



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION

MINUTES
STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR TELEPHONIC MEETING

Via Webex
November 17, 2021
9:30 A.M.

I. Call to Order

Commissioner Penny was present via Webex and called the meeting to order at 9:33 A.M. Commissioners Michael Ajello, Shannon Bergquest, Greg Picuch, 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 November 03, 2021

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Cascudo to approve the Minutes of the Meeting of November 03, 2021. So voted by a vote of 5-0-0.

III. Administrative Reports

Executive Director and General Counsel Michael J. Brandi provided the Commission with several updates. Agency budget continues to be on track. Staff will be working with OPM in the coming months concerning the retirements in the agency. It is understood that up to 40% of state employees statewide are eligible for retirement.

Staff is looking to provide the commission with the agency's 2022 legislative proposals at the next meeting. Director Brandi noted that 2022 is a short session, which is limited to budget adjustments. Director Brandi also reviewed that the 2022 election cycle is starting with 19 candidates including 7 statewide and 6 exploratory committees currently registered for next year's statewide and General Assembly election.

Director Brandi also mentioned that the work of the Reapportionment Commission is ongoing. The Reapportionment Commission met on November 16 to appoint a new 9th member; former Senate Minority Leader John McKinney to replace Kevin Johnston. Director Brandi stated that staff continue to monitor the commission's progress as it works to redraw state House, state Senate, and Congressional maps. If the districts do get redrawn, it is important for us to understand whether contributions are qualifying as "in-district".

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Personnel-wise the agency is still working to fill the open Fiscal Administrative and Office Assistant positions. Also, staff are working to finalize a list of regular commission meetings for calendar year 2022, in accordance with state statute. Staff hope to present that calendar to the Commission at its next meeting as well.

IV. Consideration of Application for Public Grants from the Citizens' Election Fund

1. "Trenae McGee for State Rep", Trenae McGee

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Cascudo to approve the grant application for "Trenae McGee for State Rep", Trenae McGee. So voted by a vote of 5-0-0.

V. Pending Complaints and Investigations

A. Public Session

Public session was not convened.

VI. 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 Cascudo 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 by a vote of 5-0-0.

Commissioners Stephen Penny, Michael Ajello, Shannon Bergquist, Andrew Cascudo, and Greg Piecuch were present via Webex. Staff members present via Webex were Michael J. Brandi, James Talbert-Slagle, Ryan M. Burns, Kevin Ahern, William B. Smith, Joshua Foley, Lindsey Leung, Chelsea Ruzzo, Stephanie Fish, Scott Branfuhr, Ronald Perry, Salman Munir, Lisa Drew, Paul Brady, Stephen Palmer, Linda Waterman, Shannon Kief, and Sheri-Lyn Lagueux.

The Commission returned to public session at 10:58 A.M. Chairman Penny noted for the record that Commissioner Piecuch had to leave the meeting unexpectedly at 10:30 A.M. to address a personal matter.

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 November 17, 2021 and requested that seven (7) 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 seven (7) complaints File Nos. 2021-187, 2021-188, 2021-189, 2021-190, 2021-191, 2021-192, and 2021-193. So approved by the Commission, 4-0-0. So voted.

2. In the Matter of a Complaint by Francesco M. G. Carlozzi, Lucille C. Munterich, Ronald E. Munterich, and Ronald L. Faibusch, Farmington File No. 2021-132

Recommendation of Counsel

Attorney:

William B. Smith

Legal Investigator:

Ronald Perry

Attorney William B. Smith summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Findings and Conclusions in File No. 2021-132. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings and Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Cascudo to adopt the Findings and Conclusions as to a dismissal in File No. 2021-132. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0. The Findings and Conclusions will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

3. In the Matter of a Referral from the West Hartford Registrars of Voters File No. 2020-076A

Recommendation of Counsel

Attorney:

Ryan M. Burns

Legal Investigator:

Scott Branfuhr

Attorney Ryan M. Burns summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Findings and Conclusions in File No. 2020-076A. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings and Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Cascudo to adopt the Findings and Conclusions as to a dismissal in File No. 2020-076A. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0. The Findings and Conclusions will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

4. In the Matter of a Referral from the West Hartford Registrars of Voters File No. 2020-076B

Recommendation of Counsel

Attorney:
Legal Investigator:

Ryan M. Burns
Scott Branfuhr

Attorney Ryan M. Burns summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2020-076B. 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. 2020-076B, pending receipt within 10 days. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0. The Consent Order & Agreement will be available on our website under Commission Decisions upon receipt.

5. Recommendation of Counsel: Discussion of In re Matter of: Markley et al v. SEEC

No action taken.

6. Recommendation of Counsel: Discussion of Proposed Regulations pursuant to Public Act 2021-49

No action taken.

7. Recommendation of Counsel: Discussion of Audit Process

No action taken.

8. Draft Audit Reports

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. "Kurt for CT," William K. Miller
Accounts Examiner: Dinorah Collado
5. "Julie 2018," Julie Kushner
Accounts Examiner: Ergys Guni

Linda Waterman summarized the above five (5) 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 five (5) audit reports listed above. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

VII. Consideration of Matters Discussed in Executive Session


VIII. Adjournment

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Cascudo at 11:08 A.M. to adjourn the meeting. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0. Unless otherwise noted, all votes of the Commission are unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,


Sheri-Lyn Lagueur
Clerk of the Commission

Adopted this 1st day of December, 2021 at Hartford, Connecticut.


Stephen T. Penny
By Order of the Commission

The next regular scheduled meeting is December 01, 2021 at 9:30 A.M. via Webex.