

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION

In re Audit Report for *Committee to Elect Charles Blango*

File No. 2010-160

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The State Elections Enforcement Commission initiated this complaint against the qualified candidate committee of Charles A. Blango, candidate for the 94th Assembly district in the 2008 election. The complaint arose out of a referral from the Commission's Campaign Disclosure and Audit Unit, which performed a post-election audit of the *Committee to Elect Charles Blango* candidate committee. The Commission voted to authorize an investigation into the campaign at its December 15, 2010 meeting based on the Draft Final Audit Report that the audit and disclosure unit prepared.

After the investigation of the Complainant's complaint, the Commission makes the following findings and conclusions:

1. Charles A. Blango filed documents to create a candidate committee on April 9, 2008, declaring that he was a candidate for the 94th district seat in the General Assembly and naming Jerry Smart as campaign treasurer and Lynn Johnson as the committee's deputy treasurer. *See* SEEC Form 1 – Registration by Candidate (“Committee to Elect Charles Blango” April 9, 2008).

2. On June 12, 2008, Blango completed Form CEP 10 indicating his intent to abide by the expenditure limits of the Citizens' Election Program. Candidate Blango signed the document and initialed key provisions to reflect his acceptance of the restrictions imposed by the voluntary program as did Smart in his role as campaign treasurer and Johnson as deputy treasurer. *See* SEEC Form CEP-10 (June 12, 2008).
3. The Commission awarded *Committee to Elect Charles Blango* a grant from the Citizens' Election Fund totaling \$24,300 on July 24, 2008. *See* Minutes, Special Telephonic Meeting (State Elections Enforcement Comm'n, July 24, 2008).
4. Following the 2008 election cycle, the Commission audited all candidate committees that participated in the 2008 elections. The Commission's Campaign Disclosure & Audit Unit conducted an extensive audit of the Blango committee.
5. The audit revealed that the Blango committee's campaign treasurer failed to report on the committee's financial disclosure statements at least 27 transactions, totaling more than \$3,500 or 14% of the Committee's grant from the Citizens' Election Fund. Connecticut's campaign finance disclosure laws require a campaign treasurer to make and report all expenditures, including those incurred but not yet paid, of the relevant committee for which the individual serves as the treasurer and to file the financial disclosure documents with the appropriate repository. *See* General Statutes §§ 9-606 (a) (2) – (4) (imposing affirmative duty on treasurer to file periodic reports and account for all expenditures). *See also* General Statutes § 9-608 (c) (1) (C).
6. The campaign treasurer's failure to report these transactions represented a violation of General Statutes § 9-608.
7. After the 2008 election cycle, campaign treasurer Smart moved from Connecticut and took no part in the audit process. Commission staff has been unable to locate him.
8. The Commission's investigation revealed no violations for which the candidate could be held personally liable, but the Commission has communicated with the candidate to impress upon him the importance of selecting appropriate individuals to serve as campaign treasurers.

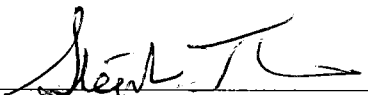
9. Weighing the significant resources necessary to find Smart with the potential civil liability he bears for his apparent violation of General Statutes § 9-608, the Commission has decided not to pursue this matter any further.

ORDER

The following Order is recommended on the basis of the aforementioned findings:

That the complaint be dismissed without prejudice.

Adopted this 24 day of August of 2011 at Hartford, Connecticut.



Stephen F. Cashman
By Order of the Commission