reference to a by-law, resolution, policy or guideline made, enacted, established or adopted by the Township, including the Code, except as may be otherwise provided, shall be deemed to include such by-law, resolution, policy or guideline as may be amended or re-enacted from time to time or its successor by-law resolution policy or guideline made, enact, established or adopted from time to time; and
- (vi) if a court of competent jurisdiction should declare any section or part of a section of this Code to be invalid, such section or part of a section shall not be construed as having persuaded or influenced Council to pass the remainder of this Code and it is hereby declared that the remainder of this Code shall be valid and remain in force.

AND THAT this By-Law comes into force on March 1, 2019.

ENACTED THIS 4th day of March, 2019.