

Re: Pugwash Village Commission's Code of Conduct.

The purpose of this Code is to establish guidelines for the ethical and inter-personal conduct of the Commissioners of the Village of Pugwash.

The public expects the highest standards of professionalism from Commissioners elected to the Village Commission. As agents of the public whose primary duty is to address the needs of the residents of the Village, Commissioners are entrusted with upholding and adhering to the Municipal Government Act and the Village's By-laws and Policies as well as all applicable Provincial and Federal laws.

Also as public servants, Commissioners must adhere to a high standard of morality in the conduct of their official duties and faithfully fulfill the responsibilities of their office, regardless of their personal and financial interest.

Please note, where there is any conflict between the Code of Conduct and the requirements of any statute of the Provincial and/or Federal Government; the Provincial and/or Federal statutes shall take precedence.

POLICY

1. Commissioners shall at all times carry on the business of the Village truly, faithfully, and impartially to the best of their knowledge and ability in accordance with the Municipal Government Act (Part 18), while maintaining:
 - **INTERGRITY**- by giving priority to the interests of the residents of Pugwash over a personal/private individual(s)/group(s) interests;
 - **HONESTY**- by being truthful and open;
 - **OBJECTIVITY**- by making decisions based on a thorough and reasonable analysis of facts;
 - **ACCOUNTABILITY**- by being accountable to each other and to the residents of the Village for decisions and financial expenditures taken;
 - **LEADERSHIP**- by confronting challenges and providing direction on the issues of the day.

2. Commissioners shall act in good faith at all times, putting public interest above personal interest.
3. Commissioners shall not show favoritism or bias toward any vendor, contractor or others doing business with the Village. Commissioners are prohibited from accepting gifts or favours from any vendor, contractor or others doing business with the Village and/or through a family member or friend, which could be considered (either real or perceived) as reasonable suspicion of influence of favours or disadvantage to any individual or organization.
4. Commissioners shall be mindful of issues involving a Conflict of Interest (either direct or indirect), and will declare such Conflict of Interest when they occur. REF: Conflict of Interest Policy No. 2.
5. Commissioners shall not disclose or release to any members of the public; including but not limited to individuals, organizations/groups and/or media, any confidential information acquired by virtue of their position as a Commissioner, which has been shared in confidentiality (i.e. In Camera or Committee of the Whole Meetings), in either oral or written form except when required by law or authorized by the Village Commission to do so.
6. Commissioners shall not use confidential information for personal or private gain; or for the gain of relatives/friends; or a corporation, organization or group of which a Commissioner is a member, investor, employee, owner or partner.
7. Commissioners seeking information relevant to Village business from staff will do so through the office of the Village Clerk/Treasurer and/or Village Chair. Commissioners seeking information through the Freedom of Information and Privacy (FOIPOP) Act, in relation to Village business will do so through the office of the Village Clerk/Treasurer and/or Village Commission Chair.
8. Commissioners shall make every attempt to attend all Village Commission meetings and those meeting to which they have been appointed by the Commission as their representative. REF: Committee Representation Policy. However, when this is not possible, it is the responsibility of the said Commissioner to make known to the Village Clerk/Treasurer and/or the Village Commission Chair their unavailability/expected absence, prior to the appointed time of said meeting.
9. Commissioners will recognize that the expenditures of Village funds is a public trust and will endeavor at all times to ensure that such funds are expended efficiently, economically and in the best interest of the Village as a whole.
10. Commissioners will not request the use of Village owned equipment, materials, property or staff time for personal convenience/profit., except where such privileges/services are made available/granted to the general public.

- Commissioners shall ensure that the business of the Commission is conducted in an efficient manner and shall avoid waste, abuse and extravagance in the provision or use of Village resources.
11. No Commissioner shall be granted special consideration, treatment and/or advantage nor shall they in turn grant any special consideration, treatment and/or advantage to any citizen, organization/group or company beyond that which is accorded to all.
 12. Commissioners shall create a working environment free from discrimination, bullying and harassment while demonstrating a high standard of professionalism by displaying a dignified, understanding and respectful attitude toward the Chair, fellow Commissioners, staff, corporate/contractual employees, other government level department/employees and members of the public present during Village monthly meetings; at any proceedings called by the Commission and/or other meetings at which the Commission is represented. Meetings shall provide an environment for transparent, respectful and healthy debate on matters requiring decision-making.
 13. Commissioners are also expected to:
 - a. avoid hostility and bitterness during meeting;
 - b. observe appropriate/proper decorum and behavior;
 - c. encourage full and open discussions on all relevant matters;
 - d. will not withhold/conceal pertinent information from fellow commissioners.
 14. Commissioners will not pursue nor involve themselves in any procedure (planned or otherwise) calculated to embarrass a fellow Commissioner/staff of the Village; nor shall they make disparaging remarks (in or out of village meetings) about other Commissioners/staff and/or their opinions; but will reserve the right to make respectful and honest criticism if a situation warrants.
 15. Commissioners will abide and respect the majority decisions of the Commission even if they should disagree with such decisions and shall recognize and respect the responsibility of the Village Chair to accurately communicate said decisions made by the Commission. The Village Commission Chair shall act as spokesperson for the Commission unless another Commissioner has been assigned that duty by the Commission as a whole.
 16. Commissioners shall recognize the importance of working constructively with other levels of governments and recognized organizations in Nova Scotia and beyond in order to achieve the goals of the Village. Therefore commissioners shall endeavor to keep informed on all local, provincial, and national programs/developments which may be of significance to the Village of Pugwash.

17. Commissioners will accept that effective and well informed governance of the Village is critical to ensuring that decisions are made in the best interest of the residents and on a timely basis. Thus Commissioners shall endeavor to make educated decisions by gathering reliable information from other Commissioners, and when/where applicable, from individual Village residents, Village organizations/groups and/or persons from other levels of government.(ie Municipal/Provincial /Federal)

Commissioners who have reason to believe that this Code has been breached in any way are encouraged to bring their concerns forward to the Village Commission. No adverse action shall be taken against any Village Commissioner/staff who, acting in good faith and on reliable information, brings forward such information.

Any reported violation of this Code will be subject to an investigation by the Commission or Commission authorized staff. Violation of this Code by a Commissioner may constitute a cause for corrective action. If an investigation finds a Commissioner has breached a provision of the Code of Conduct, the Village Commission may impose corrective action in proportion to the nature and severity of the breach, which may include a formal warning or public reprimand to said Commissioner.

Members shall acknowledge the importance of the principals contained in this Code, which will be self regulated, by signing a “Statement of Commitment to the Code” (Attachment “1 B”) within seven (7) days of taking the Commissioner’s Oath pursuant to section 147 of the Municipal Election Act, R.S.N.S.1989, c.300.

See also Attachment “1 A”: Confidentiality / Probity

See also Attachment “1 B”: Commissioner’s Pledge

See also Attachment “1 C”: Commissioner’s Declaration of Confidentiality

Policy Approved on: _____

Village Commission Chair

Village Clerk Treasurer