



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION

DRAFT MINUTES
STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR TELEPHONIC MEETING
1st Floor Conference Room
January 20, 2021
9:30 A.M.

I. Call to Order

Commissioner Castagno was present via Webex and called the meeting to order at 9:47 A.M. Commissioners Salvatore Bramante, Stephen Penny 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 November 18, 2020

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Penny to approve the November 18, 2020 minutes with minor word changes to the Administrative report by a 4-0-0 vote. So voted.

Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of December 16, 2020

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Penny to approve the December 16, 2020 minutes by a 4-0-0 vote. So voted.

Commissioner Castagno added to the agenda in Executive Session the following matters: #11.b. Final Audit Report for *Tony Hwang for Connecticut Exploratory Committee*, Proposed Final Audit; # 12 In the Matter of a Complaint by Lisa Labella, Trumbull File No. 2019-145A and #13 In the Matter of a Complaint by Lisa Labella File No. 2019-145B and 2019-146.

III. Administrative Reports

Director Brandi updated the Commission on the budget. The SEEC has moved to the new location from Trinity Street to 55 Farmington Ave, in Hartford, CT. the entire Agency moved on December 18th, 2020. Staff are settling at 55 Farmington Avenue, but there's still a little more to be done but the office is functional, up and running.

Director Brandi Shared a budget update with the Commission on the agency's budget. Currently there are vacancies, which allowed extra budget money. Brandi shared that the SEEC has 2 positions open and in the process of hiring and interviewing. Staff hopes to fill those positions withing the next month.

Director Brandi shared that we are about to embark into Inauguration Day would like to say congratulations to President Elect Biden and Vice President Elect Harris. Most of staff is working remotely today due to safety concerns. The new building is very secure, however a memorandum from the Governor's Office was distributed instructing to take precaution today.

Director Brandi shared that staff is looking at the beginning session that's starting a very different session. Leadership has changed with a New Speaker and Minority Leaders in the house. The hardest part of this legislative session is the capital complex is still effectively closed and everything is done remotely including all the hearing for the GAE Committee.

Director Brandi shared updates on the proposed legislation. Staff will be reviewing and preparing some proposed legislation including a technical bill this year. The Agency is waiting to see what transpire at the Capitol during session, but the whole staff is prepared at this point. Staff is ready to address any bills that are coming forward that will involve the SEEC and we do expect the major focuses this session will be on early voting. Also, there is a special election coming up for a senate seat in the 27th district so, we anticipate the Governor issuing emergency orders there to allow for continued early voting process that was used in general election in November and in the Primaries back in August.

IV. Pending Complaints and Investigations

A. Public Session

1. In the Matter of a Complaint by David Lowry, Middlefield

File No. 2019-173

Proposed Consent Order & Agreement

Respondent:

Donna M. Golub

Attorney:

William B. Smith

Legal Investigator:

Stephanie Fish

Attorney William B. Smith summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2019-173. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement.

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Penny to adopt the Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2019-173. So voted by a vote 4-0-0.

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 Penny at 10:00 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 Castagno, Bramante, Penny and Cascudo were present via Webex. Staff members present via Webex were Kevin Ahern, James Talbert-Slagle, William B. Smith, Joshua Foley, Lindsey Leung, Shannon Kief, Michael J. Brandi, Lisa Drew and Sheri-Lyn Lagueux.

Commissioner Cascudo left the meeting at 10:32 A.M.

The Commission returned to public session at 11:00 A.M.

The Commission took the following actions in public session:

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 January 15, 2021 and requested that six (6) matters be moved to investigate.

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Penny to make a determination that it is necessary to investigate violations relating to six (6) complaints File Nos. 2020-081; 2020-082; 2020-083; 2020-084; 2020-085 and 2020-086. So approved by the Commission 3-0-0. So voted.

2. In the Matter of a Complaint by Ernestine Holloway, Meriden
File No. 2019-106
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. 2019-106. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Penny to adopt the Findings & Conclusions with no further action in File No. 2019-106. So voted by a vote 3-0-0.

3. In the Matter of a Complaint by Joel Gonzalez, Bridgeport
File No. 2019-126
Recommendation of Counsel

Attorney:	Kevin M. Ahern
Legal Investigator:	Stephanie Fish

Attorney Kevin M. Ahern summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2019-126. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement.

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Penny to adopt the Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2019-126. So voted by a vote 3-0-0.

4. In the Matter of a Complaint by Joene Hendry, East Haddam,
File No. 2019-134
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. 2019-134. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Penny to adopt the Findings & Conclusions with no further action in File No. 2019-134. So voted by a vote 3-0-0.

5. In the Matter of a Complaint by Isabel Maria Vazquez, Hartford
File No. 2019-147
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. 2019-147. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Penny to adopt the Findings & Conclusions with no further action in File No. 2019-147. So voted by a vote 3-0-0.

6. In the Matter of a Complaint by Diwanda Johnson, Hartford
File No 2019-148
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. 2019-148. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Penny to adopt the Findings & Conclusions as a dismissal in File No. 2019-148. So voted by a vote 3-0-0.

7. In the Matter of a Complaint by Keith Johnson, Hartford
File No 2019-149

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. 2019-149. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Penny to adopt the Findings & Conclusions as a dismissal in File No. 2019-149. So voted by a vote 3-0-0.

8. In the Matter of a Complaint by Lou DeCilio, Stratford
File No. 2019-131A & 2019-131B

Recommendation of Counsel

Attorney: Ryan M. Burns
Legal Investigator: Scott Branfuhr

Attorney Kevin M. Ahern summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2019-131A. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement.

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Penny to adopt the Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2019-131A. So voted by a vote 3-0-0.

Attorney Kevin M. Ahern summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Findings & Conclusions in File No. 2019-131B. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Penny to adopt the Findings & Conclusions as a dismissal in File No. 2019-131B. So voted by a vote 3-0-0.

9. *In re. Commission Initiated Investigation into Makewayforholloway2020*
Recommendation of Counsel

Attorney: James M. Talbert-Slagle

Attorney James M. Talbert-Slagle summarized the above referenced matter. He recommended the Commission Initiate an Investigation.

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Penny to Initiate an Investigation into *Makewayforholloway2020*. So voted by a vote 3-0-0.

10. *In re. Commission Initiated Investigation into Hwang4Senate Committee*
File No. 2018-123

Proposed Findings & Conclusions

Attorney: James M. Talbert-Slagle
Legal Investigator: Scott Branfuhr

Attorney James M. Talbert-Slagle summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Findings & Conclusions in File No. 2018-123. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Penny to adopt the Findings & Conclusions with no further action in File No. 2018-123. So voted by a vote 3-0-0.

11. Final Audit Report for *Hwang for Senate*
Proposed Final Audit

Attorney James Talbert-Slagle provided an overview of the audit and recommended that the Commission make the Audit Report for *Hwang for Senate* final. So moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Penny. So voted by a vote 3-0-0.

11.b. Final Audit Report for *Tony Hwang for Connecticut Exploratory Committee*
Proposed Final Audit

Attorney James Talbert-Slagle provided an overview of the audit and recommended that the Commission make the Audit Report for *Tony Hwang for Connecticut Exploratory Committee* final. So moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Penny. So voted by a vote 3-0-0.

12. In the Matter of a Complaint by Lisa Labella, Trumbull
File No. 2019-145A

Recommendation of Counsel

Attorney: Ryan M. Burns
Legal Investigator: Scott Branfuhr

Attorney Kevin M. Ahern summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Findings & Conclusions in File No. 2019-145A. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Penny to adopt the Findings & Conclusions as a dismissal in File No. 2019-145A. So voted by a vote 3-0-0.

13. In the Matter of a Complaint by Lisa Labella

File No. 2019-145B and 2019-146

Recommendation of Counsel

Attorney:

Ryan M. Burns

Legal Investigator:

Scott Branfuhr

Attorney Kevin M. Ahern summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Findings & Conclusions in File No. 2019-145B. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Penny to adopt the Findings & Conclusions as a dismissal without prejudice in File No. 2019-145B. So voted by a vote 3-0-0.

Attorney Kevin M. Ahern summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Findings & Conclusions in File No. 2019-146. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Penny to adopt the Findings & Conclusions as a dismissal without prejudice in File No. 2019-146. So voted by a vote 3-0-0.

VI. Consideration of Matters Discussed in Executive Session

VII. Adjournment

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and Seconded by Commissioner Penny at 11:15 A.M. to adjourn the meeting. Unless otherwise noted, all votes of the Commission are unanimous.

The next regular scheduled meeting is February 3, 2021 at 9:30 A.M. in the 1st Floor Conference room.