The Ethics and Disclosure law of the Town of Woodstock, Section VIII Ethics Board, C Powers and Duties, number 8 requires the Ethics Board to "... prepare and submit an annual report to the Town Board summarizing the activities of the Ethics Board, listing any recommended changes to the text or administration of the Local Law."

Here is our 2014 annual report:

Members:
Neil Ratner, MD - Appointment September 2013. Completing term expiring December 31, 2014

In March 2014, Diane Katz was elected secretary. At this meeting, Allison Dodd and Neil Ratner were elected Co-Chairs.

Volunteer Day August 16, 2014:
Several members attended the town's Volunteer day.

"Form for Complaints and Requests for Advisory Opinions":
Developed "Form for Complaints and Requests for Advisory Opinions," which is currently available at the Town office and online.

Annual Disclosure Forms:
Performed review of annual disclosure forms.

Ethics Inquiries:
Cases 2014-1, 2014-2, 2014-3, 2014-4. All inquiries were resolved without any involvement from the Town Board.

However, several cases were quite involved and required extensive research including opinions from the Town Attorney.

Ethics Law Updates:
During 2014, the Ethics Board discussed ongoing changes to the Ethics and Disclosure Law. This review is continuing into 2015. Today, the review has focused on the changes submitted by the Town Board but has also included recommendations on proposed changes submitted by the Town Supervisor, those outlined in Town of Woodstock Ethics Board's 2013 Annual Report, as well as information obtained from current and past Ethics Board members, including reviewing the Model Code of Ethics for Local Governments published by the Office of the State Comptroller and the Ethics Board's own experiences during the last year. The Ethics Board plans to present its recommendations to the Town Board at the annual review in early 2015.

Other Recommendations:
The Ethics Board wants to help ensure that all new and ongoing Town officers and employees are familiar with the requirements of the Ethics and Disclosure Law. We believe that there are procedural enhancements that can be made to help ensure that information reaches those individuals in a more efficient manner and that the individuals can complete the appropriate forms in a more timely manner.
• Ethics Information and Acknowledgment - To be completed on an Annual Basis. Further, pursuant to Section 71-1(B)(3), officers and employees are required to fill out and file an Annual Disclosure Form no later than January 31st of each year. To help ensure that officers and employees are familiar with the provisions of the Ethics and Disclosure Law, we recommend the changes to the Annual Disclosure Law noted above (including the website and a place to acknowledge receipt of a copy of the Law in each office) and that all officers and employees sign and acknowledge that they have read and understood the Ethics and Disclosure Law on an annual basis when they submit their Annual Disclosure Form.

• The Ethics Board would be pleased to work with the Town and Town Manager on additional training and educational materials, but we believe the fact that the Ethics and Disclosure Law should be made available to all new and existing forms of town and employees, as well as any newly hired employees or those who have received the Ethics Law, is a critical first step. In addition, we believe the Ethics Board should have reviewed the Ethics Law and all its provisions.

2104 Meetings:
2014 Woodstock Ethics Board