

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION

MINUTES
STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR TELEPHONIC MEETING
Via Webex
June 2, 2021
9:30 A.M.

Swearing in of New Commissioner

The oath of office was administered by Chairman Stephen Penny to Commissioner Greg Picuch.

I. Call to Order

Commissioner Stephen Penny was present via Webex and called the meeting to order at 9:31 A.M. Commissioners Shannon Bergquist and Greg Picuch were present via Webex. Agency staff was also present.

II. Approval of the Minutes

Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of May 5, 2021

It was moved by Commissioner Bergquist and seconded by Commissioner Penny to approve the Minutes of the Meeting of May 5, 2021 as amended. So voted by a vote of 2-0-1, with Commissioner Picuch abstaining.

III. Administrative Reports

Director Michael Brandi updated the Commission with a budget analysis for fiscal year that closes on June 30th. The SEEC is actively evaluating end of year budget. SEEC staff are going through audiovisual items that are necessary to equip our conference room here in the new building. SEEC staff is also in the midst of a massive historical scanning project for the agency. Due to the move, the agency has somewhere around 86 boxes of material that were Commissioner decisions dating back to 1974 that were just being held in the basement of the old building.

Director Brandi reported that SEEC staff has embarked on this project since we have very limited storage space and are trying to transition to a fully electronic system. The SEEC has available budget money this year because of the number of vacancies and the inability to fill during most of the year due to COVID-19. A&A office solutions has been awarded the contract as they were on the state bid list. We received an additional quote, which was almost five times the amount that A&A bid.

A&A is going to remove 86 boxes of materials from the dead storage facility at 92 Farmington Ave. They are going to scan and make the material electronic and searchable. Then, we can eventually destroy the paper, but we will have to retain all those documents in electronic format. We received permission from the state archives and the state library pursuant to our retention policy to shred 100 boxes of materials. Some of the documents were fiscal records and materials from years that have been completely audited by the state auditor's and some were 15 and 20 years old ledgers and documents that we are no longer required to keep.

Director Brandi updated that here at the agency, we are doing as much as we can to take control of these projects. Some of these documents were sitting in a basement for 40 years and it's time for us to bite the bullet with the available funds and we make these documents available to the public in electronic format. A special thanks to Rick Gebo, Sheri-Lyn Lagueux, Paul Brady, and Stephen Palmer for their assistance in getting everything moved

Director Brandi reported that the agency has 33 employees staffed. Rhonda Tillman joined the agency as a new Fiscal Officer two weeks ago. We are pleased to have her on board. The SEEC is still looking to fill the Accounts Examiner Position that is back out for a more public search. Once the position is filled, we will be back to six Account Examiners in our audit unit. The only remaining position that we have not filled, and I don't intend to fill for a while, will be the Clerk Typist position, which is a front desk person.

Director Brandi provided the Commission with a legislative update. Budget-wise we are monitoring Legislature and the state budget process. There's currently no access to the Capitol building, but Chelsea Ruzzo and Sheri-Lyn Lagueux have been monitoring the debates and bills on a daily basis. They were several election-related bills related to absentee ballots and the constitutional amendment related to early voting which passed and will be on the 2022 ballot for referendum.

Director Brandi advised that the Commission is watching for the myriad of amendments to existing bills. At this point, SEEC is monitoring the Governor's bill allowing CEP funds for child care. This bill has passed in the Senate and is awaiting action in the House.

The Legislature has until midnight on June 9th to conclude the session and we will continue to monitor all activities.

IV. Pending Complaints and Investigations

A. Public Session

Public Session was not convened.

V. ***Executive Session per General Statutes §§ 1-200(6)(B) and (E), and 1-210(b)(1), (3),(4),(10) and General Statutes §9-7a, as amended by Public Act 11-48 §300 (Preliminary draft and agency consideration of enforcement action and exempt records relative thereto)***

It was moved by Commissioner Bergquist and seconded by Commissioner Piecuch at 9:44 A.M. to proceed into Executive Session pursuant to General Statutes §§ 1-200(6)(B) and (E), and 1-210(b)(1),(3),(4),(10) to discuss strategy and negotiations with respect to pending claims and exempt records. So voted.

Commissioners Penny, Bergquist and Piecuch were present via Webex. Staff members present via teleconference were, William B. Smith, James Talbert-Slagle, Ryan M. Burns, Scott Branfuhr, Kevin Ahern, Alyssa Torres, Joshua Foley, Chelsea Ruzzo, Stephanie Fish, Ronald Perry, Lisa Drew, Douglas Frost, Linda Waterman, Shannon Kief, Michael J. Brandi and Sheri-Lyn Lagueux.

The Commission returned to public session at 10:21 A.M.

Returning to public session the Commission took the following action:

1. Recommendation of Counsel: Necessary to Investigate Determination pursuant to General Statutes §9-7a, as amended by Public Act 11-48 §300

Attorney William B. Smith summarized the Recommendation of Counsel dated May 24, 2021 and requested that (8) matters be moved to investigate.

It was moved by Commissioner Bergquist and seconded by Commissioner Piecuch to make a determination that it is necessary to investigate violations relating to (8) complaint File Nos.: 2021-123, 2021-124, 2021-125, 2021-126, 2021-127, 2021-128, 2021-129 and 2021-130. So approved by the Commission, 3-0-0. So voted.

2. In the Matter of a Complaint by Martha Emilio, Pomfret
File No. 2020-051

Recommendation of Counsel

Attorney:

William B. Smith

Legal Investigator:

Stephanie Fish

Attorney William B. Smith summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Findings & Conclusions in File No. 2020-051. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Bergquist and seconded by Commissioner Piecuch to adopt the Findings & Conclusions in File No. 2020-051. So voted by

a vote 3-0-0. The Findings & Conclusions will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

3. In the Matter of a Complaint by Brian Boyd, Madison
File No. 2020-077
Recommendation of Counsel
Attorney: William B. Smith
Legal Investigator: Stephanie Fish

The matter is continued.

4. In the Matter of a Complaint by Rhonda Caldwell, Hamden
File No. 2020-032
Recommendation of Counsel
Attorney: Kevin M. Ahern
Legal Investigator: Stephanie Fish

Attorney Kevin M. Ahern summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Findings & Conclusions in File No. 2020-032. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Bergquist and seconded by Commissioner Piecuch to adopt the Findings & Conclusions as to a dismissal in File No. 2020-032. So voted by a vote 3-0-0. The Findings & Conclusions will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

5. In the Matter of a Complaint by James Morris, Hartford
File No. 2020-035
Recommendation of Counsel
Attorney: Kevin M. Ahern
Legal Investigator: Scott Branfuhr

Attorney Kevin M. Ahern summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Findings & Conclusions in File No. 2020-035. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Bergquist and seconded by Commissioner Piecuch to adopt the Findings & Conclusions as to no further action in File No. 2020-035. So voted by a vote 3-0-0. The Findings & Conclusions will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

6. In the Matter of a Complaint by Maria Pereira, Bridgeport
File No. 2020-002
Recommendation of Counsel
Attorney: Kevin M. Ahern
Legal Investigator: Stephanie Fish

Attorney Kevin M. Ahern summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Findings & Conclusions in File No. 2020-002. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Bergquist and seconded by Commissioner Piecuch to adopt the Findings & Conclusions as to a dismissal in File No. 2020-002. So voted by a vote 3-0-0. The Findings & Conclusions will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

7. In re: *Commission Initiated Investigation*
File No. 2019-086

Recommendation of Counsel

Attorney:

Ryan M. Burns

Attorney Ryan M. Burns summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed the Commission take no further action in File No. 2019-086.

It was moved by Commissioner Bergquist and seconded by Commissioner Piecuch to take no further action in File No. 2019-086. So voted by a vote 3-0-0. The minutes of the meeting will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

8. In the Matter of a Complaint by Patrick Perugino, West Haven
File No. 2020-053

Recommendation of Counsel

Attorney:

Ryan M. Burns

Legal Investigator:

Stephanie Fish

The matter is continued.

9. In the Matter of a Complaint by Joan Coe, Sismbury
File No. 2021-059

Recommendation of Counsel

Attorney:

Ryan M. Burns

Legal Investigator:

Stephanie Fish

Attorney Ryan M. Burns summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Findings & Conclusions in File No. 2021-059. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Bergquist and seconded by Commissioner Piecuch to adopt the Findings & Conclusions as to a dismissal in File No. 2021-059. So voted by a vote 3-0-0. The Findings & Conclusions will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

10. In the Matter of a Complaint by Elaine M. Dove, Hamden
File No. 2021-003

Recommendation of Counsel

Attorney:

James M. Talbert-Slagle

Legal Investigator:

Stephanie Fish

The matter is continued.

11. In the Matter of a Complaint by Joseph Vollano, Meriden

File No. 2020-045

Recommendation of Counsel

Attorney:

James M. Talbert-Slagle

Legal Investigator:

Stephanie Fish

The matter is continued.

12. In re: Commission Initiated Investigation *MakeWay4Holloway*

File No. 2021-043

Recommendation of Counsel

Attorney:

James M. Talbert-Slagle

Legal Investigator:

Stephanie Fish

Attorney James M. Talbert-Slagle summarized the above referenced matter in File No. 2021-043. He recommended authorization of an investigatory subpoena for bank records from Liberty Bank.

It was moved by Commissioner Bergquist and seconded by Commissioner Piecuch to authorize an investigatory subpoena for bank records from Liberty Bank in File No. 2021-043. So voted by a vote 3-0-0.

13. Draft Audit Reports

1. "Flynn 2018," John Flynn
Accounts Examiner: Krysta Palozie
2. "O'Brien for New Milford," Thomas P. O'Brien
Accounts Examiner: Ergys Guni
3. "Smedley4Senate," Robert C. Smedley
Accounts Examiner: Nicole Petit
4. "Giselle Gigi Jacobs for the 7th District State Rep," Giselle S. Jacobs
Accounts Examiner: Krysta Palozie
5. "NKD18," Nicole Klarides Ditria
Accounts Examiner: Ergys Guni
6. "Friends of Michael DiMassa," Michael DiMassa
Accounts Examiner: Ergys Guni

7. "Polletta for Rep." Joseph Polletta
Accounts Examiner: Ergys Guni
8. "Mary Fay for CT State Rep." Mary Fay
Accounts Examiner: Karen Walauskas
9. "Tanski for the 31st," Lillian Tanski
Accounts Examiner: Ergys Guni
10. "Ziogas 18," Christopher Ziogas
Accounts Examiner: Dinorah Collado
11. "Aimee4Ridgefield," Aimee Berger-Girvalo
Accounts Examiner: Dinorah Collado
12. "Aimee4Ridgefield," Aimee Berger-Girvalo - Exploratory
Accounts Examiner: Dinorah Collado
13. "Chapman for Secretary of the State," Susan Chapman
Accounts Examiner: Krysta Palozie

Linda Waterman summarized the above referenced Draft Audit Reports and recommended the draft reports become final.

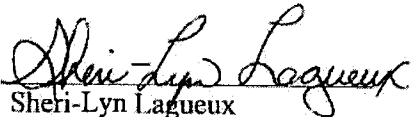
It was moved by Commissioner Bergquist and seconded by Commissioner Piecuch to adopt as final 13 audit reports as listed above. So voted by a vote 3-0-0.

VI. Consideration of Matters Discussed in Executive Session


VII. Adjournment

It was moved by Commissioner Bergquist and Seconded by Commissioner Piecuch at 11:17 AM to adjourn the meeting. Unless otherwise noted, all votes of the Commission are unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,


Sheri-Lyn Lagueux
Clerk of the Commission

Adopted this 16th day of June, 2021 at Hartford, Connecticut.



Stephen Penny, Chair
By Order of the Commission

The next regular scheduled meeting is June 16, 2021 at 9:30 A.M. via Webex.