



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION

MINUTES
STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR TELEPHONIC MEETING
1st Floor Conference Room
March 3, 2021
9:30 A.M.

I. *Call to Order*

Commissioner Penny was present via Webex and called the meeting to order at 9:36 A.M. Commissioners Salvatore Bramante, Anthony Castagno, Michael Ajello and Andrew Cascudo were present via Webex. Agency staff was also present via Webex.

II. *Approval of the Minutes*

Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of February 17, 2021

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to approve the February 17, 2021 Minutes by a 3-0-2 vote. Commissioners Ajello and Cascudo abstained. So voted.

III. *Administrative Reports*

Director Brandi reported on a couple of issues related to the Legislature. SEEC has completed the initial appropriations hearing which went well. There were very few questions related to our budget for the next two years since our budget is effectively a flat budget.

Director Brandi reported the Appropriations hearing was done via Zoom this year, which was a different format from prior years. A sub-committee meeting is coming up in the next few weeks and SEEC staff will advise of any issues that arise from that meeting.

Questions usually asked of the agency include the status of vacancies and potential retirements. Also, there was a question as to the sufficiency of the fund looking into the 2022 statewide elections. SEEC was able to report on the funds and at this point, the fund is right on track. This is due largely to the 2018 statewide election candidates participating in the CEP, but the eventual gubernatorial candidates did not participate. This was an overall saving for the CEP budget.

Director Brandi advised that the 2022 SEEC budget is on track with the amount of money in the fund. There are over 22 million dollars in the fund presently with

additional deposits that will be made by statute following the adoption of the new budget moving forward.

Director Brandi reported in terms of SEEC vacancies, human resources is in the process of filling our two vacant Election Officer positions. Ron Perry, the SEEC's new Legal Investigator is on board and present today. SEEC also anticipates filling one Fiscal position and an Accounts Examiner in the next weeks. This will increase the total number of staff to 34 of the 35 positions. We hope to complete the hiring process for these positions in the next six to eight weeks as soon as we get through all the process with DAS and approval that is required from DAS and OPM.

Director Brandi reported that staff continues to do a great job. Managers are working remotely with a schedule of 2-3 days a week of office time with all other staff working remotely. Staff has a weekly office schedule with rotating days while we are working to maintain our COVID- 19 safety measures.

Director Brandi advised that SEEC staff is monitoring bills in the CT legislature affecting the agency and campaign finance laws in general. SEEC is also monitoring nationally the H.R.1 bill at the House of Representatives. Of interest is Public Campaign Financing on a federal level or a matching grant program. Also, SEEC staff is monitoring Voter suppression bills that are being filed now nationally and monitoring to see how the impact would affect us in Connecticut.

Director Brandi Reported of upcoming Conferences for Town Clerks and registrars. These conferences will be virtual and one of the topics will be the bill in Connecticut that is related to the Constitutional Amendment to pass the early voting and changes to the Absentee ballots.

Director Brandi reported on discussions with leaders of the legislature. Some of the discussions were about education and getting the word out there that our elections are safe and secure showing the data that we have reflecting such. A part of the SEEC's mission going forward in the next few months includes restoring confidence in the electoral system. As the Agency responsible for investigating and prosecuting claims of election fraud, voter fraud, and irregularities at the Polls, the SEEC has the advantage of the data and expertise that's here. We need to publicize the data which will show Connecticut does a great job; ballots are tabulated and the misinformation that's rampant still about voter fraud is inaccurate.

Director Brandi reports there are 30 of the 2018 election Audits prepared for final today. SEEC staff is working on completing the balance of the 2018 Audits. Then, we are moving towards the review of the 2020 election cycle and trying to move forward with those projects as far as we can as we get into the Municipal Cycle this year.

IV. Pending Complaints and Investigations

A. Public Session

1. In the Matter of a Complaint by Christopher Tymniak, Fairfield
File No. 2019-174
Proposed Findings & Conclusions
Attorney:
Legal Investigator:

William B. Smith
Stephanie Fish

Attorney William B. Smith summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Findings & Conclusions in File No. 2019-174. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to adopt the Findings & Conclusions as a dismissal in File No. 2019-174. So voted by a vote 5-0-0.

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 Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Ajello at 9:57 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, Castagno, Bramante, Ajello and Cascudo were present via Webex. Staff members present via Webex were Kevin Ahern, James Talbert-Slagle, William B. Smith, Ryan M. Burns, Scott Branfuhr, Stephanie Fish, Ron Perry, Alyssa Torres, Joshua Foley, Lindsey Leung, Douglas Frost, Linda Waterman, Shannon Kief, Michael J. Brandi, Lisa Drew and Sheri-Lyn Lagueux.

The Commission returned to public session at 11:39 A.M.

Commissioner Cascudo left the meeting at 11:32 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 Smith summarized the Recommendation of Counsel dated February 25, 2021 and requested that twelve (12) matters be moved to investigate.

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to make a determination that it is necessary to investigate violations relating to twelve (12) complaints File Nos. 2021-031; 2021-033; 2021-034; 2021-035, 2021-036, 2021-037, 2021-038, 2021-039, 2021-040 and 2021-041. As to File No. 2021-032 to investigate only as to the §9-236 violation and in File No. 2021-042 as to section 1 and section 2C of the complaint. So approved by the Commission 4-0-0. So voted.

2. In the Matter of a Complaint by Maria Pereira, Bridgeport
File No. 2020-011
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. 2020-011. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to adopt the Findings & Conclusions as a no further action in File No. 2020-011. So voted by a vote 4-0-0.

3. In the Matter of a Complaint by Maria Pereira, Bridgeport
File No. 2020-012
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. 2020-012. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to adopt the Findings & Conclusions as a no further action in File No. 2020-012. So voted by a vote 4-0-0.

4. In the Matter of a Complaint by Maria Pereira, Bridgeport
File No. 2020-013
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. 2020-013. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to adopt the Findings & Conclusions as a no further action in File No. 2020-013. So voted by a vote 4-0-0.

5. In the Matter of a Complaint by Maria Pereira, Bridgeport
File No. 2020-014
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. 2020-014. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to adopt the Findings & Conclusions as a no further action in File No. 2020-014. So voted by a vote 4-0-0.

6. In the Matter of a Complaint by Maria Pereira, Bridgeport
File No. 2020-015
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. 2020-015. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to adopt the Findings & Conclusions as a no further action in File No. 2020-015. So voted by a vote 4-0-0.

7. In the Matter of a Complaint by Maria Pereira, Bridgeport
File No. 2020-017
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. 2020-017. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to adopt the Findings & Conclusions as a no further action in File No. 2020-017. So voted by a vote 4-0-0.

8. In the Matter of a Complaint by Maria Pereira, Bridgeport
File No. 2020-018

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. 2020-018. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to adopt the Findings & Conclusions as a no further action in File No. 2020-018. So voted by a vote 4-0-0.

9. In the Matter of a Complaint by Maria Pereira, Bridgeport
File No. 2020-019

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. 2020-019. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to adopt the Findings & Conclusions as a no further action in File No. 2020-019. So voted by a vote 4-0-0.

10. In the Matter of a Complaint by Maria Pereira, Bridgeport
File No. 2020-020

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. 2020-020. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to adopt the Findings & Conclusions as a no further action in File No. 2020-020. So voted by a vote 4-0-0.

11. In the Matter of a Complaint by Maria Pereira, Bridgeport

File No. 2020-021

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. 2020-021. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to adopt the Findings & Conclusions as a no further action in File No. 2020-021. So voted by a vote 4-0-0.

12. In the Matter of a Complaint by Maria Pereira, Bridgeport

File No. 2020-022

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. 2020-022. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to adopt the Findings & Conclusions as a no further action in File No. 2020-022. So voted by a vote 4-0-0.

13. In the Matter of a Complaint by Maria Pereira, Bridgeport

File No. 2020-023

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. 2020-023. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to adopt the Findings & Conclusions as a no further action in File No. 2020-023. So voted by a vote 4-0-0.

14. In the Matter of a Complaint by Maria Pereira, Bridgeport

File No. 2020-024

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. 2020-024. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to adopt the Findings & Conclusions as a no further action in File No. 2020-024. So voted by a vote 4-0-0.

15. In the Matter of a Commission Initiated Investigation
File No. 2018-051B
Recommendation of Counsel
Attorneys:

Ryan M. Burns, William B.
Smith & Alyssa Torres

The matter is continued. The record reflects that Commissioner Penny recused himself during the discussion of this matter.

16. In the Matter of a Complaint by Sarah Nankin, Cheshire
File No. 2020-052
Recommendation of Counsel
Attorney:
Legal Investigator:

Ryan M. Burns
Stephanie Fish

The matter is continued.

17. In the Matter of a Complaint by Shawn Styfco, Beacon Falls
File No. 2020-030
Recommendation of Counsel
Attorney:
Legal Investigator:

James M. Talbert-Slagle
Stephanie Fish

The matter is continued.

18. In the Matter of a Complaint by Gary Fuller, Stratford
File No. 2020-049
Recommendation of Counsel
Attorney:
Legal Investigator:

James M. Talbert-Slagle
Stephanie Fish

Attorney Kevin M. Ahern summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Findings & Conclusions in File No. 2020-049. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to adopt the Findings & Conclusions as a dismissal in File No. 2020-049. So voted by a vote 4-0-0.

19. In the Matter of a Complaint by John Rodolico, Ledyard

File No. 2020-010

Recommendation of Counsel

Attorney:

James M. Talbert-Slagle

Legal Investigator:

Stephanie Fish

The matter is continued.

20. Consideration of Draft Audit Reports

1. "*Adams 2018*," Terry B. Adams
Accounts Examiner: Nicole Petit
2. "*Arconti 2018*," David Arconti
Accounts Examiner: Nicole Petit
3. "*Ellen Russell Beatty 2018*," Ellen R. Beatty
Accounts Examiner: Dinorah Collado
4. "*Buckbee 2018*," William J. Buckbee
Accounts Examiner: Krysta Palozie
5. "*Cabrera for State Senate*," Jorge L. Cabrera
Accounts Examiner: Nicole Petit
6. "*Concepcion for Hartford*," Julio A. Concepcion
Accounts Examiner: Karen Walauskas
7. "*Demicco 2018*," Michael V. Demicco
Accounts Examiner: Dinorah Collado
8. "*Elect DePalma 116th*," Richard V. DePalma
Accounts Examiner: Krysta Palozie
9. "*Desmarais 2018*," Jeffrey Desmarais
Accounts Examiner: Dinorah Collado
10. "*Friends of Pat Dillon*," Patricia Dillon
Accounts Examiner: Matthew Lombardi
11. "*DiPace 2018*," Anthony M. DiPace
Accounts Examiner: Ergys Guni
12. "*Forster 2018*," Chris Forster
Accounts Examiner: Nicole Petit

13. "*Dan Fox for State Rep 2018*," Daniel J. Fox
Accounts Examiner: Ergys Guni
14. "*Fuller 2018*," Kevin M. Fuller
Accounts Examiner: Krysta Palozie
15. "*Gerratana 2018*," Theresa Gerratana
Accounts Examiner: Karen Walauskas
16. "*Hall 2018*," Joshua M. Hall
Accounts Examiner: Karen Walauskas
17. "*Harrigan 2018*," Anne M. Harrigan
Accounts Examiner: Ergys Guni
18. "*Henrie for 61st*," John R. Henrie
Accounts Examiner: Karen Walauskas
19. "*Annie for Senate*," Annie Hornish
Accounts Examiner: Karen Walauskas
20. "*Kraut for Westport*," Greg Kraut
Accounts Examiner: Matthew Lombardi
21. "*James Krochko for 131*," James T. Krochko
Accounts Examiner: Dinorah Collado
22. "*McKeen for State Senate*," Aili McKeen
Accounts Examiner: Nicole Petit
23. "*Orange 2018*," Linda A. Orange
Accounts Examiner: Nicole Petit
24. "*Pearson for CT*," Daniel Pearson
Accounts Examiner: Dinorah Collado
25. "*Friends of Chris Perone*," Chris Perone
Accounts Examiner: Ergys Guni
26. "*Kim Rose 2018*," Kim M. Rose
Accounts Examiner: Krysta Palozie
27. "*Kate Rotella 2018*," Kate Rotella
Accounts Examiner: Nicole Petit

28. "Liz for the 42nd," Elizabeth Schwebel
Accounts Examiner: Dinorah Collado
29. *Team Soto*," Christian Soto
Accounts Examiner: Dinorah Collado
30. "Winkler 2018," Michael A. Winkler
Accounts Examiner: Matthew Lombardi

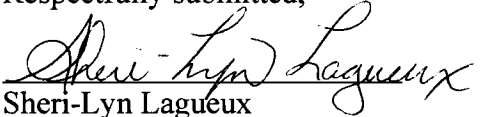
Linda Waterman provided an overview of the audits and recommended that the Commission make audits number 1 through 30 final, so moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Ajello. So approved by the Commission, 4-0-0.

VI. Consideration of Matters Discussed in Executive Session

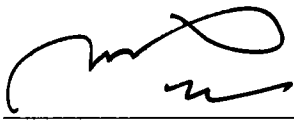
VII. Adjournment

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and Seconded by Commissioner Ajello at 11:55 A.M. 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 17th day of March, 2021 at Hartford, Connecticut.


Stephen T. Penny, Chair
By Order of the Commission

The next regular scheduled meeting is March 17, 2021 at 9:30 A.M. via WEBEX.