January 2012

CODE OF ETHICS
AND
STANDARDS OF CONDUCT
FOR MEMBERS OF
THE GOOCHLAND COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

CODE OF ETHICS

Recognizing that persons who hold public office have been given a public trust and that the stewardship of such office demands the highest levels of ethical and moral conduct, any person serving on the Goochland County Board of Supervisors should adhere to the following Code of Ethics.

1. Uphold the Constitution, laws and regulations of the United States and of all governments therein and never knowingly be a party to their evasion.

2. Put loyalty to the highest moral principles and to the county as a whole above loyalty to individuals, districts, or particular groups.

3. Give a full measure of effort and service to the position of trust for which stewardship has been granted; giving earnest effort and best thought to the performance of duties.

4. Seek to find and use the most equitable, efficient, effective, and economical means for getting tasks accomplished.

5. Adopt policies and programs that support the rights and recognize the needs of all citizens regardless of race, sex, age, religion, creed, country of origin or disability. Avoid adopting policies, supporting programs or engaging in activities that discriminate against or offend individuals because of race, sex, age, religion, creed, country of origin or disability.

6. Ensure the integrity of the actions of the Board of Supervisors by avoiding discrimination through the dispensing of special favors or unfair privileges to anyone, whether for remuneration or not. A member should never accept for himself or herself or for family members, favors or benefits under circumstances which might be construed by reasonable persons as influencing the performance of governmental duties.

7. Make no private promises of any kind binding upon the duties or any office, since a public servant has no private word which can be binding on public duty.

8. Engage in no business with the county government, or the school system, either directly or indirectly, which is inconsistent with the conscientious performance of government duties except as may be consistent with the conflict of interests statutes in the Code of Virginia.

9. Never use any information gained confidentially in the performance of governmental duties as a means of making private profit.

10. Expose through appropriate means and channels, corruption, misconduct, or neglect of duty whenever discovered.

11. Adhere to the principle that the public's business should be conducted in the public view by observing and following the letter and spirit of the Freedom of Information Act using closed meetings only to deal with sensitive personnel, legal matters, contractual matters or as otherwise provided by the Code of Virginia.

12. Avoid using the position of public trust to gain access to the media for the purposes of criticizing colleagues, citizens or personnel, impugning their integrity or vilifying their personal beliefs.

13. Make sure, when responding to the media, that a clear distinction is made between personal opinion or belief and a decision made by the Board.

14. If requested by any member of the Board of Supervisors, review orally and in public session at the annual organizational meeting each of these principles.

15. Pledge to honor and uphold these principles, ever conscious that public office is a public trust.

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

Recognizing that persons holding a position of public trust are under constant observation by the media and interested county residents, and recognizing that maintaining the integrity and dignity of the public office is essential for maintaining high levels of public confidence in our institutions of government, every member of the Goochland County Board of Supervisors should adhere to the following Standards of Conduct:

1. Avoid during public meetings and during the performance of public duties the use of abusive, threatening or intimidating language or gestures directed at colleagues, citizens, or personnel.

2. Pay all taxes due to the county, state, or national government.

3. Attend all regularly scheduled meetings of the Board or committees to which he or she has been assigned, resigning whenever personal circumstances preclude regular attendance.

4. Avoid a private lifestyle that casts public doubt upon the integrity and competence of the county government.

5. Make a conscientious effort to be well prepared for each meeting.

6. Offer criticism of colleagues or county employees only in private meetings with appropriate individuals or in closed meeting.

7. Work to create a positive environment in public meetings where citizens will feel comfortable in their roles as observers or participants.

8. Maintain an attitude of courtesy and consideration toward all colleagues and staff during all discussions and deliberations.

9. Be tolerant. Allow citizens, employees, or colleagues sufficient opportunity to present their views.

10. Be respectful and attentive. Avoid comments, body language or distracting activity that conveys a message of disrespect for the presentations from citizens, personnel or colleagues.

11. Be concise. Avoid the practice of taking more time to address an issue before the body than is necessary and essential for an adequate consideration of those matters being discussed.

12. Follow the process set forth below upon receiving a complaint that a Board member has violated the Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct. In the event a complaint is received, the following procedure shall be followed:

A. the Clerk or the Chairman of the Board shall forward the complaint to all members of the Board;
B. the accused member shall be given a reasonable period of time to respond in writing to the allegations, and such response shall be forwarded to all members of the Board;
C. the Board and the County Administrator and/or County Attorney, if needed, may meet to discuss the allegations and the member's response;
D. the Chairman shall poll the members regarding their disposition of the alleged violation; and
E. the Chairman shall direct the County Administrator to draft a response to inform the complainant of the Board's disposition.

If the Chairman is the alleged violator, the Vice-Chairman shall carry out the Chairman's duties, as outlined in subsections 12(A) thru 12(E) above.

Adopted March 7, 2000
Amended January 6, 2009
Amended January 13, 2009
Amended January 5, 2010
Amended January 4, 2011
Amended January 3, 2012