**Ethics Committee**

**Approved 5/22/2014**

Rotary is designed to differentiate itself from other civic clubs by placing emphasis on ethics.  Due to our commitment to ethics, we will institute a standing ethics committee.  The purpose of this committee is two fold.

First, the committee will be a sounding board for club members to use when they are facing an ethical question or situation.  The member may use the committee as a group or go to committee members individually.   The member may wish to keep the matter confidential.  It will be his or her right to determine if the matter is to be held in confidence or not.  Committee meetings should not be held before or after our regular weekly club meetings if the desire is to keep the matter confidential.

Secondly, the committee will be used to facilitate matters of conflict and/or ethics between members.  Our constitution has language on how to deal with conflict, but this is when matters have reached critical mass.  It is the desire of our club to resolve issues between each other promptly, confidentially, and properly.   Committee members (individually or jointly) can be used as facilitators between two (or more) parties in conflict.  It is understood that that it is best to have the aggrieved party to address the situation privately.  The facilitator(s) should encourage the parties to meet privately and resolve their issues.  If after several attempts (three plus) to meet and one party refuses, then the facilitator may choose to have one or both parties meet with them privately or as a committee.  If the parties do meet privately and their issues are still unresolved, the facilitators should then meet with both parties while still maintaining confidentiality.   It is the desire of the board that the matter will be addressed to the satisfaction of all parties and the issue will be resolved without board (or club) involvement or their knowledge.  However, the ethics committee will have no authority to make judgments or bind agreements on members.  Its function is to facilitate discussion and make suggestions for possible remedies that members may or may not follow at their discretion.  When the committee meets the president must be notified since the president is an ex officio member of all committees.

Once it becomes clear the matter cannot be resolved with the committee. Then the board will be notified of the issue by the committee chair and the board will deal with it as directed by our constitution.

The committee chair will not be required to attend regular board meetings or even to report to the board.  It will be the chair’s decision when an issue will be passed to the board for further action.

There are some matters that rise to immediate action without going through the above steps.  If a party is accusing another of sexual harassment, physical assault or physical threats, then this must be immediately reported to the board for action.

The committee will not address issues of personal family matters.