

1 **GREENBURGH CAMPAIGN FINANCE COMMISSION**
2 **MEETING MINUTES--MAY 11, 2000**
3 **(May 23, 2000 draft)**

4
5 Present:

6 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett, Claire Lee, Harriet Leib, Erin Malloy, Susan Mancuso, Charlotte
7 Schienberg, Ervin Schliefer, Francis Sheehan, Lester Steinman

8
9 Absent:

10 Andrew Goodman, Rev. Wilbert Preston, Mike Reynolds, Sally Schaadt, Mary Tobias

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12
13 The seventh meeting of the commission was called to order at 12:40 p.m. in room 121, at Rochambeau
14 School, 228 Fisher Avenue, White Plains.

15
16 Co-Chair Harriet Leib said that the sole purpose of the meeting is to focus on the ultimate goals of
17 each subcommittee and the commission in general to be presented to the public. Therefore, there is no
18 agenda. The commissioners need to work in the spirit of compromise, with the townspeople in mind,
19 recognizing that there is no perfect system. There are legal, ethical, and moral issues that need to be
20 addressed. The commissioners should keep the discussion as impersonal as possible. Each of the
21 subcommittees should talk about their concerns and what should be in the document presented to the
22 public.

23
24 Claire Lee said she would start. The Cable Subcommittee had a good meeting. Susan Mancuso typed
25 up and presented a proposal at the last meeting. The subcommittee has learned that other communities
26 have a much better way of handling cable access. She wouldn't mind exploring those methods, but
27 perhaps doing so is beyond the commission's charge. She spoke to Frank Leicht, who was responsible
28 for setting up cable access in Larchmont and Mamaroneck. The residents there recognized cable
29 access would be important so the local civic associations formed a non-profit organization to regulate
30 cable. Frank Leicht was astonished to learn that the cable franchise fees in Greenburgh are not used
31 for improving cable access but instead are placed into the town's general budget.
32 Larchmont/Mamaroneck has an oversight board with members from each of the three municipalities--
33 Larchmont, the Town of Mamaroneck and the Village of Mamaroneck. Francis Sheehan has since
34 conducted research on the web and found that other municipalities have similar systems.

35
36 Harriet Leib asked if it is common to have a non-profit oversight board in other municipalities.

37
38 Francis Sheehan said that he conducted a search for "cable access" on the web and has downloaded a
39 considerable amount of material which he is still collating. He said he has not found any that are under
40 the total control of the municipal officials, as is Greenburgh's cable access system. All of the cable
41 access stations found to date offer comprehensive training so that the community members essentially
42 operate and control the amount of access and the quality of the system-- producing, hosting and editing
43 the cable access shows. Many of the stations are regulated, not by the municipality, but by a non-profit
44 organization similar to that in Larchmont/Mamaroneck. Some of those non-profit organizations even
45 negotiate the franchise agreement with the cable company, again similar to the system in
46 Larchmont/Mamaroneck. They do not have to rely on a municipal employee's approval or availability
47 to host or produce a cable access program. Community members who take the training courses can
48 sign out cameras and other equipment and televise any non-commercial, non-obscene show or meeting
49 they wish.

50
51 Francis Sheehan said, using the franchise fee moneys as well as fund-raising proceeds, cable access
52 systems elsewhere have built substantial studio buildings, purchased one or more vans to offer mobile

53 coverage, equipped their studios with numerous editing booths, etc. It appears the common format is
54 to require hosts/producers to obtain training and to then apply that training to their shows as well as the
55 shows of others. There is a community team effort. In other words, the public access station is truly
56 placed in the hands of the public with sufficient funds to provide quality equipment. He did not try to
57 find web sites that differed from Greenburgh's system. He downloaded any cable access site he found.
58 Only one site indicated the municipality takes most of the cable franchise money and diverts it to other
59 uses, similar to what happens in Greenburgh. The vast majority of cable systems found are under the
60 control of independent, non-profit community organizations.
61

62 Francis Sheehan said, based on his research, municipalities generally distinguish between the three
63 cable access channels provided by most cable companies-- a municipal channel, an educational
64 channel, and a public access channel. The municipal channel is generally limited to official municipal
65 business, such as town meetings. Schools use the educational channel for school board meetings,
66 plays, etc. The public access channel is the one used for all other programming and is operated by the
67 community. However, it appears most municipalities that have a non-profit organization overseeing
68 the public access channel ask the non-profit group to oversee and operate the municipal channel as
69 well, taping the board meetings, etc., as a service to the community. He said Yorktown Councilman
70 Nicholas Bianco's presentation at a prior commission meeting only pertained to the municipal channel,
71 which Mr. Bianco called the "government's channel". The commission did not hear about the public
72 access channel or the education channel in Yorktown. Therefore, no conclusion can be made regarding
73 whether Yorktown officials control community programs as do Greenburgh officials. It appears from
74 the research to date, that Greenburgh officials' total control over all access channels is atypical.
75

76 Harriet Leib asked Francis Sheehan, based on his research, what other municipalities do regarding
77 allowing political aspirants access to cable.
78

79 Francis Sheehan said that some cable access organizations have very extensive rules and regulations,
80 including access by political candidates. Most of the rules that are posted seem to be directed toward
81 providing fair and equal access to everyone, not specifically singling out candidates. One of the rules
82 he read does provide for candidates to appear for up to 30-minutes per week.
83

84 Charlotte Schienberg asked if the stations have staff.
85

86 Francis Sheehan said that many do have one to five staff members, but rely extensively on volunteers.
87 One of the ways he measures how active an organization may be is by monitoring how frequently the
88 web site is updated. Most of the cable access sites were up-to-date, with information about their cable
89 board meetings, etc., indicating that someone is minding the store.
90

91 Claire Lee said that the response in Greenburgh to complaints about limited access to candidates was
92 that they couldn't give as much access to candidates as desirable because of a limited budget. As
93 candidates asked for more coverage, the town's response was that taxes would have to be raised or
94 moneys diverted from other programs. If the cable franchise money wasn't diverted into Greenburgh's
95 town budget then that would remove that argument. Frank Leicht was very surprised that Greenburgh
96 takes that money away from cable access.
97

98 Francis Sheehan said that it would be helpful to have Frank Leicht or someone else from
99 Larchmont/Mamaroneck to attend a commission meeting so the commission can learn firsthand how
100 their system works.
101

102 Francis Sheehan said that he has been advocating using significantly increased cable access as an
103 incentive to candidates to sign on to local campaign reforms. The access must be fair and predictable,
104 so a candidate could list the air time on mailings to the public. Mailings can only contain a limited

105 amount of information but could serve as a hook to get the public to watch a program with more
106 information. He does not know of anything else, at least in the short term, that could serve as an
107 incentive to candidates to accept full disclosure, campaign spending limits, etc.
108

109 Co-chair Catherine Lederer-Plaskett said that Hillary Clinton was on the Today Show earlier in the
110 day. Ms. Clinton said that free TV time is critical to real campaign reform. The commission can't
111 offer commercial TV time as an incentive to candidates, but it could offer cable access time.
112

113 Harriet Leib asked if the cable subcommittee will be standing by the original proposal or will be
114 meeting to modify it.
115

116 Claire Lee said that Sally Schaadt wanted to know what was included in the term "the conduct of
117 official town business".
118

119 Susan Mancuso said the term is used in a clause which exempts the conduct of official town business
120 from candidate access time-limits. It means the meetings of the Town Board, Planning Board, and
121 Zoning Board of Appeals, which are televised, are exempt from the restrictions. Francis Sheehan is on
122 the Zoning Board. He should not have to step down from the Zoning Board while he is a candidate
123 because the meetings are televised. It also means that the Zoning Board meetings could still be shown
124 even though he is a candidate as well as a board member. The clause exempts those meetings.
125

126 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett said at the last meeting there was a suggestion that equal time be given to
127 those who do not sit on the boards to compensate for all the time a candidate-board member appears on
128 cable.
129

130 Claire Lee said that is a possibility.
131

132 Susan Mancuso said that the proposal is a starting point. There are some benefits to incumbents, she
133 mentioned that in the past as well, however, the proposal shouldn't be overly complicated. If a real
134 disparity is apparent in access then changes can be made.
135

136 Harriet Leib said there does appear to be a disparity already. The commission has heard repeatedly
137 that the incumbents own the station. It was a major point. The incumbents controlled the scheduling
138 and there was not equity or fairness in the distribution of time.
139

140 Susan Mancuso said the proposal addresses that problem. It even provides for candidates vying for
141 primary nomination. It establishes the amount of time, 10-minutes, the candidates can appear on air.
142 It could be done other ways, and suggestions are welcome, but the proposal allows all candidates equal
143 time and as the field whittles down, if candidates fail to get on the ballot or lose the primary, fewer
144 candidates would appear on cable. The segments would be changed monthly so the public wouldn't
145 get bored. Every candidate would get an opportunity to appear first.
146

147 Harriet Leib asked Susan Mancuso if the town would be receptive to the idea of separating cable
148 access franchise fees from the town's budget, similar to what is done in Larchmont/Mamaroneck.
149

150 Susan Mancuso said she cannot speak for the town. She thinks it is a laudatory idea. She thinks a non-
151 profit corporation operating cable access is also a great idea. However, these issues are beyond the
152 scope of the commission.
153

154 Harriet Leib said it could be a recommendation even if it can't be implemented immediately.
155

156 Susan Mancuso said she would not have a problem with making a recommendation.
157

158 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett said that Harriet Leib's final comment at the last meeting addresses this
159 issue. The League of Women Voters signed on with a condition that the commission would be
160 independent and could make recommendations other than those directly related to financing
161 campaigns. Supervisor Feiner acknowledged that he agreed to the condition. The commission is not
162 confined to act solely on the Supervisor's charge.
163

164 Susan Mancuso agreed. She said her statement was directed toward what can be readily implemented.
165 She wasn't questioning the commission's ability to make recommendations. She is trying to develop
166 something manageable, starting small and expanding outward.
167

168 Charlotte Schienberg asked what would be the window of time for candidates during the campaign
169 season.
170

171 Susan Mancuso said the election season starts in June.
172

173 Charlotte Schienberg asked how much time could be allotted for candidates during the election season
174 and could the so-called "government" channel provide additional time to candidates when municipal
175 meetings are not being televised.
176

177 Susan Mancuso said other members of the subcommittee may be able to speak to this issue also. The
178 subcommittee is developing a minimum access time. As Francis Sheehan has said, cable access can be
179 a "carrot". Hillary Clinton's comment regarding the importance of TV coverage crystallizes this cable
180 access "carrot" idea. This proposal could be the minimum for signing on to whatever the rules are for
181 campaign finance reform.
182

183 Francis Sheehan said that he hoped the meeting would be used for concepts instead of specific
184 proposals. At the last commission meeting each subcommittee presented subcommittee reports that
185 were not fully developed at the subcommittee level and, more problematic, each of the subcommittees
186 started treading on the work of other subcommittees and could not make decisions because the issues
187 involved another subcommittee. For example, the Cable Subcommittee's proposal does not contain
188 incentives for candidates who sign on to local campaign finance reforms. In fact, it is a disincentive
189 for a candidate to sign on because it requires a candidate who has a 30-minute cable show to give up
190 that show for a 10-minute segment. It makes a candidate less of a citizen than everyone else in the
191 Town entitled to have a cable show. He doesn't think anyone would sign on to such a proposal.
192

193 Francis Sheehan said the Cable Subcommittee drafted the proposal as written without incentives
194 because the use of cable as an incentive would step on the work of the Public Finance Subcommittee.
195 The Cable Subcommittee had no incentive-mandate with which to work. The Ethics Subcommittee
196 met and developed recommendations which included creation of some type of oversight board, which
197 was also discussed separately by the Cable Subcommittee and the Public Finance Subcommittee. He
198 hopes this meeting will be used, not solely for hearing from each subcommittee separately, but for all
199 the subcommittees to jointly develop a focus for these overlapping issues so subcommittees can
200 continue working, all in a unified direction. For example, if the incentive for signing on to local
201 reform is significantly increased cable access, as he believes it should be, then each of the
202 subcommittees can incorporate that incentive into their proposals. He hopes the subcommittee
203 members will leave the meeting with a unified focus. For example, if cable is determined to be the
204 incentive, the Cable Subcommittee could develop recommendations for providing increased cable
205 access time to candidates and the Public Finance Subcommittee could decide what reforms a candidate
206 should agree to in order to obtain that increased cable access time, full disclosure, etc.
207

208 Francis Sheehan said that rehashing the details of the Cable Subcommittee proposal again, as was done
209 at the last commission meeting, does not seem to be productive, particular in light of Lester Steinman's

210 comment during an Ethics Subcommittee meeting that candidates cannot be barred from cable access
211 simply because they refuse to sign on to campaign reforms. Candidates are residents of the town and
212 have as much right to cable access as any other resident. Candidates do not become less of a citizen by
213 declaring to be a candidate. Therefore, what the Cable Subcommittee needs to do is develop basic
214 access for all candidates and then a “nugget” or “carrot”, and it should be a big one, for those
215 candidates who sign on to the campaign reform measures developed by the Public Finance
216 Subcommittee.

217
218 Claire Lee said increased cable access doesn’t cost anything. She said George Latimer was smart to
219 avoid reforms that cost a lot. The residents have complained about cable access being unfair.
220 Oversight is needed to ensure compliance. If someone breaks the rules, the violator needs to be
221 exposed. It is really not complicated to implement these reforms.
222

223 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett said that the cable access proposal defines the election season as starting on
224 June 1st. There is nothing special about June 1-- it is not the date signatures are collected or petitions
225 are filed at the Board of Elections. Perhaps the date should be the date a person declares him/herself a
226 candidate in the newspaper. It could be part of the “nugget” that was mentioned. It could be a remedy
227 to the disadvantage a challenger has against an incumbent who appears frequently on cable during
228 board meetings, etc., which are exempt from regulation. Incumbents tend to wait until the last minute
229 to declare because they can give speeches at meetings without those speeches being considered
230 campaign-related. If a challenger declares in February, for example, he/she could start benefiting from
231 the increased cable time. It would apply to all candidates who agree to the reforms. The date should
232 be more flexible and be based on when a candidate declares him/herself to be a candidate.
233

234 Claire Lee mentioned Frank Leicht. The subcommittee will probably talk to him. Would the entire
235 commission want to hear what he has to say?
236

237 Harriet Leib said the problem is time. The commission could hear endlessly from people who have
238 helpful things to offer but there is a little amount of time.
239

240 Elizabeth Daniel said she is unclear if the Cable Subcommittee is limiting itself to making cable access
241 more fair and accessible in general or is focusing on making it fairer and more accessible only if tied to
242 campaign finance reform.
243

244 Susan Mancuso said the idea is that the only way to get voluntary compliance with campaign finance
245 reforms is to offer the cable “nugget”. Therefore, there is a linkage.
246

247 Claire Lee said that even if there wasn’t linkage the process is worth doing.
248

249 Elizabeth Daniel said she absolutely agrees. Her point is that not all candidates will agree to the
250 reforms so the issue becomes how best to structure cable so that it is fair for all candidates without
251 linkage and then how best to structure cable for those candidate who sign on. How many candidates
252 sign on will depend on how onerous it is to comply with the reform measures adopted. It will be a
253 smaller group of candidates who benefit from the nugget. The two structures needed are different.
254 The commission might consider proposing both structures at the public hearing but doing so might get
255 too confusing. It is conceivable that it is not feasible to proceed with a full-blown campaign finance
256 reform system, but one of the key things that must be done is to address complaints that cable access is
257 not fair. It must be made fair for everyone.
258

259 Francis Sheehan said that he has never advocated making cable access fair only if there is linkage.
260 Access to cable needs to be fair and equitable, regardless of any other reform initiative. Since the
261 commission has learned that all candidates must be provided some baseline amount of access to cable,

262 similar to what is available to other residents, it is even more critical that the commission develop
263 recommendations to ensure day-to-day access to cable is fair. Baseline access must be fair to
264 everyone, including candidates who decide not to participate in reforms.
265

266 Elizabeth Daniel said a municipality doesn't have to allow everyone access to the government channel,
267 which is used for municipal meetings. It only has to provide open access to the community access
268 channel. Residents do not have a right to be on the government channel, as they do on the community
269 access channel.
270

271 Francis Sheehan said that the channel distinction Elizabeth Daniel described is very common
272 elsewhere, but not in Greenburgh. Greenburgh essentially has two government channels. The
273 incumbents control both channels, decide who can have a show, when it will air and how often, and
274 then they schedule the permitted shows to be replayed on both the "government" channel, channel 71,
275 and the public access channel, channel 73, in a window from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. weekdays. The only
276 difference between the channels in Greenburgh is that town municipal meetings are not shown on
277 channel 73 in the unincorporated area of town. Also, the villages have been given the ability to
278 preempt what is shown on the access channels so cable shows may not be viewed town-wide.
279

280 Susan Mancuso said the villages probably have the right to preempt what is on the public access
281 channels within their villages.
282

283 Francis Sheehan said that he has not seen anything in writing that permits preemption of town-wide
284 programming.
285

286 Susan Mancuso said if there is nothing in writing it would be interesting, even though politically it may
287 be problematic working it out.
288

289 Harriet Leib summarized that the issues with cable are equity and incentives, with possible long-term
290 changes to the way Greenburgh deals with cable access in general regarding creation of a non-profit
291 corporation and separating financing from the town budget. The commission can recommend short-
292 term and long-term changes. The Cable Subcommittee needs to know if this is the focus upon which
293 to concentrate. Any recommendations should be in as few words as possible because they must be
294 given to the media for publication, perhaps even posted on the cable access bulletin board.
295

296 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett asked if anyone had an objection to the Cable Subcommittee focusing on
297 the issues summarized by Harriet Leib. There was no objection.
298

299 Harriet Leib said the next subcommittee is the Ethics Subcommittee. She said she heard the biggest
300 source of contention for the subcommittee seems to involve restricting employees from accepting gifts,
301 and using the term "contribution" may be problematic because it may not be legally allowable. She
302 asked Catherine Lederer-Plaskett to give the subcommittee report.
303

304 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett said that one of the questions facing the subcommittee, which may have
305 been clarified at the end of the last commission meeting, involves the scope of the commission's
306 charge and possible recommendations it could make. As mentioned previously, Lester Steinman came
307 up with the recusal provision as a means of legally addressing the appearance of impropriety that
308 results from a board member being asked to vote on a campaign contributor's application; the
309 contribution cannot be restricted if it complies with election laws but the elected official's ability to
310 vote on a contributor's application can be restricted, which reduces the influence a contribution from a
311 developer may have. Officials would be given the opportunity to return a contribution rather than
312 recuse themselves.
313

314 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett said the Ethics Subcommittee also discussed the section of the Ethics Code
315 which prohibits a majority of Ethics Board members from belonging to the same political party. The
316 members considered imposing a time period that a person should belong to a political party before
317 being appointed but there was strong sentiment by some that that section of the Ethics Code should be
318 left alone.
319

320 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett said there was discussion about how a complaint gets to the Ethics Board.
321 In many towns, residents have direct access to the Ethics Board. In Greenburgh, the Town Board must
322 authorize the Ethics Board to conduct any inquiry. She said Francis Sheehan conducted research on
323 the web and found innumerable examples of municipalities that allow any person to file a complaint
324 with the Ethics Board. Some members felt that allowing any person to file a complaint would
325 overwhelm the Ethics Board in Greenburgh. Other members felt that if municipalities such as the City
326 of White Plains or the City of Seattle or our own Village of Dobbs Ferry can handle open access to
327 their Ethics Boards, then the Town of Greenburgh should be able to handle the potential workload as
328 well. The members of the subcommittee have strong but differing opinions regarding each of these
329 issues.
330

331 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett said there was also a difference of opinion regarding whether the
332 subcommittee's recommendations should consist of a drafted proposed Ethics Code amendment, a
333 more generalized statement of concerns for the Town Board to consider, or a hybrid of the two
334 presentation methods. The hybrid compromise involves making generalized statements of concern in
335 the final report, while referencing proposed amendment language in an appendix.
336

337 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett said the Ethics Subcommittee members are in agreement that a Fair
338 Practices Board needs to be created. The composition of the board and whether it should be a non-
339 partisan board or a bi-partisan board needs to be resolved.
340

341 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett said the last but an important issue discussed by the Ethics Subcommittee
342 pertains to newsletters, which was effectively handled at the County level. The commission has seen
343 examples of how town officials sent out mass mailings to sections of town simultaneously with the
344 time period for collecting signatures to get on the ballot. The possibility of truly needed mailings
345 being sent from the legal department instead of the Supervisor's office was discussed. The public
346 would still obtain needed information without the politics.
347

348 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett said the issue of gifts has been contentious. Susan Mancuso has objected to
349 changing the Ethics Code to prohibit employees from accepting any gifts. The issue was initially
350 raised to try to address concerns about favoritism and lobbying. Proposed changes have been said to
351 penalize candidates for getting elected. However, the advantage of dealing with these issues in the
352 Ethics Code is that it targets those in a position to make decisions on a contributor's applications.
353 Candidates who don't get elected can't vote. Another discussion concentrated on the possibility that
354 the recusal provision could result in a majority of board members being prohibited from voting, since
355 contributions obtained directly or indirectly as part of a team are included. She spoke to Elizabeth
356 Daniel regarding this possibility and even if the board members had to vote in order to have a quorum
357 they would still be required to disclose receiving the contribution.
358

359 Erin Malloy asked what would happen if all five members of the Town Board accepted contributions
360 from the applicant.
361

362 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett said that there is a provision that allows members to vote even if there is a
363 conflict if recusal results in an insufficient number of voting members.
364

365 Erin Malloy asked if the law would then be that the Town Board members would not have to recuse
366 themselves, they would just have to disclose the contribution.
367

368 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett said that the issue is up for discussion.
369

370 Lester Steinman said the order should be disclosure and then recusal. Disclosure is a minimum step.
371 The officials would have to state why they are stepping down from the vote. The public is entitled to
372 know why their elected officials are not voting on an issue. Once they disclose, if there are an
373 insufficient number of voting members, they can vote.
374

375 Erin Malloy said the goal is obviously to encourage elected officials not to have a conflict.
376

377 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett agreed, stating that elected officials won't want to appear tainted by certain
378 contributions and may refuse them.
379

380 Harriet Leib asked what was the legal issue involving using the term "contribution", or was the
381 problem related to the term "employee".
382

383 Lester Steinman said he didn't want to be repetitive but most municipalities exclude campaign
384 contributions from gift provisions in their Ethics Code to avoid violating federal and state election
385 laws. The recusal provision that was developed addresses the concern that was raised regarding
386 campaign contributions to a board member. There was a later discussion that raised the issue of
387 employees accepting gifts, which is a totally separate issue, quite distinct from campaign finance
388 reform. The commission should focus on the major issue, which is dealt with by the recusal provision.
389

390 Ervin Schliefer asked if other municipalities have a prohibition on voting by elected officials.
391

392 Elizabeth Daniel said there are a handful of towns that have similar provisions and some cities as well.
393 The difficulty municipalities have is defining what constitutes having an interest in an application.
394

395 Ervin Schliefer asked what do those municipalities do when a majority cannot vote.
396

397 Lester Steinman said that there is a common law rule called the "Rule of Necessity", which states that,
398 if the board cannot otherwise function, members can vote even though a potential conflict has been
399 identified.
400

401 Elizabeth Daniel said that similar provisions exist in the corporate world.
402

403 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett said that great progress has been made in what can be presented to the
404 public.
405

406 Lester Steinman asked if the recusal provision should be tied to a monetary threshold, such as \$25. It
407 is a fundamental question. There is a supposition being made that an elected official will be unduly
408 influenced by contributions and therefore precluded from voting. It is difficult to make that case for a
409 small contribution. Elected officials could repeatedly have to recuse themselves for no valid reason. A
410 threshold is important.
411

412 Harriet Leib asked if it was legal to prevent an elected official from accepting contributions, setting
413 aside employees at this point.
414

415 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett said it is not legal to attack the giving of the campaign contribution. The
416 proposal doesn't do that. Instead, the ability of a contribution to influence an elected official's vote is
417 addressed through the recusal provision. The contributor can give the candidate a contribution.

418 However, the contribution can't help the contributor's application because the candidate is recused
419 from voting on it.

420
421 Lester Steinman said this discussion goes to the heart of the issue-- what constitutes a substantial
422 contribution, one that would influence a vote and therefore justify recusal.

423
424 Harriet Leib said the dollar value is not the only benefit to a candidate, there is a "chumminess" factor
425 that is very important.

426
427 Elizabeth Daniel asked if a candidate attended a League of Women Voters' reception and ate a lot,
428 would that be considered a gift.

429
430 Lester Steinman said chumminess has many facets other than money. A person cannot be disqualified
431 solely on the basis of chumminess.

432
433 Erin Malloy said that non-monetary issues seem to be something only the League of Women Voters
434 cares about. When she was at the NYC finance board she asked about in-kind contributions as she was
435 being shown computer screens of data and they scoffed at her. In-kind contributions can be significant
436 but are difficult to quantify, unlike monetary contributions, on which the commission should focus.

437
438 Harriet Leib said she believes NYC tried to regulate in-kind contributions but could not define the
439 issue.

440
441 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett said that the value of someone making a phone bank available to a
442 candidate is supposed to be disclosed to the Board of Elections.

443
444 Erin Malloy agreed, stating that those types of in-kind contributions have a dollar value that must be
445 considered as equivalent to giving money. It must be decided what constitutes a potentially corrupting
446 amount of money.

447
448 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett said that there should be some standard. Election laws require disclosure of
449 contributions of \$100 or more. That may be a justifiable threshold. A review of the financial filings
450 shows that the average person gives about \$25. At the local level a \$100 contribution stands out.

451
452 Erin Malloy said that \$100 is too low. She is not uncomfortable with her elected officials voting on
453 applications where the applicant gave more than that.

454
455 Elizabeth Daniel said that there is a difference between disclosure thresholds and thresholds that are
456 corrupting. The disclosure threshold is set low to determine if there is a pattern to the source of the
457 contributions. \$100 seems appropriate for disclosure. A corrupting amount would be higher.

458
459 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett asked what should be the threshold for recusal, \$250?

460
461 Harriet Leib said the amount is relative to the community-- in one community \$250 could be too low
462 and in another it could be too high.

463
464 Francis Sheehan said that local disclosure requirements less than what is required by federal or state
465 law are unenforceable unless there is full disclosure and all the contribution total what is reported to
466 the Board of Elections. The oversight committee has no way of verifying if a candidate received two
467 \$75 contributions or three \$50 contributions because no laws are broken by not itemizing the amounts
468 under \$100. The only way of verifying compliance with lower disclosure thresholds is to require full
469 disclosure and then verify the totals against totals filed with the Board of Elections. He asked if there
470 would be a different threshold of disclosure for receiving the cable "nugget" than for the recusal
471 provisions.

472
473 Susan Mancuso said that there should be a distinction between the two thresholds.
474
475 Lester Steinman said the cable issue is totally different. The two are unrelated.
476
477 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett suggested sticking to the threshold for recusal and then suggested that the
478 dollar amount may need to be determined after obtaining input at the upcoming public hearing.
479
480 Lester Steinman asked Erin Malloy if she had a recusal threshold amount in mind.
481
482 Erin Malloy said she was surprised how much money is spent in Greenburgh on local elections.
483
484 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett said that she has made copies of local candidates' financing filings for the
485 past few elections.
486
487 Erin Malloy said her "gut" reaction is that \$250 is too low.
488
489 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett said that \$250 is too high for local elections and urged that the records be
490 examined.
491
492 Elizabeth Daniel said \$250 may seem too high in a local election but to what end. Is it high based on
493 what others are contributing or is it high because it is inherently corrupting at the local level?
494
495 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett said that it depends on who is giving the money. If a developer contributes
496 the contribution is generally larger.
497
498 Lester Steinman asked how much developers typically donate.
499
500 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett said she has offered the records at each of the commission meetings.
501 Developers contribute \$1000. Some contribute \$250.
502
503 Francis Sheehan said \$1000 is the maximum that could be contributed in the local election. The
504 maximum is being contributed.
505
506 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett said that Town Board members seeking higher office, such as a
507 congressional seat or judgeship, raise more money from different sources than Town Board members
508 just interested in running for local office. The local candidates typically receive smaller contributions
509 than those running for higher office so the threshold needs to address the local candidate who may
510 receive many small donations and a \$100 or \$250 donation really stands out.
511
512 Erin Malloy said Catherine Lederer-Plaskett's point is an interesting one. The candidate's goals need
513 to be considered when establishing a threshold. In addition, the candidates' actual expenditures should
514 be examined to determine the cost of the local campaigns.
515
516 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett said the issue of campaign costs highlights the team problem.
517
518 Elizabeth Daniel said the team issue is addressed by in-kind contribution disclosure requirements. If a
519 town council candidate is receiving in-kind help from another member of the team worth \$1,000
520 dollars that must be disclosed.
521
522 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett said in Greenburgh town council members have not disclosed the indirect
523 funding of their campaigns by the Supervisor on their financial filings. Each gave \$500 to the
524 Supervisor who then paid for their entire campaign. A challenger generally collects numerous small
525 donations so a \$250 contribution to such a candidate who later is called on to vote on the contributor's

526 application could be perceived as having a conflict. The proposal doesn't prohibit the contribution,
527 just a subsequent vote pertaining to the contributor.
528

529 Harriet Leib said the commission is getting bogged down with the recusal threshold amount issue. A
530 decision needs to be made. Should an amount be established or should a general statement be
531 presented at the public hearing.
532

533 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett suggested letting the public comment regarding what would be an
534 appropriate threshold amount. A finished product need not and should not be presented to the public.
535

536 Francis Sheehan said that in the last election two of the Town Council members running with the
537 Supervisor spent \$500 on their campaigns according to the filed financial records. Therefore, \$250 for
538 a Town Council member is extremely high and even \$100 is too high. A distinction also needs to be
539 made regarding the office sought. A Town Council race is different from a Supervisor race which is
540 different from a congressional race.
541

542 Lester Steinman said Mr. Sheehan is using the wrong standard. The standard should be what dollar
543 amount will influence the elected official's vote. He hopes an elected official would laugh at a \$250
544 contributor who asked for favoritism. When \$1000 is contributed, that could have some influence.
545 The individual gives \$1000 for the primary, \$1000 for the general election, his/her company gives
546 \$1000, and it all adds up to a significant amount of money that could influence a candidate. The
547 standard needs to be the amount that could influence a vote.
548

549 Erin Malloy said that standard could also apply to a lesser degree to Town Council members voting. It
550 didn't cost only \$500 for the Town Council candidates to get elected, it had to cost them much more.
551

552 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett said the financial records filed with the Board of Elections indicate that
553 they each contributed \$500 to the team and that was all it cost them.
554

555 Harriet Leib said the in-kind contributions were obviously not included.
556

557 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett said that a proposed \$1000 threshold shows the high economic level of the
558 members in the room. Some candidates do not get anywhere near \$1000 contributions. A \$100 or
559 \$250 contribution stands out and is highly unusual. Other candidates have supporters who can afford
560 to give more so a \$250 contribution may not have the same influence.
561

562 Lester Steinman said it is not illegal for a candidate, once elected, to vote in support of his/her
563 constituents who helped win the election.
564

565 Erin Malloy said the comment that some candidates who receive smaller contributions than other
566 candidates may be influenced by lower thresholds implies that those candidates are more easily
567 corrupted.
568

569 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett said that is not her point. The limit for federal elections is \$1000. The
570 threshold for a local election should be much lower, particularly for a seat that cost \$500 to win. The
571 commissioners seem to be judging that \$250 or \$500 is not much money based on their own salaries.
572 Even so, how many in the room gave \$250 to a candidate? It is a lot of money. If the contribution
573 amount stands out from the other contributions it could lead to the appearance of a conflict, which
574 should be avoided.
575

576 Elizabeth Daniel said that the commission should not consider \$500 as the amount needed to run for
577 office in Greenburgh. That amount is caused by a unique set of circumstances in how the incumbents
578 ran as a team during the last election and how the expenditures were reported. Focusing on the \$500

579 reported could skew the analysis needed. Instead, the records should be examined to determine if \$250
580 is such a rare contribution that it is high enough to trigger a concern that something is going on.
581

582 Lester Steinman said the final thing to keep in mind when establishing a threshold is that it is not just
583 requiring disclosure, it is preventing an elected official from voting, from doing his or her job.
584

585 Ervin Schliefer said that he is concerned that 10,000 people who may have contributed to a candidate
586 could be disenfranchised because their candidate accepted their contributions and cannot vote.
587

588 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett suggested soliciting comment regarding the recusal threshold amount at the
589 public hearing. There was consensus to do so.
590

591 Francis Sheehan asked if the June 5 date for the public hearing is firm. He was told the commission is
592 committed to having the hearing on that date.
593

594 Harriet Leib asked if the commission should discuss the criticism that the public is barred from directly
595 forwarding a complaint to Greenburgh Ethics Board.
596

597 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett suggested soliciting comment about it at the public hearing.
598

599 Claire Lee inquired as to possible options since the only way to get to the Ethics Board is if the Town
600 Board agrees the matter should be considered by the Ethics Board.
601

602 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett said that Town Board approval is required under the current Ethics Law in
603 Greenburgh but there are many municipalities that allow any person in the municipality to file a
604 complaint directly with the Ethics Board.
605

606 Harriet Leib said that the oversight board might be an appropriate alternative path to the Ethics Board.
607

608 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett said that how the oversight board is created will determine if they can
609 forward complaints to the Ethics Board. The oversight board may have to be appointed by the Town
610 Board in order to make referrals unless the Ethics Code is changed to allow any person to file a
611 complaint.
612

613 Lester Steinman said he is still researching this issue. If the oversight is created totally outside the
614 scope of town government he is concerned that they would not be able to make a recommendation
615 under the current code.
616

617 Erin Malloy said she is concerned that the issue of how someone gets to the Ethics Board could
618 consume valuable time at the public hearing.
619

620 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett said that the issue has been controversial for some time and it is likely
621 someone will raise the issue at the public hearing, regardless of what is presented to the public.
622

623 Lester Steinman said that how the general public files a non-campaign-related complaint with the
624 Ethics Board is outside the scope of the commission and yet it might detract from time spent hearing
625 about campaign finance related issues. Perhaps a statement could be issued that acknowledges that
626 there is no means of getting to the Ethics Board except through the Town Board so the commission is
627 considering an oversight board as an alternate mechanism of forwarding campaign-related complaints
628 to the Ethics Board. The statement may be ignored and general access comments received anyway.
629

630 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett said that one alternative path via an oversight board is not the only option.
631 Another option, since the commission is examining the Ethics Code anyway, is to recommend that any

632 person should be able to file a complaint, including members of an oversight board that is not
633 appointed by the Town Board, as is the case in many municipalities throughout the country.
634

635 Lester Steinman said this approach raises the issue of what is the commission's charge. It is not to re-
636 write the Ethics Code in toto. There may be 100 things that may need to be done to the Ethics Code to
637 bring it up-to-date but that is not the commission's role. He asked for guidance from the commission
638 on the scope to be pursued.
639

640 Francis Sheehan said the final comments at the last commission meeting were the "saving grace" for
641 the commission. It was clear that the League of Women Voters had extracted a commitment from
642 Supervisor Feiner that, even though the Supervisor had a specific charge in mind, the commission
643 could conduct an independent study and could make recommendations quite different that what might
644 be considered within the scope of the Supervisor's charge. He thinks it is important that the
645 commission not ignore, or be perceived as ignoring, controversial issues that may not be directly
646 related to campaign finance reform but are associated with the Ethics Law, cable access or any other
647 topic under study by the commission. If objective research supports a recommendation which
648 addresses a complaint heard by the commission, the commission should not shy away from making
649 such a recommendation simply because it does not directly address a campaign finance issue. For
650 example, his research indicates that many municipalities allow "any person" to file a complaint with
651 the municipality's Ethics Board without prior approval of another board. He noted that recently-
652 revised ethics codes, including those for the City of White Plains and the Village of Dobbs Ferry, as
653 well as many others nation-wide, have added language to allow any person to file a complaint without
654 the approval of another board. The controversial requirement in Greenburgh that the Town Board
655 approve an Ethics Board complaint, including a complaint that may be critical of one or more Town
656 Board members, is not the standard. The commission, having recognized that the Greenburgh referral
657 system is needlessly controversial, based on objective data, should not hesitate recommending
658 remedies. To date, no data has been presented to refute his research findings. If anyone has such data,
659 indicating that the town's referral procedure is the standard, he would like to see it.
660

661 Francis Sheehan said the credibility and fairness of the League of Women Voters and the Council of
662 Greenburgh Civic Associations, and every other group represented on the commission will be judged
663 by the work product that is ultimately produced, its objectivity and scope. He is concerned that
664 remedies to controversial issues that do not require much effort to address via a recommendation may
665 be tabled because they don't specifically relate to campaign finance. Particularly troubling to him is
666 the apparent willingness by some to ignore a complaint that the political party composition of the
667 Ethics Board has been manipulated to maintain Democratic Party control even though the Ethics Code
668 specifically prohibits a majority of any political party being represented on the board. As mentioned at
669 a prior meeting, a candidate for Greenburgh Town Judge, registered as an Independent, ran as a life-
670 long Democratic who only changed his party affiliation because he was asked to be on the Ethics
671 Board and the board already contained the maximum number of Democrats. Mr. Sheehan said he has
672 the campaign literature proving the statements he is making. He said the commission has objective
673 data indicating a provision of the Ethics Code is being sidestepped, jeopardizing the perceived
674 objectivity of the board to which any oversight board created would refer complaints. Making a
675 recommendation that Ethics Board members be affiliated with their party for at least one election cycle
676 or some other time period before appointment doesn't seem that onerous. He said it was wrong for the
677 Town Board to sidestep the Ethics Code party diversity provision and it is wrong for the commission
678 to not broaden its scope when necessary to address such issues.
679

680 Susan Mancuso asked who was the candidate.
681

682 Francis Sheehan said the candidate was James Hubbert.
683

684 Erin Malloy asked if the Town Board or Ethics Board has refused to accept ethics violation
685 complaints.
686

687 Francis Sheehan said a civic association attempted to file an Ethics Code violation complaint with the
688 Ethics Board, which refused to accept the complaint without authorization from the Town Board,
689 which refused to grant authorization. These are real issues facing town residents.
690

691 Harriet Leib read a section of the recently adopted Ethics Code for the Village of Dobbs Ferry: "Upon
692 receipt of a sworn complaint by any person alleging a violation of this Code of Ethics or by
693 determining upon its own initiative that a violation of this Code of Ethics may exist, the Village Ethics
694 Board shall have the power and duty to conduct any investigation necessary."
695

696 Francis Sheehan said that provision is standard language in ethics codes based on his research.
697

698 Erin Malloy said that adopting the Village of Dobbs Ferry's Ethics Code was an incredible ordeal and
699 that she is concerned about broadening the scope of the commission. However, she may be
700 hypersensitive to the issue since she has spent months and months working on the Dobbs Ferry code.
701

702 Francis Sheehan said that there were calls for members to conduct research and research was done. If
703 anyone can show what he has found is not standard language, then he would drop the issue. That
704 doesn't appear to be the case.
705

706 Lester Steinman said that is not the issue. If the commission was charged with re-writing the Ethics
707 Code a wholesale review and re-write could be done after obtaining considerable expertise. That is not
708 what he believes the commission is charged with doing. There is no problem mentioning that during
709 the course of the commission's deliberations issues were raised with respect to how the Ethics Board
710 was appointed, with respect to how complaints are made to the Ethics Board. To get involved in re-
711 writing the Ethics Code is beyond the scope of this commission.
712

713 Erin Malloy said the creation of an oversight board that could refer complaints to the Ethics Board
714 would address the issue involving access.
715

716 Harriet Leib said that a complaint could be heard by the oversight board and a decision made by them.
717

718 Lester Steinman said the oversight board could not interpret the Ethics Code but apply the Ethics Code
719 and refer a potential violation to the Ethics Board.
720

721 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett said unless the Ethics Code is changed to allow any person to refer matters
722 to the Ethics Board, the oversight board could not refer violators unless the members of the oversight
723 board were appointed by the Town Board.
724

725 Lester Steinman said a Town Board-appointed oversight board could refer matters directly to the
726 Ethics Board without the approval of the Town Board and provide an alternate means of filing a
727 complaint. If the oversight board works completely outside town government that presents a problem.
728

729 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett said this issue raises another issue-- how does the oversight board get
730 appointed.
731

732 Harriet Leib said that is a totally different issue.
733

734 Lester Steinman suggested the commission resolve that issue. Should the oversight board be outside or
735 not.
736

737 Harriet Leib said the issue is really should the oversight board be independent.

738
739 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett said that the access problem could be circumvented if the Ethics Code was
740 amended to allow any person to file a complaint because then an outside, independent oversight board
741 could file a complaint as a "person".
742

743 Lester Steinman said that these are two separate issues: access to the Ethics Board and how the
744 oversight board is created. It is true that an outside oversight board could file a complaint with the
745 Ethics Board if it is opened up to everyone's complaints. The commission is trying to address
746 campaign finance because it is an important issue and if going from closed to open is not feasible than
747 letting an oversight board be an alternate means of getting to the Ethic Board with campaign-related
748 issues is a way to resolve the problem. The oversight board serves as a check, similar to a grand jury,
749 looking at complaints to determine if they merit being forwarded to the Ethics Board.
750

751 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett said she doesn't see how they are separate issues since how the oversight
752 board is created determines whether the board has the authority to be an alternate path to the Ethics
753 Board. Only a town-appointed oversight board would have that authority.
754

755 Lester Steinman said that it would be difficult to create an oversight board that is totally independent
756 of town government and yet give it the authority in local town law to be tied into the administration of
757 the government.
758

759 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett repeated that an independent oversight board would have the authority to
760 refer matters to the Ethics Board if the Ethics Code was modified, as it has been elsewhere, to let any
761 resident file a complaint.
762

763 Lester Steinman said these issues have to be resolved. Opening it up to everyone is a totally different
764 approach, requiring an examination of the commission's charge.
765

766 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett said that members indicated they would have to leave shortly and suggested
767 hearing from the last subcommittee-- the Public Finance Subcommittee. She said that she has been
768 lugging copies of the public finance records to every meeting and no one seems to want to look at
769 them. She was told to get them and she did. She wants the record to reflect that there are clearly
770 contributions from attorneys who appear before the town boards, from developers both small and large,
771 from planners, and from people who have lawsuits pending against the town. They are available for
772 inspection. She will give Francis Sheehan, the Commission Secretary, a copy for his records. The
773 records are too voluminous to copy for everyone. The records do support the statements that have
774 been made at these meetings regarding who has been contributing to the local campaigns.
775

776 Claire Lee suggested the records be left in the League of Women Voters office so anyone who wants to
777 look at them can do so.
778

779 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett said she spent a considerable amount of time obtaining the copies and
780 would not want to let go of them at this point. However, she will be bringing them to every meeting so
781 anyone who cares to can review them.
782

783 Lester Steinman said that he has scanned through the records and, in addition, has relied on Catherine
784 Lederer-Plaskett's representation of what they contain.
785

786 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett said that she has taken the liberty of inviting a few of the candidates to
787 attend the next meeting, so additional information can be collected. Hopefully, some will attend. The
788 general feeling of the Public Finance Subcommittee is that no one is complaining that lack of funds is a
789 barrier to running for office. Maybe the commission has not heard from a broad enough group. The
790 candidates invited to the next meeting may provide additional insight.

791
792 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett said that the subcommittee hasn't discussed the voter guide that Supervisor
793 Feiner is proposing. The people that she has spoken to have commented that the League of Women
794 Voters and the Westchester Coalition for Legal Abortion both produce very good newsletters, updating
795 the public on candidates' positions and therefore another newsletter is unnecessary.
796

797 Harriet Leib said Supervisor Feiner's suggested guide would be different from the guide distributed by
798 the League. He wants individual guides with answers to certain questions of concern to Greenburgh
799 residents. The League's guide is more general.
800

801 Charlotte Schienberg said the League asks general questions but it is an idea worth exploring to have
802 the League's guide include questions from the local communities. If so, it would address the idea
803 behind the guide without having another one. Another guide is not needed.
804

805 Francis Sheehan said a question-answer guide with specific questions raises another issue-- who
806 decides what are the key issues in Greenburgh.
807

808 Charlotte Schienberg said that is an important question that needs to be resolved.
809

810 Harriet Leib said that people have strong positions, which is admirable, but there needs to be a middle
811 ground sought.
812

813 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett suggested commissioners talk to the public to determine if they welcome
814 another guide.
815

816 Harriet Leib suggested the commissioners resolve the issue now. She asked the commissioners if they
817 support that a referendum be adopted, as Supervisor Feiner recommended. A referendum may not
818 even be legal. She asked Lester Steinman if a referendum on this issue is legal.
819

820 Lester Steinman urged the commission to avoid the referendum issue. Having or not having a
821 referendum is not the responsibility of the commission. The commission should decide what it wants
822 to accomplish and set out to accomplish it. If there are costs associated with the commission's
823 recommendations then it is up to the town and its bond counsel to figure out how best to pay for them.
824 The commission should expect the town to fund any recommendation it makes. How the town funds
825 the recommendation is not for this commission to decide.
826

827 Harriet Leib said Supervisor Feiner make it clear he wanted something on the ballot.
828

829 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett said she agrees with Lester Steinman's statement.
830

831 Charlotte Schienberg said the commission should be able to come up with ways other than another
832 costly voter guide to help candidates communicate with the public, such as increased free cable access
833 discussed at the last meeting.
834

835 Lester Steinman said the commission could suggest reforms which do not have costs associated with
836 them. Alternatively, if there are costs involved, because the commission questions the townspeople's
837 willingness to expend taxpayer monies on public financing of campaigns, a recommendation could be
838 made, if legal, to hold a referendum. The commission should not get hung up on the referendum issue
839 because, no matter what the commission recommends, the town's bond counsel will ultimately decide
840 if a referendum is possible.
841

842 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett asked for a general sense from those present about having another voter
843 guide.
844

845 Erin Malloy said she does see the need.
846

847 Charlotte Schienberg said she doesn't see a reason to have another one.
848

849 Claire Lee said she doesn't want another piece of campaign literature.
850

851 Francis Sheehan said it would create more controversy. Who selects the questions?
852

853 Ervin Schliefer questioned how the voter guide would compliment existing voter guides.
854

855 Susan Mancuso said her only concern is that written media has not been addressed. Since the reporter
856 from The Journal News didn't show up, she couldn't ask him questions. The commission has not
857 addressed the need for increased written material, as opposed to cable access, etc.
858

859 Elizabeth Daniel asked about the possibility of ads in newspapers.
860

861 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett said that the problem with candidates advertising in the newspaper is that it
862 is very day-specific and even page-specific. There would have to be a regular series of ads. If the
863 newspapers didn't donate the space, it probably would not be worthwhile to pour money into that kind
864 of access.
865

866 Susan Mancuso said that there are weekly newspapers that cover town issues that might be helpful.
867

868 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett said the Scarsdale Inquirer only covers Edgemont and Hartsdale. The
869 Enterprise covers the river villages. There is a significant area of Greenburgh not covered by any
870 weekly paper.
871

872 Claire Lee asked who would put out this voter's guide?
873

874 Lester Steinman said he was about to ask the same question.
875

876 Harriet Leib said she doesn't think the voter guide is needed either and, based on the comments, said it
877 seems that the voter guide is not something the commission wants to consider.
878

879 Francis Sheehan said that every option should stay on the table pending the public hearing. Even
880 though the commission doesn't think a voter guide is worth pursuing, maybe the testimony at the
881 public hearing will convince the commission otherwise.
882

883 Charlotte Schienberg said a more productive method of informing the public of candidates' viewpoints
884 would be to have more open forums, sponsored by many groups, not just the League of Women
885 Voters.
886

887 Francis Sheehan said that the Council of Greenburgh Civic Associations also sponsors debates of local
888 candidates.
889

890 Francis Sheehan said that he would like to discuss the commission's completion timetable. He said, as
891 it reads, it may incorrectly lead the public to think that their comments at the public hearing will not be
892 adequately addressed. Only one meeting is scheduled following the public hearing to conclude the
893 commission's work.
894

895 Harriet Leib said the meeting after the public hearing is to determine a completion date, which would
896 take into consideration what is said at the hearing. If more meetings are needed, they will be scheduled
897 but a completion date should be determined at that subsequent meeting.
898

899 Francis Sheehan said that addresses his concern.

900
901 Lester Steinman said that the timetable should indicate the commission will be using the meeting after
902 the hearing to work on findings.
903

904 Harriet Leib said that subcommittees should meet prior to the May 23, 2000, meeting to come up with
905 final recommendations and documentation. She will not be available for commission work after the
906 third week of June. Anne Nelson, who chaired the first commission meeting, will substitute in her
907 absence.
908

909 Catherine Lederer-Plaskett consulted with members of the Public Finance Subcommittee present and
910 determined that no meeting could be held before May 23, 2000. She then suggested the Ethics
911 Subcommittee convene.
912

913 Harriet Leib suggested, due to various scheduling conflicts among the members, meeting at 5:00 p.m.
914 before the May 23, 2000, meeting, after which a verbal presentation of the subcommittee's conclusions
915 will be presented to the commission.
916

917 The meeting was adjourned at 2:20 p.m.
918
919

920 Respectfully submitted,
921 Francis Sheehan, Commission Secretary