



**VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE LOCAL ETHICS
COMMISSION**

Tuesday, June 17, 2025 – 6:00 PM
Village Hall – 400 Park Avenue – River Forest, IL 60305
First Floor Community Room

AGENDA

Public comments sent in advance of the meeting are shared with the Commission. You may submit your written public comments via email in advance of the meeting to: mwalsh@vrf.us.

You may listen to the meeting by participating in a Zoom webinar below:
https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_3oQtLIO1THKIN1cqoK5V4w

The agenda is as follows:

- I. Call to Order/Roll Call
- II. Citizen Comments
- III. Approval of Meeting Minutes – March 5, 2025.
- IV. Old Business
 - a. Discussion and Potential Recommendation on Amendments to the Village's Ethics Ordinance.
- V. New Business
- VI. Other Business
- VII. Adjournment

ADA Compliance: Any individual with a disability requesting a reasonable accommodation in order to participate in a public meeting should contact the Village at least 24 hours in advance of the scheduled meeting in person at Village Hall by telephone at 708.366.8500 or by email: mwalsh@vrf.us. Every effort will be made to allow for meeting participation.

**VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST LOCAL ETHICS COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES**

March 5th, 2025

A special meeting of the Local Ethics Commission was held on March 5th, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. in the First Floor Community Room at the River Forest Village Hall, 400 Park Avenue.

I. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. Upon roll call, the following persons were:

Present: Chair Daley (Virtual,) Commissioner Ignoffo, and Commissioner Degroff.

Absent: None.

Also Present: Village Administrator Matt Walsh, Deputy Clerk/Management Analyst Luke Masella, Village Attorney Lance Malina

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Degroff to allow Chair Daley to participate virtually. Seconded by Commissioner Ignoffo.

AYES: Commissioner Ignoffo and Commissioner Degroff.

NAYS: None.

Motion Passes.

II. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Corey Gimbel made a public comment requesting documents related to the previous meeting.

Commissioner DeGroff noted having discussed the format of the documents with Mr. Gimbel.

Administrator Walsh provided background on the Ethics Commission's communication to the Village Board, including its request to pause any further discussions regarding the Economic Development Commission complaint.

Margie Cekander made a public comment regarding her recent complaint submitted to the Ethics Commission. She encouraged the Commission to take its time in reviewing and updating the ethics ordinance to ensure it is as effective as possible. Ms. Cekander also raised concerns about discrepancies between a previous draft of the ordinance and the current version. She then raised concerns about how her complaint was handled by the Village

III. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES – FEBRUARY 19TH, 2025

Local Ethics Commission Meeting Minutes
March 5th, 2025

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Degroff and SECONDED by Commissioner Ignoffo to approve the meeting minutes of the February 19th, 2025, meeting of the Local Ethics Commission as presented.

AYES: Commissioner Ignoffo and Chair Daley.

NAYS: None.

ABSTAIN: Commissioner Degroff.

Motion Passes.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

a. Discussion and Potential Recommendation on Amendments to the Village's Ethics Ordinance.

Chair Daley, Commissioners Ignoffo and DeGroff, Village Administrator Matt Walsh, and Village Attorney Lance Malina reviewed the proposed changes to the existing ethics code submitted by members of the Ethics Commission.

Among other matters, the group discussed provisions of the code pertaining to anonymity, the filing and handling of complaints, the number of meetings required to review a complaint, the role of staff, and mandatory reporting responsibilities. The Commission also underscored the need for consistency and uniformity throughout the code.

Commissioner DeGroff noted that she may present additional language at the next meeting regarding anonymity and clarifying which Village personnel have access to complaints.

The Commission agreed to increase the fines in the Ordinance, but Village Attorney Malina noted that he would have to confirm the legal limit.

The Commission discussed whether anonymous complaints would be allowed.

The Commission agreed that all complaints will be shared with all commissioners upon receipt.

Chair Daley stated she would revise the draft document and distribute it to others to edit further in advance of the next Commission meeting.

The Commission tentatively set the next meeting for April 3rd at 10:00am.

V. NEW BUSINESS

None.

VI. OTHER BUSINESS

Local Ethics Commission Meeting Minutes
March 5th, 2025

None.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Ignoffo and SECONDED by Commissioner Degroff to adjourn the March 5th 2025, meeting of the Local Ethics Commission at 7:59pm.

AYES: Commissioner Ignoffo, Commissioner Degroff, and Chair Daley.

NAYS: None.

Motion Passes.

Respectfully submitted:

Luke Masella
Deputy Village Clerk/Management Analyst

Approved:

Peggy Daley, Chair
Local Ethics Commission

Date

CHAPTER 23 ETHICS

SECTION:

- 1-21-1: Preamble
- 1-23-2: Definitions
- 1-23-3: Prohibited Political Activities
- 1-23-4: Gift Ban
- 1-23-5: Ethical Standards
- 1-23-6: Duty to Report
- 1-23-7: Ethics Advisor
- 1-23-8: Ethics Commission
- 1-23-9: Enforcement and Penalties
- 1-23-10: How to Make a Complaint

1-23-1: PREAMBLE AND OTHER LAWS

The purpose of this Chapter is to establish a code of ethical conduct for all “Village Covered Individuals” and “Contractors,” as defined in Section 1-23-2 below. The requirements of this Chapter are intended to meet or exceed the ethics requirements imposed in State or Federal law on Village Covered Individuals and Contractors.

These ethical standards are intended to be self-enforcing and are most effective when Village Covered Individuals and Contractors are thoroughly familiar with and embrace the ethical standards. Therefore, the ethical standards shall be included in the regular orientations for all Village Covered Individuals and Contractors. Upon entering office, employment or service to the Village, as the case may be, each Village Covered Individual shall sign a statement affirming they have read and understand the ethical standards in this Chapter.

To the extent State or Federal law, or another Village ordinance, policy or requirement, imposes stricter ethical standards than in this Chapter, the strictest standards shall apply. Additional ethics requirements applicable to Village Covered Individuals and / or Contractors, as the case may be, are imposed in the following laws, among others:

- A. Illinois Governmental Ethics Act, 5 ILCS 420/1-101, *et seq.*, as amended;
- B. Illinois State Officials and employees Ethics Act, 5 ILCS 430/1-1, *et seq.*, as amended;
- C. Illinois Election Code, 10 ILCS 5/1-1, *et seq.*, as amended;
- D. Illinois Lobbyist Registration Act, 25 ILCS 170/1, *et seq.*
- E. Illinois Public officer Prohibited Activities Act, 50 ILCS 105/0.01, *et seq.*, as amended;

Commented [PD1]: This needs a review for formatting by someone with better formatting skills than I have.

Commented [PD2]: Need to clean up language as we are only recommending.

Commented [PD3]: Move this to the preamble.

- F. Illinois Public officer Simultaneous Tenure Act, 50 ILCS 110/0.01, *et seq.*, as amended;
- G. Illinois Local Government Employees Political Rights Act, 50 ILCS 135/1, *et seq.*, as amended;
- H. Illinois Municipal Code, 65 ILCS 5/1-1-1, *et seq.*, as amended;
- I. Illinois Liquor Control Act, 235 ILCS 5/1-1, *et seq.*, as amended; and
- J. Illinois Criminal Code, 720 ILCS 5/1-1, *et seq.*, as amended.

1-23-2: DEFINITIONS:

For purposes of this Chapter, the following terms shall be given these definitions, whether or not capitalized herein:

CAMPAIGN FOR ELECTIVE OFFICE: Any activity in furtherance of an effort to influence the selection, nomination, election, or appointment of any individual to any federal, state, or local public office or office in a political organization, or the selection, nomination, or election of presidential or vice presidential electors, but does not include activities: a) relating to the support or opposition of any executive, legislative, or administrative action, b) relating to collective bargaining, or c) that are otherwise in furtherance of the person's official duties.

CANDIDATE: A person who has filed nominating papers or petitions for nomination or election to an elected Village office, or who has been appointed to fill a vacancy in nomination, and who remains eligible for placement on the ballot at a regular election for such office, as defined in Section 9-1.3 of the Illinois Election Code, 10 ILCS 5/9-1.3, as amended.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING: Has the same meaning as that term is defined in Section 3 of the Illinois Public Labor Relations Act, 5 ILCS 315/3, as amended.

COMPENSATED TIME: Means, with respect to an employee, any time worked by or credited to the employee that counts toward any minimum work time requirement imposed as a condition of his or her employment, but for purposes of this chapter, does not include any designated holidays, vacation periods, personal time, compensatory time off or any period when the employee is on a leave of absence. With respect to Village Covered Individuals whose hours are not fixed, "compensated time" includes any period when the person is on premises under the control of the employer or when the person is executing his or her official duties, regardless of location.

COMPENSATORY TIME OFF: Authorized time off earned by or awarded to an employee to compensate in whole or in part for time worked more than the minimum work time required of that employee as a condition of his or her employment.

CONTRACTOR: Means a contractor, sub-contractor or any person or entity doing, or seeking to do, business with the Village.

CONTRIBUTION: Has the same meaning as that term is defined in Section 9-1.4 of the Illinois Election Code, 10 ILCS 5/9-1.4, as amended.

EMPLOYEE: A person employed by the Village of River Forest, whether on a full time or part time basis or pursuant to a contract, whose official duties are subject to the direction and control of the Village with regard to the material details of how the work is to be performed but does not include an independent contractor.

EMPLOYER: The Village of River Forest.

GIFT: Any gratuity, discount, entertainment, hospitality, loan, forbearance, or other tangible or intangible item having monetary value including, but not limited to, cash, food and drink, tickets, travel expenses and honoraria for speaking engagements related to or attributable to the Village Covered Individual's employment or work on behalf of the Village.

IMMEDIATE FAMILY MEMBER: Any individual's spouse, domestic partner, civil union partner, parent, step-parent, child, step-child, sibling, step-sibling, dependent, or any family member living in the same household as such individual, including a fiancé or fiancée.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE: Any period during which an employee does not receive: a) compensation for employment, b) service credit towards pension benefits, and c) health insurance benefits paid for by the employer.

OFFICER: A person who holds, by election or appointment, an office created by statute or ordinance, regardless of whether the officer is compensated for service in his or her official capacity.

OFFICIAL DUTIES: Actions performed that are either required or authorized as part of an individual's position to effectuate the assignments of that position.

POLITICAL ACTIVITY: Any activity in support of or in connection with any campaign for elective office, question of public policy or any political organization, but does not include activities: a) in furtherance of the person's "official duties" such as work associated with executive, legislative, or administrative action or b) relating to collective bargaining. Political activity as defined herein shall not include any activities which the Village is precluded from regulating under the United States Constitution, the Constitution of the State of Illinois, Federal law or State law.

POLITICAL ORGANIZATION: A party, committee, association, fund, or other organization (whether or not incorporated) that is required to file a statement of organization with the State Board of Elections or a County Clerk under Section 9-3 of the Illinois Election Code, 10

ILCS 5/9-3, as amended, but only with regard to those activities that require filing with the State Board of Elections or a County Clerk.

PROHIBITED POLITICAL ACTIVITY:

A. Preparing for, organizing, or participating in any political meeting, political rally, political demonstration, or other political event.

B. Soliciting contributions, including, but not limited to, the purchase of, selling, distributing, or receiving payment for tickets for any political fundraiser, political meeting, or other political event.

C. Soliciting, planning the solicitation of, or preparing any document or report regarding anything of value intended as a campaign contribution.

D. Planning, conducting, or participating in a public opinion poll in connection with a campaign for elective office or on behalf of a political organization for political purposes or for or against any referendum question.

E. Surveying or gathering information from potential or actual voters in an election to determine probable vote outcome in connection with a campaign for elective office or on behalf of a political organization for political purposes or for or against any referendum question.

F. Assisting at the polls on election day on behalf of any political organization or candidate for elective office or for or against any referendum question.

G. Soliciting votes on behalf of a candidate for elective office or a political organization or for or against any referendum question or helping in an effort to get voters to the polls.

H. Initiating for circulation, preparing, circulating, reviewing, or filing any petition on behalf of a candidate for elective office or for or against any referendum question.

I. Making contributions on behalf of any candidate for elective office in that capacity or in connection with a campaign for elective office.

J. Preparing or reviewing responses to candidate questionnaires in connection with a campaign for elective office or on behalf of a political organization for political purposes.

K. Distributing, preparing for distribution, or mailing campaign literature, campaign signs, or other campaign material on behalf of any candidate for elective office or for or against any referendum question.

L. Campaigning for any elective office or for or against any referendum question.

M. Managing or working on a campaign for elective office or for or against any referendum question.

N. Serving as a delegate, alternate, or proxy to a political party convention.

O. Participating in any recount or challenge to the outcome of any election.

PROHIBITED SOURCE: Any person or entity who:

A. Is seeking official action from the Village: 1) by an officer board or commission appointment, or 2) by an employee, or by the officer or another employee directing that employee;

B. Does business or seeks to do business with the Village;

C. Conducts Village activities with a Village Covered Individual;

D. Has interests that may be substantially affected by the performance or nonperformance of the official duties of a Village Covered Individual;

E. Is registered or required to be registered with the Illinois Secretary of State under the Illinois Lobbyist Registration Act, 25 ILCS 170/1, *et seq.*, as amended; or

F. Is an agent of, a spouse of, or an Immediate Family Member who is living with a "prohibited source."

VILLAGE BOARD MEMBERS AND COMMISSIONERS: Means each of the Village President, Village Clerk, members of the Board of Trustees, members of the board of the Village and members of the commissions of the Village.

VILLAGE COVERED INDIVIDUAL: Means each of the Village Board members and commissioners, appointed officers, commission members, volunteers and employees of the Village.

1-23-3: PROHIBITED POLITICAL ACTIVITIES:

A. Village Covered Individuals and Contractors shall not knowingly perform any prohibited political activity during any time where they are being compensated by the Village. Except as noted herein, Village Covered Individuals and Contractors shall not knowingly use any Village property or resources by engaging in any prohibited political activity. Exceptions:

1. A Village employee may use a Village vehicle designated for his/her unrestricted full time use for any purpose while not on compensated time, and

2. A Village officer may use any room for a political campaign which room is available for use by the general public.

B. At no time shall any Village Covered Individual or Contractor knowingly use the services of any other Village Covered Individual or Contractor, by requiring that person to perform any prohibited political activity: 1) as part of that person's Village work or duties, 2) as a condition of Village employment or doing business with the Village, or 3) during any compensated time.

C. Village Covered Individuals and Contractors shall not be required at any time to participate in any prohibited political activity in consideration for being awarded business with the Village, additional compensation or any employee benefit.

D. A Village Covered Individual shall not be awarded any additional compensation or employee benefit in consideration for the person's participation in any prohibited political activity.

E. Nothing in this Section prohibits activities that are otherwise appropriate for a Village Covered Individual to engage in as a part of his or her official Village employment, duties or activities that are undertaken by a Village Covered Individual on a voluntary basis as permitted by law, including, but not limited to, pursuant to the Illinois Local Government Political Rights Act, 50 ILCS 135/1, *et seq.*, as amended.

F. No person either: 1) in a position that is subject to recognized merit principles of public employment, or 2) in a position the salary for which is paid in whole or in part by Federal funds and that is subject to the Federal standards for a merit system of personnel administration applicable to grant in aid programs, shall be denied or deprived of Village employment or tenure solely because he or she is a member or an officer of a political committee, of a political party, or of a political organization or club.

1-23-4: GIFT BAN:

A. Solicitation Or Acceptance Of Gifts: Except as set forth in Subsection 1-23-4.B. of this Section, no Village Covered Individual, and no Immediate Family Member of a Village Covered Individual (collectively the "recipients"), shall knowingly solicit or accept any gift from any prohibited source, or which is otherwise prohibited by law or ordinance. No prohibited source shall knowingly offer or make a gift that violates this Section.

B. Exceptions: Subsection 1-23-4.A. of this Section is not applicable to the following:

1. Opportunities, benefits, and services that are available on the same conditions as for the general public.
2. Anything for which the Village Covered Individual or his or her spouse or Immediate Family Member, pays the fair market value.

3. Any: a) contribution that is lawfully made under the Election Code or b) activities associated with a fundraising event in support of a political organization or candidate.

4. Educational materials.

5. Reasonable expenses associated with travel in furtherance of official duties

6. A gift from a relative, meaning those people related to the individual as father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, great aunt, great uncle, first cousin, nephew, niece, husband, wife, grandfather, grandmother, grandson, granddaughter, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, stepfather, stepmother, stepson, stepdaughter, stepbrother, stepsister, half-brother, half-sister, and including the father, mother, grandfather, or grandmother of the individual's spouse and the individual's fiancé or fiancée.

7. Anything provided by an individual on the basis of a personal friendship unless the recipient has reason to believe that, under the circumstances, the gift was provided because of the Village Covered Individual's association with the Village or their Immediate Family Members association with the Village and not because of the personal friendship. In determining whether a gift is provided on the basis of personal friendship, the recipient shall consider the circumstances under which the gift was offered, such as: a) the history of the relationship between the individual giving the gift and the recipient of the gift, including any previous exchange of gifts between those individuals; b) whether to the actual knowledge of the recipient the individual who gave the gift personally paid for the gift or sought a tax deduction or business reimbursement for the gift; and c) whether to the actual knowledge of the recipient the individual who gave the gift also at the same time gave the same or similar gifts to other Village Covered Individuals, or their spouses or Immediate Family Members.

8. Food or refreshments not exceeding seventy- five dollars per person in value on a single calendar day; provided that the food or refreshments are: a) consumed on the premises from which they were purchased or prepared or b) catered. For the purposes of this Section, "catered," means food or refreshments that are purchased ready to consume which are delivered by any means.

9. Food, refreshments, lodging, transportation, and other benefits resulting from outside business or employment activities (or outside activities that are not connected to the official duties of the Village Covered Individual), if the benefits have not been offered or enhanced because of the official position or employment of the Village Covered Individual, and are customarily provided to others in similar circumstances.

10. Intragovernmental and intergovernmental gifts. For the purpose of this Section, "intragovernmental gift" means any gift given to a Village Covered Individual from

another Village covered individual and “intergovernmental gift” means any gift given to a Village Covered Individual by an officer or employee of another governmental entity.

11. Bequests, inheritances, and other transfers at death.

12. Any item or items from any one prohibited source during any calendar year having a cumulative total value of less than one hundred dollars. Each of the exceptions listed in this Subsection 1-23-4.B. is mutually exclusive and independent of every other.

C. Disposition Of Gifts: A Village Covered Individual, his or her spouse or an Immediate Family Member living with the Village Covered Individual, does not violate this chapter if the recipient promptly takes reasonable action to return a gift from a prohibited source to its source or gives the gift or an amount equal to its value to an appropriate charity that is exempt from income taxation under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as now or hereafter amended, renumbered, or succeeded.

1-23-5: ETHICAL STANDARDS

A. Purpose And Application: The Village adopts these ethical standards to assure public confidence in the integrity of local government and its effective and fair operation. This section shall apply to all Village Covered Individuals, Contractors and Employees.

B. Policy Statement: The citizens and businesses of the Village are entitled to have fair, ethical and accountable local government in connection with Village Covered Individuals and Contractors who have earned the public’s full confidence. In keeping with the Village’s commitment to excellence, the effective functioning of democratic government requires that:

1. Village Covered Individuals and Contractors comply with the letter and spirit of the laws and policies affecting the operations of government and avoid even the appearance of impropriety;
2. Village Covered Individuals and Contractors be independent, impartial and fair in their judgment and actions;
3. Village Covered Individuals use public office for the public good, not for personal gain;
4. Public deliberations and processes are conducted by Village Covered Individuals transparently, unless legally entitled to be conducted in executive session, in an atmosphere of respect and civility; and

5. Public deliberations and processes are conducted by the Village Board members and commissioners free of abusive conduct and personal attacks that are unrelated to public business.

C. Ethical Standards: Pursuant to the above policy statement, and to assure public confidence in the integrity of local government and commitment to respect and civility in public discourse, the following ethical standards are imposed:

1. Working For The Common Good: Recognizing that stewardship of the public interest must be their primary concern, Village Covered Individuals shall work for the common good of the people of the Village, shall work for the best interests of the Village and shall not work on behalf of any private or personal interest, and they shall assure fair and equal treatment of all persons, claims and transactions coming before the Village. Village Covered Individuals shall put forth an honest effort in the discharge of their official duties in a fiscally responsible manner.

2. Compliance With Laws: Village Covered Individuals and Contractors shall comply with the laws of the United States, the State of Illinois and the Village of River Forest in the performance of their official duties. These laws include, without limitation: the United States and Illinois constitutions; the State and County laws and ordinances pertaining to conflicts of interest, gift bans, election campaign disclosures, employer responsibilities, and open processes of government; and local ordinances and policies.

3. Respect For Process: Village Board members and commissioners shall perform their official duties in accordance with the processes and rules of order established by the Village governing the deliberation of public policy issues, meaningful involvement of the public, and implementation of policy decisions of the Village Board by the Village staff.

4. Conduct Of Public Meetings: Village Covered Individuals shall prepare themselves for public issues; listen courteously and attentively to all public discussions before the public body; and focus on the business at hand. Village Board members and commissioners shall further refrain from interrupting other speakers; making personal comments not germane to the business of the body; or otherwise interfering with the orderly conduct of meetings.

5. Sharing Of Relevant Information: Village Board members and commissioners shall publicly share substantive information that is relevant to a matter under consideration by their respective bodies, which may have been received from sources outside of the public decision making process.

6. Conflict Of Interest: In order to assure their independence and impartiality on behalf of the common good, the Village Covered Individuals shall not use their official offices or positions to influence government decisions in which they currently have or are actively pursuing a financial interest or an organizational

responsibility or personal relationship which may create a conflict of interest, or which give the appearance of a conflict of interest. As may be related to matters before them, Village Covered Individuals shall disclose investments, interests in real property, sources of income, and gifts, including those held or received by their spouses; and they shall abstain from participating in deliberations and decision making where conflicts may exist.

No Village Covered Individual, or that person's Immediate Family Members living with the Village Covered Individual, shall have a financial relationship or a controlling interest, whether directly or indirectly personally and/or through any business, corporation, LLC, partnership, or consulting or professional entity, in or be engaged in doing business with, any elected or appointed officer, Contractor, employee or vendor of the Village of River Forest.

No Village Covered Individual shall have a financial or other personal interest, whether directly or indirectly, with any Village Covered Individual or Contractor which is incompatible with the proper discharge of his or her official duties or work on behalf of the Village or that would tend to impair his or her independence of judgment.

No Village Covered Individual shall hire or recommend for employment with the Village, or with a Contractor, any Immediate Family Member of the Village Covered Individual.

Nothing herein shall limit any appointment power of the Village President otherwise conferred by the Village Code.

7. Confidential Information: Village Covered Individuals and Contractors shall respect the confidentiality of information concerning the property, personnel or affairs of the Village. Village Covered Individuals and Contractors shall neither disclose confidential information without proper legal authorization, nor use such information to advance their personal, financial or other private interests.

8. Use Of Public Resources: Village Covered Individuals shall be prohibited from using public resources not available to the public in general, such as Village staff time, equipment, supplies or facilities, for private gain or personal purposes.

9. Representation Of Private Interests: In keeping with their role as stewards of the public interest, Village Covered Individuals and Contractors shall not appear on behalf of the private interests of third parties before any board or commission of the Village on which they serve, and for purposes of this Subsection the Plan Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, and Development Review Board shall be considered as one commission. This prohibition shall not prohibit a Village Covered Individual or Contractor from appearing on their own behalf before any board or commission of the Village on which they serve.

10. Positive Workplace Environment: Village Covered Individuals shall support the maintenance of a positive and constructive workplace environment for Village staff and for citizens and businesses dealing with the Village. Village Board members and commissioners shall recognize their special role in dealings with Village staff to in no way create the perception of inappropriate direction to Village staff.

11. Policy Role Of Village Covered Individuals: Village Covered Individuals shall respect and adhere to the administrative structure of the Village as outlined in the Village Code. The Village President and Board of Trustees determines the policies of the Village with the advice, information and analysis provided by the Village's public, boards and commissions, and staff. Village Covered Individuals shall not interfere with the administrative functions of the Village or the official duties of the Village administrator, nor shall they impair the ability of Village staff to implement Village policy decisions.

12. Statement Of Economic Interest: All officers, including appointees to Village commissions, shall file a statement of economic interest with the Cook County Clerk with the information required by, and within the time required by, article 4A of the Illinois Governmental Ethics Act, 5 Illinois Compiled Statutes 420/4A, as amended.

1-23-6: DUTY TO REPORT:

This Section applies to Village Covered Individuals and Contractors who do not have a duty to report violations of this Chapter under Federal law, State law or Village ordinance or policy. Village Covered Individuals and Contractors who have a duty to report violations of this Chapter under Federal law, State law or another Village ordinance or policy shall not be required to comply with the duty to report in this Section and shall instead report violations of this Chapter as otherwise required.

Any Village Covered Individual or Contractor with knowledge that a Village Covered Individual or Contractor has violated a requirement of this Chapter has an obligation to report the violation to a Chair of the Ethics Commission. ~~In the event any person associated with the Village receives a complaint of a violation of this ordinance, that person shall refer the complaint to the Chair of the Ethics Commission.~~ If a Village Covered Individual must report ~~any~~ potential violation within a reasonable time of obtaining knowledge of the violation, but in no case shall the time period for a report be longer than seventy-two hours. ~~In the event any person associated with the Village receives a complaint of a violation of this ordinance, that person shall refer the complaint to the Chair of the Ethics Commission within 24 hours.~~ After a report ~~or referral~~ is made pursuant to this section, the reporting individual and the nature of the report shall remain anonymous except to those required under this Code to have such knowledge until such time as the Complaint is required to be made public under the relevant provisions of this Chapter. Retaliation against a Village Covered Individual or Contractor for filing ~~or referring~~ a complaint under this ordinance is prohibited and constitutes a violation of this Chapter.

Commented [PD4]: Added by Village counsel. This appears to be inconsistent with anonymity clause.

Commented [GI5R4]: I think we can view a "complaint" which remains anonymous as different from a required reporting event. But, to clarify, we can say: "After a report is made pursuant to this section, the reporting individual and the nature of the report shall remain anonymous except to those required under this Code to have such knowledge."

Commented [PD6R4]: Done

Commented [PD7]: Added by Village counsel. This appears to be inconsistent with anonymity clause.

Commented [GI8R7]: I think we can view a "complaint" which remains anonymous as different from a required reporting event. But, to clarify, we can say: "After a report is made pursuant to this section, the reporting individual and the nature of the report shall remain anonymous except to those required under this Code to have such knowledge."

Commented [PD9R7]: Done

Commented [PD10]: Greg: 123-10 making the complaint how to make the complaint. If feels a violation has occurred the complaint can be directed to the chair of the ethics commission.

Commented [PD11R10]: Also address the need for confidentiality - how to make it anonymous, no retaliation for making a complaint.

Commented [PD12R10]: 123-8.

1-23-7: ETHICS ADVISOR:

The Village Attorney shall serve as the Village's ethics advisor and, upon request, shall provide guidance to Village Covered Individuals concerning the interpretation of and compliance with the provisions of this Chapter.

1-23-8: ETHICS COMMISSION:

A. There is hereby created a commission to be known as the Ethics Commission of River Forest. The Commission shall be comprised of a chairperson and two other members nominated by the Village President and approved by the Board of Trustees. All members shall be residents of the Village. No person shall be appointed as a member of the Commission who is an Immediate Family Member of the Village President or Board of Trustees. Initially, two commissioners shall serve two-year terms, and the third commissioner shall serve a one-year term. Thereafter, all commissioners shall be appointed to two-year terms. Commissioners may be reappointed to serve subsequent terms. A quorum shall consist of two commissioners, and official action by the Commission shall require the affirmative vote of two members.

B. The Commission shall have the following powers and duties:

1. To receive, consider and investigate complaints made under this Chapter and to make recommendations to the Village Board for enforcement of complaints of alleged violations that the Commission determines were made.

Commented [PD13]: Delete entirely or change to edit.

2. To promulgate procedures and rules governing the performance of its duties and the exercise of its powers.

3. The Commission is authorized to act upon the receipt of a written complaint alleging a violation of this Chapter, within the Commission's purview, by a Village Covered Individual or a Contractor. Upon receipt of a written complaint, the Commission may, based upon its assessment of the validity of a written complaint, pursuant to the procedures below, investigate, conduct hearings and deliberations, issue recommendations for disciplinary actions, and fines in accordance with Section 1-23-9 of this Chapter

4. To receive information from the public pertaining to its investigations and to require additional information and documents from persons who may have violated the provisions of this Chapter.

5. To compel the following from Village Covered Individuals and Contractors: production of documents and other evidence, in both physical and electronic format; attendance at duly noticed hearings; and, response under oath to questions, in both written and oral format.

It is the obligation of all Village Covered Individuals and Contractors to cooperate with the commission during the course of its investigations. Failure or refusal to cooperate with requests by the Commission shall be a violation of this Chapter.

C. 1. Complaints submitted pursuant this Chapter to §123- shall be handled by the Commission in the manner set forth below. If the complaint alleges facts which may constitute a crime, it shall first be referred to a law enforcement agency or the State's Attorney and may later be refiled with the Commission, at the request of the complainant, if the agency or State's Attorney declines prosecution or fails to act within thirty days.

Commented [PD14]: Can't read the note. Confirm.

2. a) The Commission, and any person who takes part in the administration of any complaint, shall keep complaints confidential to the fullest extent permitted by law until and unless the Commission determines that the complaint is supported by sufficient evidence and the Commission determines there are reasonable grounds that the complaint establishes a violation of this Chapter.. Prior to a determination by the Commission that a that there are reasonable grounds that the complaint establishes a violation of this Chapter, consideration of complaints by the Commission at a meeting shall be closed to the public to the extent authorized by the Open Meetings Act.

b) Initial Review: Within a reasonable time after the receipt of a complaint, the Commission shall meet and conduct an initial review of the sufficiency of the complaint. The Commission may dismiss a complaint if any of the following criteria are met:

- i. The complaint, on its face or as clarified, fails to state a violation of one of the laws or regulations within the Commission's purview.
- ii. The complaint, on its face or as clarified, lacks sufficient factual detail, or is so speculative, conclusory or incoherent that the Commission cannot infer that a violation may have occurred or may be occurring.
- iii. Based on all of the facts and information provided by the complainant, or publicly available information, the Commission cannot reasonably conclude that a violation has occurred.
- iv. The Commission obtained credible information indicating that the allegations raised by the complainant are currently resolved.
- v. The Commission determines that the complaint is moot or unripe.

vi. The Commission is currently investigating the same conduct in another complaint.

vii. Another reason provided by the Commission.

If the Commission dismisses a complaint it shall include the reasoning for the dismissal in the meeting minutes and in a written determination.

Notwithstanding any term in this Chapter to the contrary, the Commission may dismiss a complaint at any stage. If the Commission dismisses a Complaint it shall include the reasoning for the dismissal in the meeting minutes and in a written determination. The Commission shall work as quickly as possible to resolve all complaints it receives.

- c) A copy of the complaint may be provided to the Village Attorney, Village Administrator, Village President and Village Board of Trustees upon the determination that there is a reasonable basis for a complaint.
- d) The Village Administrator shall assign Village staff to support the Commission in the discharge of its duties under this Section. A copy of the complaint shall not be provided to any person who is subject of the complaint unless and until the Commission shall determine the complaint passes initial review pursuant to section 1-23-8(c)(2)(d). Any person to whom the complaint is provided prior to determination of initial review is bound by all anonymity provisions set forth in this Code."
- e) Investigation: If the Commission determines that a complaint passes an initial review, the Commission shall send by certified mail, return receipt requested, a notice to the respondent that a complaint has been filed against him or her and a copy of the complaint. The Commission shall send by certified mail, return receipt requested, a confirmation of the receipt of the complaint to an identified complainant, within five business days after the Commission's determination that the complaint passed the initial review. The notices to the respondent and an identified complainant shall also advise them of the date, time, and place of a Commission meeting to determine the sufficiency of the complaint and to establish whether reasonable grounds exist to proceed.

3. If the complaint is deemed to be supported by sufficient evidence to allege a violation of this Chapter within the Commission's purview and there is a determination of reasonable grounds to proceed, then the Commission shall issue notice to the respondent and an identified complainant including a hearing date scheduled within four weeks after the complaint's receipt. If the complaint is deemed not sufficient to allege a violation or if there is no determination of reasonable grounds to proceed, then the Commission shall send by certified mail,

Commented [PD15]: confirm

Commented [PD16]: There is a note whether we should delete, referring to §123-8.

return receipt requested, a notice to the respondent and an identified complainant, of the decision to dismiss the complaint, and that notice shall be made public.

4. On the scheduled date and upon at least forty-eight hours' public notice of the meeting, the Commission shall conduct a hearing on the complaint and shall allow the respondent and an identified complainant the opportunity to present testimony and evidence. The hearing may be closed to the public if authorized by the Open Meetings Act.

~~75. The Commission may recommend that the Board of Trustees fine any person who knowingly violates any provision of this Chapter within the Commission's purview or who knowingly files a frivolous complaint alleging a violation of this Chapter within the Commission's purview. The Commission may recommend to the Village President and Board of Trustees any appropriate discipline up to and including discharge or removal of office for any Village Covered Individual found in violation of this chapter or person filing a frivolous complaint. The recommendation of the Commission shall be deemed sufficient cause for discipline, discharge or removal from office without further proceedings by the Village, unless the offender is subject to the jurisdiction of the Board of Fire and Police Commissioners or as otherwise required by a collective bargaining agreement or employment contract.~~

Commented [PD17]: There is a note that this paragraph could be compressed further.

~~65. As soon as practicable -after the date the hearing or any recessed hearing is concluded, the Commission shall either: a) dismiss the complaint for any of the reasons in Section 1-23-8.C.2.c. above or b) issue a recommendation, including but not limited to discipline, a fine, or both to the alleged violator and to the Village Administrator, or if the Village Administrator is the alleged violator, to the Village President, or impose a fine upon the violator, or both Village Board for enforcement. The findings in the case, any recommendation for discipline, and any fine imposed shall not be confidential and shall be a matter of public information.~~

Commented [PD18]: This is confusing. Authority for final determination.

76. If a complaint is filed during the sixty days preceding the date of any election at which the respondent is a candidate, the Commission shall meet at the earliest date possible with the intent to render its decision prior to the election.

~~7. The Commission may recommend that the Board of Trustees fine any person who knowingly violates any provision of this Chapter within the Commission's purview or who knowingly files a frivolous complaint alleging a violation of this Chapter within the Commission's purview. The Commission may recommend to the Village President and Board of Trustees any appropriate discipline up to and including discharge or removal of office for any Village Covered Individual found in violation of this chapter or person filing a frivolous complaint. The recommendation of the Commission shall be deemed sufficient cause for discipline, discharge or removal from office without further proceedings by the Village, unless the offender is subject to the jurisdiction of the Board of Fire and Police Commissioners or as otherwise required by a collective bargaining agreement or employment contract.~~

Commented [PD19]: There is a note that this paragraph could be compressed further.

1-23-9: ENFORCEMENT AND PENALTIES:

- A. A person who knowingly violates any provision of this chapter or who knowingly files a frivolous complaint alleging a violation of this chapter is subject to a fine in an amount of not less than fifty dollars (\$50.00) and not more than two thousand five hundred fifty dollars (\$2,550).
- B. Subject to limitations in collective bargaining agreements and contracts to which the Village is a party, in addition to a fine, any Village Covered Individual who knowingly violates any provision of this chapter or who knowingly files a frivolous complaint alleging a violation of this chapter is subject to discipline, discharge, or removal from office, as the case may be. Subject to limitations in contracts to which the Village is a party, in addition to a fine, any Contractor which knowingly violates any provision of this chapter or who knowingly files a frivolous complaint alleging a violation of this chapter, the Village Board may determine that such Contractor is no longer eligible to do business with the Village and bar said Contractor from doing business with the Village.
- C. Unless the conduct in question also violates Federal, State, or County law, rules or regulations, or also violates other Sections of this Chapter or any other Chapter of this Code, the Village Board shall have the exclusive authority to enforce the recommendations of the Ethics Commission relating to alleged violations the ethical standards of this Section and impose penalties for violations thereof. Except as otherwise provided by law, a violation of the ethical standards shall in no way be construed as a basis for challenging the validity of a decision rendered by the Village Board or any advisory board or commission of the Village. Members of the public are encouraged to bring violations of the ethical standards to the attention of the Ethics Commission..
- D. Penalties for violations of this Section shall be in the form of reprimand, formal censure or removal of an officer from an advisory board or commission of the Village. Further, the Village Board shall have the option of referring a violation of this Section to the Village Prosecutor for issuance of a citation in the Circuit Court of Cook County, in which case the Village Prosecutor shall seek a monetary fine pursuant to Section 1-23-9 of this Chapter. However, no penalty shall be imposed by the Village Board under this Section without first providing the Village Covered Individual or Contractor with reasonable notice of the charges and an opportunity to be heard before the Village Board. The penalties provided for in this Section shall be considered cumulative and shall in no way be construed as preventing the enforcement of any Federal, State or County law, ordinance, rule or regulation, or other Sections of this Chapter or any other Chapter of this code.

Commented [PD20]: Add two provisions from earlier and then a notice paragraph, how to make a complaint. Have it on the website and make it easy.

Commented [PD21]: Move Enforcement and Penalties to 1-23-9 and change heading to enforcement and penalties.

Commented [PD22R21]: Done

- E. Retaliation by any Village Covered Individual or Contractor against any person that files a Complaint under this Chapter is prohibited and constitutes a violation of this Chapter subject to the penalties and enforcement provisions set forth herein.

1-23-10: HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT

- A. In the event a person wishes to make a complaint alleging ~~that~~ a violation of this ordinance, a complainant may take the following actions.
1. Complete a Complaint form available on the Village's website on the Local Ethics Commission page.
 2. Submit an email to the Chair of the Ethics Commission [via email address on the Local Ethics Commission page](#).
- B. Complaints shall include facts including, but limited to, the alleged violator, alleged violation and timing of the alleged violation.
- C. It shall be the responsibility of the Village Administrator to ensure that a publicly available complaint intake form is maintained on the Village website.
- D. Notwithstanding other provisions herein, enforcement under this Section may not be initiated more than 24 months after the conduct alleged in the complaint occurred