

Council approves ethics panel

NORWALK

By ROBERT KOCH

Hour Staff Writer

In a late-night vote Tuesday, the Common Council approved unanimously the appointment of seven Norwalk residents to the city's new Board of Ethics.

"Thank you for the opportunity and the privilege of serving," said the Rev. Marcellus Norris, among the appointees. "I just continue to pray for each and every one of you that we will continue to go higher, that we will continue to uphold the standards of what we should do in God's eyes."

Appointed were Democrats Norris, Jack English and William Fitzgerald; Republicans Elizabeth Broncati and Charles Stabinsky; and unaffiliated voters Alice Allen and James Del Greco.

Their appointments come two years after the Common Council revamped Norwalk's Code of Ethics.

Councilwoman Kelly L. Straniti said the desire to engage regular citizens, rather than politically engaged persons, was behind the delay.

To be appointed to the board, each appointee required at least 11 affirmative votes from the 15-member council. Each, in fact, received 15 votes.

Mayor Richard A. Moccia, who thinks the appointees are a fair representation of the city, thanked the appointees for willing to serve on the new ethics board, while expressing hope that ethics violations do not occur.

The new ethics board stems from a revision of the city's Code of Ethics as approved by the council in June 2007. The revision was intended to modernize the code and rely upon nonpolitical citizens-at-large, rather than three elected council members to review and adjudicate alleged ethics

violations.

The new ethics code, among other things, places gift limits at \$50 and includes a whistle-blower clause.