



STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION

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MINUTES  
STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION  
REGULAR TELEPHONIC MEETING  
Via Webex  
October 6, 2021  
9:30 A.M.

***I. Call to Order***

Commissioner Penny was present via Webex and called the meeting to order at 9:35 A.M. Commissioners Michael Ajello, Shannon Bergquist and Andrew Cascudo were present via Webex. Agency staff was also present and present via Webex.

***II. Approval of the Minutes***

*Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of September 15, 2021*

It was moved by Commissioner Cascudo and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist to approve the Minutes of the Meeting of September 15, 2021. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

***III. Administrative Reports***

Executive Director Michael J. Brandi provided the Commission with several brief updates. With regard to budget, there is not much to report. The agency's budget remains on target and staff continue to monitor it as we move forward with the new fiscal year.

The SEEC is in the process of filling the last 2 positions in the roster. The Fiscal Administrative Officer position has been posted and we are waiting to move forward with that hire as well as the Office Assistant position. Once those 2 positions are filled, we will be back to a full roster of 35 staff members.

Staff had a great opportunity with the Town Clerk's Conference in September. We were able to make a presentation there prior to the municipals. Staff received a lot of good feedback from the town clerks and we look forward to working with them in the upcoming elections.

Staff is also getting ready to run the hotline for the municipal election for 2021. And we are also starting to get prepped for all items related to the 2022 upcoming statewide and General Assembly elections.

A Motion to Add File No. 2019-123 – in re: Referral from the Secretary of the State as item #3 in public session was added. It was moved by Commissioner Cascudo and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist to add File No. 2019-123 to public session as item 3. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

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*Affirmative Action / Equal Opportunity Employer*

**IV. Pending Complaints and Investigations**

*A. Public Session*

1. In the Matter of a Complaint by Joseph Vollano, Meriden  
In re. Commission Initiated Investigation: makeway4holloway 2020  
File Nos. 2020-045A & 2021-043  
Proposed Consent Order & Agreement  
Respondent: Ernestine Holloway  
Attorney: James M. Talbert-Slagle  
Legal Investigator: Stephanie Fish

Attorney James M. Talbert-Slagle summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2020-045A & 2021-043. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement.

It was moved by Commissioner Cascudo and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist to adopt the Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2020-045A & 2021-043. So voted by a vote 4-0-0. The Consent Order & Agreement will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

2. In the Matter of a Complaint by Joseph Vollano, Meriden  
File No. 2020-045B  
Proposed Consent Order & Agreement  
Respondent: Qu-Nanda Holloway  
Attorney: James M. Talbert-Slagle  
Legal Investigator: Stephanie Fish

Attorney James M. Talbert-Slagle summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2020-045B. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement.

It was moved by Commissioner Cascudo and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist to adopt the Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2020-045B. So voted by a vote 4-0-0. The Consent Order & Agreement will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

3. In the Matter of Referrals by the Secretary of the State, Hartford  
File No. 2019-123

Request for Issuance of Subpoena

Attorneys:

Ryan M. Burns &

Kevin M. Ahern

Legal Investigator:

Scott Branfuhr

Attorney Ryan M. Burns provided an update to File No. 2019-123. He recommended a request for new subpoenas be issued to Alfredo Castillo and Nilsa Heredia concerning this matter.

No action was required or taken on this matter.

***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 Cascudo and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist at 9:50 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 and Shannon Bergquist were present via Webex. Staff members present via Webex were, James Talbert-Slagle, Ryan M. Burns, Kevin Ahern, William B. Smith, Joshua Foley, Chelsea Ruzzo, Alyssa Torres, Lindsey Leung, Stephanie Fish, Ronald Perry, Scott Branfuhr, Salman Munir, Paul Brady, Lisa Drew, Stephen Palmer, Shannon Kief, Michael J. Brandi and Sheri-Lyn Lagueux.

The Commission returned to public session at 10:34 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 Kevin M. Ahern summarized the Recommendation of Counsel dated October 6, 2021 and requested that eight (8) matters be moved to investigate and requested that one (1) matter be moved not to investigate.

It was moved by Commissioner Cascudo and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist to make a determination that it is necessary to investigate violations relating to eight (8) complaints File Nos.: 2021-160, 2021-1, 2021-162, 2021-163, 2021-164, 2021-165, 2021-167 and 2021-168 and that it is

not necessary to investigate violations relating to one (1) complaint File No.: 2021-166. So approved by the Commission, 4-0-0. So voted.

2. In the Matter of a Referral by the East Haddam Town Clerk  
File No. 2020-067  
Recommendation of Counsel  
Attorney: Kevin M. Ahern  
Legal Investigator: Scott Branfuhr

The matter is continued.

3. In the Matter of a Complaint by Brian Merlen, Stamford  
File No. 2021-045  
Recommendation of Counsel  
Attorney: William B. Smith  
Legal Investigator: Ronald Perry

Attorney William B. Smith summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Findings & Conclusions in File No. 2021-045. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Cascudo and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist to adopt the Findings & Conclusions in File No. 2021-045. So voted by a vote 4-0-0. The Findings & Conclusions will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

4. In the Matter of a Complaint by Scott Valey, Berlin  
File No. 2019-097  
Recommendation of Counsel  
Attorney: Ryan M. Burns  
Legal Investigator: Scott Branfuhr

The matter is continued.

5. In the Matter of a Referral by Beth Kyle & Patrice Peterson, W. Hartford  
File No. 2020-076  
Recommendation of Counsel  
Attorney: Ryan M. Burns  
Legal Investigator: Scott Branfuhr

The matter is continued.

6. In the Matter of a Complaint by Peter Beckwith, Manchester  
File No. 2020-047

Recommendation of Counsel

Attorney:

Ryan M. Burns

Legal Investigator:

Scott Branfuhr

Attorney Ryan M. Burns summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2020-047. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement.

It was moved by Commissioner Cascudo and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist to adopt the Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2020-047. So voted by a vote 3-0-1 with Commissioner Penny abstaining. The Consent Order & Agreement will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

7. In the Matter of Referrals by the Campaign Disclosure and Audit Unit  
File Nos. 2019-163, 2019-166, 2019-026, 2020-058, 2020-060, 2021-027,  
2021-034, 2021-140

Recommendation of Counsel

Attorney:

Ryan M. Burns

Legal Investigator:

Scott Branfuhr

Attorney Ryan M. Burns summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File Nos. 2019-163, 2019-166, 2019-026, 2020-058, 2020-060, 2021-027, 2021-034, 2021-140. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement.

It was moved by Commissioner Cascudo and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist to adopt the Consent Order & Agreement in File Nos. 2019-163, 2019-166, 2019-026, 2020-058, 2020-060, 2021-027, 2021-034, 2021-140. So voted by a vote 4-0-0. The Consent Order & Agreement will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

8. Draft Audit Reports

Commissioner Penny made a recommendation to Postpone the Draft Audit Reports to the Commission's next regular meeting of October 20, 2021 in order to permit the Commission to have a discussion and develop a policy with respect to when draft audits should be finalized.

It was moved by Commissioner Cascudo and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist to Postpone the Draft Audit Reports to the October 20, 2021 meeting. So voted by a vote 4-0-0.

1. "Merrill 2018," Denise Merrill  
Accounts Examiner: Dinorah Collado

2. "Lembo for CT," Kevin P. Lembo (Exploratory)  
Accounts Examiner: Ergys Guni
3. "Lembo for CT," Kevin P. Lembo  
Accounts Examiner: Ergys Guni
4. "Dita for CT," Dita Bhargava (Exploratory)  
Accounts Examiner: Nicole Petit
5. "Dita for CT Treasurer," Dita Bhargava  
Accounts Examiner: Nicole Petit
6. "Kurt for CT," William K. Miller  
Accounts Examiner: Dinorah Collado
7. "Alex for CT," Jon A. Tiktinsky (Exploratory)  
Accounts Examiner: Dinorah Collado
8. "Alex for CT," Jon A. Tiktinsky  
Accounts Examiner: Dinorah Collado
9. "Leone for Senate 2018," Carlo Leone  
Accounts Examiner: Nicole Petit
10. "Julie 2018," Julie Kushner  
Accounts Examiner: Ergys Guni

***VI. Consideration of Matters Discussed in Executive Session***


***VII. Adjournment***

It was moved by Commissioner Cascudo and Seconded by Commissioner Bergquist at 10:45 AM to adjourn the meeting. Unless otherwise noted, all votes of the Commission are unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Sheri-Lyn Lagieux  
Clerk of the Commission

Adopted this 20<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2021 at Hartford, Connecticut.

  
Stephen T. Penny  
By Order of the Commission

***The next regular scheduled meeting is October 20, 2021 at 9:30 A.M. via Webex.***