



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION

MINUTES
STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR TELEPHONIC MEETING
1st Floor Conference Room
March 17, 2021
9:30 A.M.

I. Call to Order

Commissioner Penny was present via Webex and called the meeting to order at 9:32 A.M. Commissioners Michael Ajello, Stephen Penny and Anthony Castagno were present via Webex. Agency staff was also present.

II. Approval of the Minutes

Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of March 3, 2021

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Castagno to approve the Minutes of the Meeting of March 3, 2021. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0

III. Administrative Reports

Director Brandi reported that budget wise we are in the process of being reviewed by the Appropriations Committee. Because of the nature of the remote Zoom access for so many members of the Legislature, SEEC was contacted by OFA and the subcommittee determined that there was no need for a workshop with the agency. There was really no change to the budget, but at this point in time SEEC will just be waiting on general appropriations to come out with the budget for approval.

Director Brandi updated that in terms of our positions, we have been trying to refill our ranks with the vacancies the agency has had. SEEC recently filled the Legal Investigator Position, so Ron Perry, who is on the livestream today with us, joined us a few weeks ago. SEEC recently filled two elections officer positions we expect one starting on the 26th of March and one shortly thereafter. SEEC is also in the process of filling a fiscal position here at the agency which has been posted and we hope to begin those interview in the next two weeks. The final position we are going to hire will be for an Accounts Examiner. Once filled, the SEEC will be back up to approximately 34 out of the 35 authorized positions within the next two months. That will get us a lot of lead time for training for the Municipal cycle that's starting as well as getting ready for the 2022 Statewide cycle.

Director Brandi advised that audits are going very well, we are trying to finish up a lot of the 2018 General Assembly as well as the Statewide Audits Linda's group has switched back over to handling those parts of the process.

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Affirmative Action / Equal Opportunity Employer

Director Brandi updated that there are a lot of Special Elections going on right now, including one CEP application for today. Commissioners should be prepared for a special meeting within the next week as there is a second application we are expecting. There is another special election for the Stamford District, House 145 as Patricia Billie Miller won for Senate 27 and her seat is now open. So we expect more applications for CEP in that special election.

Director Brandi reported that the SEEC is trying to work on lots of different pieces for upcoming events. SEEC will be attending the Town Clerk's convention, and there is another event coming up in April which is being hosted by a group in Fairfield, part of the effort to try and educate the public on elections issues, so, with our expertise in elections issues and voter fraud we are going to do as much as we can with various organizations to educate the public and increase confidence in the electoral process.

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

1. "Nick for CT 2021," Nicholas Kapoor

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Castagno to approve the grant application for "*Nick for CT 2021, Nicholas Kapoor*". So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

V. Pending Complaints and Investigations

A. Public Session

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

File No. 2020-010

Proposed Consent Order & Agreement

Respondent:

Attorney:

James Talbert-Slagle

Legal Investigator:

Stephanie Fish

Attorney James Talbert-Slagle summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2020-010. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement.

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Castagno to adopt the Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2020-010. So voted by a vote 4-0-0. The Consent Order & Agreement will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

Commissioner Cascudo joined the meeting via Webex at 9:45 A.M.

2. In the Matter of a Complaint by Thomas M Rutledge, Self-Report
File No. 2020-080
Proposed Consent Order & Agreement
Attorney: Ryan M. Burns

Attorney Ryan M. Burn summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2020-080. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement.

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Castagno to adopt the Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2020-080. So voted by a vote 5-0-0. The Consent Order & Agreement will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

3. Request for a Finding of Reason to Believe a Violation of General Statutes §9-608 or §9-604 Has Been Committed Pursuant to Section 9-7b-35 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies
2019-163, Respondent Lorraine Franco
2019-164, Respondent Roland Lemar
2019-165, Respondent Marcus Brown
2019-166, Respondent Lorraine Franco
2019-167, Respondent Aleah Byas
2019-168, Respondent Aleah Byas
2020-058, Respondent Lorraine Franco
2020-059, Respondent Fabio Mazo
2020-060, Respondent Lorraine Franco

Attorney: Ryan M. Burns

Attorney Ryan M. Burn summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Request for Reason to Believe in File Nos. 2019-163, 2019-164, 2019-165, 2019-166, 2019-167, 2019-168, 2020-058, 2020-059 and 2020-060.

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Castagno to Find a Reason to Believe in File No. 2019-163, 2019-164, 2019-165, 2019-166, 2019-167, 2019-168, 2020-058, 2020-059 and 2020-060. So voted by a vote 5-0-0. Commissioner Ajello has been appointed as hearing office for these matters.

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 Castagno at 9:48 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, Bramante, Castagno, Ajello and Cascudo were present via Webex. Staff members present via teleconference were Kevin Ahern, William B. Smith, James Talbert-Slagle, Ryan M. Burns, Alyssa Torres, Joshua Foley, Lindsey Leung, Stephanie Fish, Ronald Perry, Lisa Drew, Renata Rydzewski, Linda Waterman, Shannon Kief, Michael J. Brandi and Sheri-Lyn Lagueux.

The Commission returned to public session at 11:03 A.M.

Commissioner Cascudo left the meeting at 11:03 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 March 12, 2021 and requested that one (1) matter be moved to investigate.

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Castagno to make a determination that it is necessary to investigate violations relating to two (2) complaint File Nos.: 2021-044 and 2021-046. So approved by the Commission, 4-0-0. So voted.

2. In the Matter of a Complaint by Steven Sheinberg, Fairfield
File No. 2020-046
Recommendation of Counsel
Attorney: William B. Smith
Legal Investigator: Stephanie Fish

The matter is continued.

3. In the Matter of a Complaint by Maria Pereira, Bridgeport
File No. 2020-029
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. 2020-029. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Castagno to adopt the Findings & Conclusions in File No. 2020-029. 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 Referral by the Darien Registrars of Voters

File No. 2020-004

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. 2020-004. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Castagno to adopt the Findings & Conclusions in File No. 2020-004. So voted by a vote 4-0-0. The Findings & Conclusions will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

5. In the matter of a Complaint by Stephen C. Kalkowski, Southington

File No. 2020-055

Recommendation of Counsel

Attorney:

James M. Talbert-Slagle

Legal Investigator:

Stephanie Fish

The matter is continued.

6. In the Matter of a Commission Initiated Investigation

File No. 2018-051B

Recommendation of Counsel

Attorney:

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

Attorney Ryan M. Burns summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2018-051B. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement.

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Castagno to adopt the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2018-051B. So voted by a vote 3-0-1. Commissioner Penny abstained. The Consent Order & Agreement will be available on our website under Commission Decisions. Commissioner Penny recused himself during discussion of the matter.

7. In the Matter of a Commission Initiated Investigation

File No. 2018-051C

Recommendation of Counsel

Attorney:

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

Attorney Ryan M. Burns summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2018-051C. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement.

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Castagno to adopt the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2018-051C. So voted by a vote 3-0-1. Commissioner Penny abstained. The Consent Order & Agreement will be available on our website under Commission Decisions. Commissioner Penny recused himself during discussion of the matter.

8. In the Matter of a Commission Initiated Investigation
File No. 2021-004
Recommendation of Counsel
Attorney: Ryan M. Burns

Attorney Ryan M. Burns summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Dismissal in File No. 2021-004. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Dismissal.

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Castagno to adopt the Dismissal in File No. 2021-004. So voted by a vote 4-0-0.

9. Consideration of Draft Audit Reports

1. "Boyd 2018," Pat Boyd
Accounts Examiner: Matthew Lombardi
2. "Frantz for State Senate," L. Scott Frantz
Accounts Examiner: Krysta Palozie
3. "J.P. 18," J.P. Sredzinski
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 Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Castagno to adopt as final the audit reports of, "Boyd 2018," Pat Boyd, "Frantz for State Senate," L. Scott Frantz and "J.P. 18," J.P. Sredzinski. So voted by a vote 4-0-0.

10. Commission Items

Commissioner Bramante reported that some time ago he had requested not to be reappointed to the Commission and has now been notified that he will not be reappointed as a Commissioner of the SEEC and the Legislature has recommended a replacement. Commissioner Bramante advised that he will

remain on the commission until such time that a replacement commissioner has been appointed. He recommended adoption of a motion to resign his position on the Commission as Vice Chair and appoint Michael Ajello as Vice Chair of the commission.

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Castagno to adopt the Motion to accept Commissioner Bramante's resignation as Vice Chair of the SEEC and to appoint Michael Ajello as Vice Chair. So voted by a vote 4-0-0.

VII. Consideration of Matters Discussed in Executive Session


VIII. Adjournment

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and Seconded by Commissioner Castagno at 11:27 PM 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 7th day of April, 2021 at Hartford, Connecticut.


Stephen T. Penny, Chair
By Order of the Commission

The next regular scheduled meeting is April 7, 2021 at 9:30 A.M. in the 1st Floor Conference room.