



## TOWN OF WHITEWOOD

### BYLAW NO 1-2017

## A BYLAW OF THE TOWN OF WHITEWOOD TO ESTABLISH A CODE OF ETHICS FOR THE COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF WHITEWOOD

### Short Title:

1. This Bylaw may be cited as the Code of Ethics Bylaw.

### Legal Requirement

2. This bylaw has been created to comply with Section 93.1 of *The Municipalities Act*, and as outlined in Section 3, Schedule 3 of *The Municipalities Regulations*.

### Part 1

#### Code of Ethics

#### Code of Ethics for Members of Council

### Preamble

As members of council, we recognize that our actions have an impact on the lives of all residents and property owners in the community. Fulfilling our obligations and discharging our duties responsibly requires a commitment to the highest ethical standards.

The quality of the public administration and governance of the Town of Whitewood, as well as its reputation and integrity, depends on our conduct as elected officials.

### Purpose and Interpretation

The purpose of this code is to outline basic ethical standards and values for members of Council. It is to be used to guide members of council respecting what their obligations are when fulfilling their duties and responsibilities as elected officials.

This code is to be interpreted in accordance with the legislation applicable to the Municipality, the common law and the policies and bylaws of the municipality.

Neither the law nor this code is to be interpreted as exhaustive, and there will be occasions on which a council will find it necessary to adopt additional rules of conduct in order to protect the public interest and to enhance the public confidence and trust in local government.

It is the responsibility of each member of council to uphold the standards and values set out in this code.

## **STANDARDS AND VALUES**

### **a. *Honesty***

Members of council shall be truthful and open in their roles as council members and as members of the communities they serve.

### **b. *Objectivity***

Members of Council shall make decisions carefully, fairly and impartially.

### **c. *Respect***

Members of council shall treat every person, including other members of council, municipal employees and the public, with dignity, understanding and respect. Members of council shall not engage in discrimination, bullying or harassment in their roles as members of council. They shall not use derogatory language towards others, shall respect the rights of other people and groups, shall treat people with courtesy and shall recognize the importance of the different roles other play in local government decision making.

### **d. *Transparency and Accountability***

Members of council shall endeavor to conduct and convey council business and all their duties in an open and transparent manner, other than those discussions that are authorized to be dealt with in a confidential manner in closed session, so that stakeholders can view the process and rationale used to reach decisions and the reasons for taking certain actions.

Members of Council are responsible for the decisions that they make. This Responsibility includes acts of commission and acts of omission.

### **e. *Confidentiality***

Members of Council shall refrain from disclosing or releasing any confidential Information acquired by virtue of their office except when required by law or authorized by council to do so. Members shall not take advantage of or obtain private benefit from information that is obtained in the course of or as a result of their official duties or position and that are not in the public domain. This includes complying with *The Local Authority Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* in their capacity as members of council of a local authority.

### **f. *Leadership and Public Interest***

Members of Council shall serve their constituents in a conscientious and diligent manner and act in the best interests of the municipality. A member shall strive, by focusing on issues important to the community and demonstrating leadership, to build and inspire the public's trust and confidence in local government.

**g.      *Responsibility***

Members of Council shall act responsibly and in accordance with the Acts of the Parliament of Canada and the Legislature of Saskatchewan, including the *Municipalities Act*.

This duty includes disclosing actual or potential conflicts of interest, either financial or otherwise relating to their responsibilities as members of council, following policies and procedures of the municipality, and exercising all conferred powers strictly for the purpose for which the powers have been conferred. Every member of Council is individually responsible for preventing potential and actual conflicts of interest.

**h.      *Acceptance of Gifts***

No member of Council shall accept a fee, gift or personal benefit that is connected directly or indirectly with the performance of his or her duties of office, unless permitted by the exceptions listed below.

The following are recognized as exceptions:

- (a) such gifts or benefits that normally accompany the responsibilities of office and are received as an incident of protocol or social obligation, provided that the value of the gift or benefit does not exceed \$250.00.
- (b) a suitable memento of a function honoring the member.

For these purposes, a fee or gift that is paid to or provided with the member's Knowledge to a member's spouse, partner, child or parent that is connected directly or indirectly to the performance of the member's duties is deemed to be a gift to that member.

**i.      *Appropriate Use***

There shall be no use or appropriation of municipal property, facilities, services or information for personal use, gain or business by council members, unless that municipal property is generally available to the public and is being used by the council member in that capacity like any other member of the public. (i.e. using a municipal park or other facility for recreational purposes)

If the use of municipal property consist of the personal use of telephones, internet, Computers, fax machines, cell phones or photocopiers and all of the following are Satisfied this general rule is subject to exception if:

- (a) use does not cause any additional expense to the municipality (i.e.: there is full reimbursement of any charges)
- (b) use is not excessive in regard to the circumstances

**PART II**  
**CONTRAVENTION OF THE CODE OF ETHICS**

**Complaint Procedure**

3. As required by 5 ( c ) of *The Municipalities Act*, the following section details the the procedure for handling contraventions of the code of ethics.
  - (a) To report an alleged contravention of the code of ethics, an individual/ Organization/member of council may submit the form found in Schedule A, by sending the form directly to the Chief Administrative Officer, by mail, email, fax or courier. The complaint will then be presented to council at the next regular meeting of council in an *in camera session*.
  - (b) Upon receipt of the complaint, Council shall discuss the complaint is valid.
  - (c) All discussions surrounding alleged and substantiated contraventions of this policy shall be conducted in an *in camera session* at a meeting of council.
  - (d) If the claim is found to be substantiated, Council may, by resolution, impose an appropriate penalty detailed in 5 (a) to (f) based on the severity of the contravention of the code of ethics.
    - (i) Any action taken by Council should include a time frame to complete the expected remedial action.
  - (e) Council inform the claimant, member of council, and any other relevant party of council's decision, which includes:
    - (i) Informing the claimant and the member of council that the complaint is dismissed, or
    - (ii) Informing the complaint and member of council of the corrective action and/or the measures taken to ensure the behavior or activity does not continue.

**Contravention during a Council Meeting**

4. If Council is of the opinion that a member has violated the code of ethics during council meeting, council may require the member to remove themselves for the remainder of the council meeting.

Council may apply additional penalties based on the severity of the contravention.

**Remedial Action if Contravention Occurs**

5. Should a member of council breach any of the principles outlined in this code, the possible courses of action that are available to Council include but are not limited to:
  - (a) An apology, either written and/or verbal, by the Member of Council to the impacted individual(s), Council, and/or the general public.
  - (b) Educational training on ethical and respectful conduct.
  - (c) Repayment of money/gifts received.

- (d) Removal of the Member from Council Committees and/or bodies
- (e) Dismissal of the Member from a position of Chairperson of a Committee.
- (f) Reprimand.

**PART III  
COMING INTO FORCE**

6. This Bylaw shall come into effect on the day of its final passing.

**(Seal)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chief Administrative Officer

Read a third time and adopted  
this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2017.

**SCHEDULE A  
FORMAL COMPLAINT FORM**

**Please note that knowingly signing a false affidavit may expose you to prosecution under the Criminal Code of Canada.**

I \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_  
(First and Last Name) (Full mailing address)

Do solemnly swear (affirm or declare) that the following contents of this statement are true and correct and hereby request the Council of the Town of Whitewood to look into whether or not the following member(s) of the Town Council has (have) contravened the Code of Ethics:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Member (s) of Council name (s)

I have reasonable and probable grounds to believe that the above member(s) has (have) contravened the Code of Ethics by reason of the following:

1. Insert date(s), time and location of conduct,
2. Include the sections of this bylaw that have been contravened;
3. Provide the particulars and names of all person(s) involved, and of all witnesses;
4. Provide contact information for all people listed;
5. Any exhibits can be attached; and
6. If more space is required, please attach additional pages as needed.

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**For Office Use Only**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of Complainant**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date Filed**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of C.A.O.**