

CITY OF STAMFORD

Stamford Board of Ethics
Stamford Government Center
August 19, 2020

Advisory Opinion

To: Rep. Philip J. Giordano

From: City of Stamford Board of Ethics

Re: Advisory Opinion

Dear Representative Giordano:

You requested an Advisory Opinion from the City of Stamford Board of Ethics. You advised us of the following facts:

1. You are a member of the Board of Representatives, representing District 10.
2. Former Stamford Mayor Bruno Giordano was your brother.
3. You anticipate that the Board of Representatives will be discussing the possibility of removing the Columbus Statue in Columbus Park and possibly renaming the park.
4. Some of your constituents have requested that the park be renamed in honor of your brother, Mayor Bruno Giordano.

Based on the above factual background, you asked the Board of Ethics the following questions:

To what extent can I participate in the Board of Representatives discussion regarding the issues of Columbus Park?

Would I be able to vote on whether or not to remove the Columbus Statue in Columbus Park?

Section 19-4 of the Code – Conflicts of interests; interference with duties – states: “No officer...shall engage in any business or transaction or have a personal, immediate family ...interest, directly or indirectly, which is in material conflict with or incompatible with the proper discharge of his...official duties or that by creating a divided loyalty might influence or impair his...independence of judgment and action in the performance of said duties. A conflict of interest exists whenever an officer...will more likely than not benefit, disproportionately from other citizens of the city, directly or indirectly , from a decision over which they have influence.”

Section 19-5 A. of the Code – Prohibited interests – states: “...an officer shall not deliberate or participate in a decision or action by the agency of which the individual is a member...if said individual or any member of his...immediate family...would be likely to gain or lose a material benefit that is not common to the general interest of other citizens of the city.

The Board finds that there would be no gain or loss of material benefit to you if the Columbus Statue were to be removed from the park and , therefore, there would be no conflict of interest in your participating in the discussion or voting on that issue.

The Board finds that there would be no conflict of interest in your participating in discussions or voting on the renaming of the park in honor/memory of your brother.

This Advisory Opinion pertains only to your specific circumstances, and should not be construed as precedent for any further requests for an advisory opinion or complaint filed with the Board.

The Board of Ethics thanks you for proactively seeking advice on how to handle potential conflicts of interest, and for your many years of service to the City of Stamford.