

ANNUAL REPORT



Pokégnek Bodéwadmik • Pokagon Band of Potawatomi

1/31/24

ETHICS BOARD

Purpose: The Ethics Board is responsible for administering the *Pokagon Band Code of Ethics* to ensure that public officials and public employees shall always fulfill their duties, observe standards of ethical conduct, uphold the dignity and honor of their positions and safeguard the Pokagon Band against any illegal or unethical conduct. The Ethics Code's main purpose is protecting Pokagon Band citizens and the larger public from government decisions and actions resulting from or affected by undue influences or conflict of interest. This is accomplished through ensuring public officials and public employees' compliance with the Ethics Code requirements of upholding standards of ethical conduct, avoiding conflicts of interest, disclosing affiliated economic and business interests and/or affiliations, prohibit using any power or function that places personal interests above the interests of the citizens. Finally, the Ethics Code affords due process to public officials and employees who are accused of violating it.

Members and Terms:

Elizabeth Rinehart, Chair, 03/2023-08/2025

Teresa Melendez Magnuson, Vice Chair, 08/2021-08/2024

Jarred Winchester, Secretary, 08/2022-08/2025

Alys Seamans, Treasurer, 08/2023-08/2026

Changes to the Work Plan:

The Ethics Board achieved quorum in April of 2023 and the ability to meet and discuss the work plan. A work plan was established during this time and included the following items: reading and understanding the Ethics Code, update the financial disclosure, update the gift disclosure, propose a budget for 2024, complete HR ethics training module, organize the Ethics Board SharePoint site, and send out request for financial and gift disclosures to Tribal Council and applicable employees.

Goals for the following year. The BCCC adopted the following goals for the next year:

Goal 1: Compile a list of proposed changes to the Ethics Code to increase readability and understanding.

Goal 2: Complete HR Ethics Training Module to explore applicability.

Goal 3: Explore opportunities to automate the financial disclosure process on SharePoint.

Goals not met.

The goals that were not met were to complete the HR Ethics Training module because it was agreed to complete this during a meeting and there were more pressing items to complete such as becoming familiar with the code and SharePoint site and updating the disclosures to ensure timely delivery to Tribal Council

and applicable employees. Furthermore, the Ethics Board questions the applicability of the HR Ethics Training Module to the scope and alignment of Ethics Board's duties and purpose. This will continue to be on the Ethics Board's radar as a task to complete when there is time. The second goal that was not met was to clean up the SharePoint site. There is much information (hundreds of documents, some of which date back to 2012) that was covered and organized; however, the Ethics Board was unable to complete it all. It will continue to be a goal moving forward, as we have time.

Problems/Concerns.

The Ethics Board does not have any problems or concerns to report at this time.

Recommendations for Tribal Council.

The Ethics Board recommends that Tribal Council be open to suggestions regarding the simplification of the legalistic language of the current code. The Ethics Board has reviewed several organizations' codes that are clear, concise and easy to read and follow. The Ethics Board recognizes that there is a time and a place for legalistic language, however when it comes to public officials and employees it is important that they understand expectations made of them without needing interpretation by an attorney.