



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION

MINUTES
STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR TELEPHONIC MEETING
Via Webex
June 16, 2021
9:30 A.M.

I. *Call to Order*

Commissioner Stephen Penny was present via Webex and called the meeting to order at 9:32 A.M. Commissioners Michael Ajello, Andrew Cascudo, 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 June 2, 2021

It was moved by Commissioner Bergquist and seconded by Commissioner Picuch to approve the Minutes of the Meeting of June 2, 2021. So voted by a vote of 3-0-2, with Commissioners Cascudo and Ajello abstaining.

III. *Administrative Reports*

Director Brandi updated that we are in the midst of Special Session at the legislature today, the second day. Special Session is dealing primarily with the budget by way of the implementer. The implementer is the elements of the budget where you are putting policy provisions as well as the numbers together. This is where often we find things we call “rats” things will be snuck in to benefit certain groups so, everybody is very cautious as they analyze the implementer. SEEC staff does not see anything that impacts the program. There are a lot of provisions in this bill dealing with absentee ballots. There’s even a pilot signature verification program for 5 towns.

The only other provision that has some bearing for the SEEC is they did codify some of the executive orders related to the remote meetings. Right now with what we are doing for the WebEx meetings, we are allowed to continue forward. There is a sunset of April 2022. I do expect that they will modify that bill and that’s something we will keep our eye on and we will continue to go through those provisions and we will talk to FOI about those requirements. We are still intending to continue with the remote meetings to through the summer and we’ll start analyzing the return of live meetings at some point in the near future. The bill itself does allow for the continuation of the remote meetings.

Director Brandi advised that the SEEC has some direction now from DAS on the reopening plans. We are, as of July 1, scheduled to go back to 50% increased capacity. The telework that we have all been utilizing is being modified and staff

will be able to telework now up to 50% of their time within a pay period which is a two week, 10 day, period so there are modifications to that. We don't expect to have much change as many of the staff has been working in the office, there will be just a little bit more of an increased presence amongst most of the staff.

Director Brandi reported that budget wise, the SEEC is pretty stable and will be closing out the books for the fiscal year delivering a significant surplus back to the state as a result of the COVID limitations we had over the past year. We did have a couple of major projects that we put money aside for. We are moving forward with the scanning project which is getting our commission decisions and a lot of documentation dating back to the inception of the agency in 1974 into a searchable electronic index for both staff and the public to use. We have put aside money for that contract which is in excess of \$40 thousand. We also have another project to modify the small conference room on the 8th floor with better electronic means where we can conduct our lottery, we can conduct meetings and are spending about \$15 thousand to make sure that that room is up to date. Those are two of the more sizeable existing projects. We are going to be carrying those monies forward so they won't impact next year's budget. We will start to monitor July 1 our new budget and adjust for any changes we didn't anticipate.

Director Brandi advised that we will have a couple of positions we will be hiring. Currently we are still looking for an Accounts Examiner for which that recruitment is out and posted. We will have two more positions that we will be looking to fill in the coming months. We'll utilize the savings we get from the vacancies to supplement our operating budget. We will be looking to fill positions as we move forward.

IV. Pending Complaints and Investigations

A. Public Session

There were not items in public session.

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 Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Piecuch at 9:35 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 Stephen Penny, Michael Ajello, Andrew Cascudo, Shannon Bergquist and Greg Piecuch were present via Webex. Staff members present via teleconference were, James Talbert-Slagle, Ryan M. Burns, Scott Branfuhr, Kevin

Ahern, Joshua Foley, Stephanie Fish, Ronald Perry, Stephen Palmer, Douglas Frost, Linda Waterman, Shannon Kief, Michael J. Brandi and Sheri-Lyn Lagueux.

The Commission returned to public session at 10:12 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 James Talbert-Slagle summarized the Recommendation of Counsel dated June 11, 2021 and requested that four (4) matters be moved to investigate.

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Cascudo to make a determination that it is necessary to investigate violations relating to four (4) complaint File Nos.: 2021-122, 2021-131, 2021-132 and 2021-133. So approved by the Commission, 5-0-0. So voted.

2. In the Matter of a of a Referral by the Secretary of the State

File No. 2019-010

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. 2019-010. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Cascudo to adopt the Findings & Conclusions as to a dismissal in File No. 2019-010. So voted by a vote 5-0-0. The Findings & Conclusions will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

3. In the Matter of a of a Referral by the Secretary of the State

File No. 2019-011

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. 2019-011. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Cascudo to adopt the Findings & Conclusions as to a dismissal in File No. 2019-011. So

voted by a vote 5-0-0. The Findings & Conclusions will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

4. In the Matter of a Complaint by Patrick Perugino, West Haven
File No. 2020-053A
Recommendation of Counsel
Attorney: Ryan M. Burns
Legal Investigator: Stephanie Fish

Attorney Ryan M. Burns summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2020-053A. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement.

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Cascudo to adopt the Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2020-053A. So voted by a vote 5-0-0. The Consent Order & Agreement will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

5. In the Matter of a Complaint by Patrick Perugino, West Haven
File No. 2020-053B
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. 2020-053B. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Cascudo to adopt the Findings & Conclusions in File No. 2020-053B. So voted by a vote 5-0-0. The Findings & Conclusions will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

6. In the Matter of a Complaint by Robert Statchen, Stonington
File No. 2020-061
Recommendation of Counsel
Attorney: James M. Talbert-Slagle
Legal Investigator: Stephanie Fish

The matter is continued.

7. Draft Audit Reports
 1. "Steve Baleshiski for State Representative," Steven Baleshiski
Accounts Examiner: Krysta Palozie
 2. "Balter for Senate," Josh Balter

Accounts Examiner: Krysta Palozie

3. "Cindy Wolfe Boynton 2018," Cindy Wolfe Boynton
Accounts Examiner: Dinorah Collado
4. "Cathy for CT Senate 2018," Catherine P. De Carli
Accounts Examiner: Nicole Petit
5. "Linehan 18," Liz Linehan
Accounts Examiner: Krysta Palozie
6. "Committee to Elect McKenney for CT 37th District," Hugh McKenney
Accounts Examiner: Ergys Guni
7. "Craig Miner for Senate," Craig A. Miner
Accounts Examiner: Ergys Guni
8. "RS 11," Erin Reilly
Accounts Examiner: Nicole Petit
9. "Team Tong 2018," William M. Tong (Exploratory)
Accounts Examiner: Nicole Petit
10. "Team Tong 2018," William M. Tong
Accounts Examiner: Nicole Petit

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

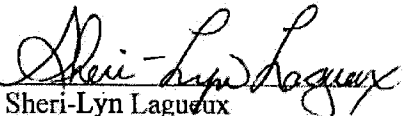
It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Cascudo to adopt as final 10 audit reports as listed above. So voted by a vote 5-0-0.

VI. Consideration of Matters Discussed in Executive Session

VII. Adjournment

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and Seconded by Commissioner Cascudo at 10:27 AM to adjourn the meeting. Unless otherwise noted, all votes of the Commission are unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,


Sheri-Lyn Lagoux
Clerk of the Commission

Adopted this 7th day of July, 2021 at Hartford, Connecticut.



Stephen Penny, Chair
By Order of the Commission

The next regular scheduled meeting is July 7, 2021 at 9:30 A.M. via Webex.