Code of Ethics of the Town Council of Summerfield

Preamble

The stability and proper operation of democratic representative government depends upon the continuing consent of the governed, upon the public confidence in the integrity of the government and upon responsible exercise of the trust conferred by the people. Government decisions and policy must be made and implemented through proper channels and processes of the governmental structure. Each Town Council member must find within his or her own conscience the touchstone on which to determine appropriate conduct. To enable and assure the adherence to the above stated principles and purposes, the following Articles establish guidelines for ethical standards of conduct for Town Council members. This Code should not be considered a substitute for the law or a Town Council member's best judgment.

Article One

A Town Council Member Shall Obey the Law

Town Council members shall support the Constitution of the United States, the Constitution of North Carolina and the laws enacted by the Congress of the United States and the General Assembly pursuant thereto. Members specifically acknowledge and agree to comply with the requirements of N.C.G.S §14-234 entitled "Public officers or employees benefiting from public contracts; exceptions."

Article Two

A Town Council Member Should Uphold the Integrity and Independence of His or Her Office

Town Council members should demonstrate the highest standards of personal integrity, truthfulness, honesty and fortitude in all their public activities in order to inspire public confidence and trust in Town government. Town Council members should participate in establishing, maintaining, and enforcing, and should themselves observe, high standards of conduct so that the integrity and independence of their office may be preserved. The provisions of this Code should be construed and applied to further these objectives.

Article Three

A Town Council Member Should Avoid Impropriety and the Appearance of Impropriety in All His or Her Activities

A. It is essential that Town government attract those citizens best qualified and

willing to serve. Town Council members have legitimate interests: economic, professional and vocational, of a private nature. Town Council members should not be denied, and should not deny to other Town Council members or citizens, the opportunity to acquire, retain and pursue private interests, economic or otherwise, except when conflicts with their responsibility to the public cannot be avoided. Town Council members must exercise their best judgment to determine when this is the case.

B. Town Council members should respect and comply with the law and should conduct themselves at all times in a manner that promotes public confidence in the integrity of the office of Town Council members and of Town government.

C. Town Council members should not allow family, social, or other relationships to unduly influence their conduct or judgment and should not lend the prestige of the office of Town Council members to advance the private interests of others; nor should they convey, or permit others to convey, the impression that they are in a special position to influence them. Town Council members shall not grant any special consideration, treatment or advantage to any citizen beyond that which is available to every other citizen.

The Mayor or any other member of the Town Council who has an interest in any official act or action before the Board shall publicly disclose on the record of the Board the nature and extent of such interest and if required by law, shall withdraw from any consideration of the matter if excused by the Board pursuant to N.C.G.S §160A-75.

Article Four

A Town Council Member Should Perform the Duties of the Office Diligently

Town Council members should, while performing the duties of the office as prescribed by law, give precedence to these duties over other activities. In the performance of these duties, the following standards should apply:

A. Legislative Responsibilities

1. Town Council members should actively pursue policy goals they believe to be in the best interests of their constituents within the parameters of orderly decision-making, rules of the Town Council, and open government.
2. Town Council members should respect the legitimacy of the goals and interests of

other Town Council members and should respect the rights of others to pursue goals and policies different from their own.

B. Adjudicative Responsibilities

1. Town Council members should be faithful to the general and local laws pertaining to the office and strive for professional competence in them. They should be unswayed by partisan interests, public clamor, or fear of criticism.

2. Town Council members should demand and contribute to the maintenance of order and decorum in proceedings before the Town Council.

3. Town Council members should be honest, patient, dignified, and courteous to those with whom they deal in their official capacity, and should require similar conduct of their staff and others subject to their direction and control.

4. Town Council members should accord to every person who is legally interested in a proceeding before the Council full right to be heard according to law.

5. Town Council members should dispose promptly of the business of Town for which they are responsible.

C. Administrative Responsibilities

1. Town Council members should clearly distinguish legislative, adjudicatory, and administrative responsibilities, and should refrain from inappropriate interference in the impartial administration of Town affairs by Town employees. Town Council members should diligently discharge those administrative responsibilities that are appropriate, should maintain professional competence in the administration of these duties, and should facilitate the diligent discharge of the administrative responsibilities of fellow Council Members and other Town officials.

2. Town Council members should conserve the resources of the Town in their charge. They should employ Town equipment, property, funds, and personnel only in legally permissible pursuits and in a manner that exemplifies excellent stewardship.

3. Town Council members should require Town employees subject to their direction and control to observe the standards of fidelity and diligence that apply to Town

Council members as well as those appropriate for employees.

4. Town Council members should take or initiate appropriate disciplinary measures against a Town employee for improper conduct of which the Town Council members may become aware.

5. Town Council members should not employ or recommend the appointment of unnecessary employees and should exercise the power of employment only on the basis of merit, avoid favoritism, and refrain from illegal discrimination and nepotism. They should not approve compensation of employees beyond the fair value of services rendered.

Article Five

A Town Council Member Should Conduce the Business of the Council in an Open and Public Manner

Town Council members should be aware of the letter and intent of the State's Open Meetings Law, should conduct the business of the Town Council consistent with the letter and spirit of that law, and consistent with the need to inspire and maintain public confidence in the integrity and fairness of Town government and the office of Town Council members. Consistent with this goal of preserving public trust, Town Council members should be aware of the need for discretion in deliberations when the lack of discretion would pose a threat to the resources of the Town, to the reputation of current or potential Town employees, to orderly and responsible decision making, to the integrity of other governmental processes, or to other legitimate interests of the Town.

This Code of Ethics and conduct for the Town of Summerfield was adopted on the 12th day of January, 2010, by action of the Town Council of the Town of Summerfield, North Carolina.

This the 12th day of January, 2010.

Mark L Brown

Mark Brown, Mayor

ATTEST AND SEAL:

Valarie Halvorsen

Valarie Halvorsen, Town Clerk