



TOWN OF BEAUFORT BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS CODE OF ETHICS AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST POLICY

Purpose

Implicit in the operations and conduct of the Board of Commissioners for the Town of Beaufort (“BOC” or “Board”) is the constant expectation that the BOC recognizes that in all their transactions and at all times they are subject to the duty of undivided loyalty to the Town. Accordingly, the Board adopts this Code of Ethics and Conflicts of Interest Policy to ensure that the Board will obey the law and uphold the trust of the citizens of the Town.

Code of Ethics

The purpose of this Code of Ethics is to establish guidelines for ethical standards of conduct for the Board of Commissioners and to help to determine what conduct is appropriate. It should not be considered a substitute for the law or for a Board member’s best judgment.

1. Board members should obey all laws applicable to their official actions as members of the Board. Board members should be guided by the spirit as well as the letter of the law in whatever they do. Board members should endeavor to keep up to date about new or ongoing legal or ethical issues they may face in their position.
2. Board members should act with integrity and independence from improper influence as they exercise the duties of their offices. Characteristics and behaviors consistent with this standard include behaving respectfully to all, exhibiting trustworthiness, and using their best independent judgment to promote the common good.
3. Board members should avoid impropriety in the exercise of their official duties. Their official actions should be above reproach. If a Board member believes that his or her actions, while legal and ethical, may be misunderstood, he or she should seek the advice of the Board’s attorney and should consider publicly disclosing the facts of the situation and the steps taken to resolve it.
4. Board members should faithfully perform the duties of their offices. They should act as especially responsible citizens whom others can trust and respect. They should set a good example for others in the community, keeping in mind that trust and respect must continually be earned. Board members should faithfully attend and prepare for meetings, and be willing to bear their fair share of the BOC’s workload.
5. Board members should conduct the affairs of the Board in an open and public manner. They should comply with all applicable laws governing open meetings and public records, recognizing that doing so is an important way to be worthy of the public’s trust and provide an environment of transparency.

Conflict of Interest

The nature of the obligations of the Board of Commissioners is such that it demands positive action on the part of the Commissioners to affirmatively protect and promote the interest of the Town committed to their care, and at all times to avoid situations where their self-interests, actual, perceived, or apparent, may be of such nature or extent as to conflict with performance of that primary responsibility. A conflict of interest is defined as an actual or perceived interest by a Board member in an action that results in, or has the appearance of resulting in, individual personal or professional gain. The scope of human activity is so broad that it is not possible to enumerate here all possible areas in which a conflict of interest might arise. Consequently, the following is an illustrative list only, and is not intended to proscribe all aspects of the conduct of the Commissioners:

1. No Commissioner should use his or her position or the knowledge gained therein in such manner that creates a conflict between the Town's interests and his or her personal interests. Both actual and perceived conflicting interests are to be avoided.
2. Commissioners should refrain from transmitting any knowledge of Town matters or decisions or any other information which might be prejudicial to the interest of the Town to any person other than in connection with the discharge of their duties as Town Commissioners.
3. Strict compliance with the provisions of applicable statutes, laws, and regulations is expected, whether local, state or federal.
4. Whenever a Commissioner has a personal, professional, or financial interest in a matter under review by the Board, whether individually or through a relationship with another party that has or may have business dealings with the Town, he or she shall disclose that interest to the Mayor (or in the case of the Mayor, to the Town Manager) for proper consideration and action.
5. Whenever a Commissioner has an opportunity to engage in a transaction in which the Town would otherwise wish to engage, he or she shall disclose that interest to the Mayor (or in the case of the Mayor, to the Town Manager) for proper consideration and action.
6. If a Commissioner is in a position where access to the Town's confidential information may materially influence his or her decisions regarding another party engaged in business with the Town, he or she shall refrain from accessing or using that information.
7. If a Commissioner is in a position where access to the Town's confidential information may materially influence his or her personal financial or investment decisions, he or she shall refrain from accessing that information and not use any confidential information already received to benefit himself or herself or anyone else.
8. If a Commissioner has a contractual relationship with or a supervising role over an existing or potential client or contractor who provides services to the Town, he or she shall disclose that interest to the Mayor (or in the case of the Mayor, to the Town Manager).

Commissioners shall comply with all laws and requirements governing conflicts of interest, self-benefiting, gifts and favors, and misuse of confidential information, as required by N.C.G.S. §§14-234, 14-234.1, and 133-32.

If at any time an elected official finds that they are in doubt as to the proper application of the Town's policy on conflicts of interest with respect to any particular situation, or they find that they might have

a financial interest or outside relationship which might involve a conflict of interest, they should immediately make all the facts known to the Mayor (or in the event of the Mayor, to the Town Manager) for proper consideration and action.