



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION

DRAFT MINUTES
STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR TELEPHONIC MEETING
Via WebEx
July 21, 2021
9:30 A.M.

I. Call to Order

Commissioner Stephen Penny was present via Webex and called the meeting to order at 9:31 A.M. Commissioners Michael Ajello, Shannon Bergquist and Andrew Cascudo were present via Webex. Agency staff was also present.

II. Approval of the Minutes

Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of July 7, 2021

It was moved by Commissioner Bergquist and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to approve the Minutes of the Meeting of July 7, 2021. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of July 14, 2021

It was moved by Commissioner Bergquist and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to approve the Minutes of the Meeting of July 14, 2021. So voted by a vote of 3-0-1, with Commissioner Bergquist abstaining.

III. Administrative Reports

Director Brandi updated the commission that the SEEC is very early into the new budget year and that there is nothing new to report yet. Brandi did note that the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) and the Office of Labor Relations (OLR) recently approved raises for managers. He also highlighted a new statute, recently passed by the General Assembly, that ties raises for managers with those similar raises negotiated by state employee unions.

Director Brandi advised that he hopes to fill an Accounts Examiner position with the agency along with a new posting for a Fiscal Administrator position.

Director Brandi reported that the U.S. Department of Justice will be soon issuing guidance to elections officials nationwide concerning recent threats made to said election officials in other states. He noted recently reported threats made against elections officials nationally.

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

1. "Fazio for CT," Ryan Fazio

It was moved by Commissioner Bergquist and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to continue without prejudice the grant application for "Fazio for CT," Ryan Fazio. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

V. Pending Complaints and Investigations

A. Public Session

1. No items for discussion.

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 Bergquist and seconded by Commissioner Ajello at 9:37 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 teleconference were, James Talbert-Slagle, William Smith, Kevin Ahern, Scott Branfuhr, Stephanie Fish, Ronald Perry, Alyssa Torres, Lisa Drew, Chelsea Ruzzo, Lindsey Leung, Joshua Foley, Paul Brady, Stephen Palmer, Linda Waterman, Shannon Kief, Michael J. Brandi and Sheri-Lyn Lagueux.

The Commission returned to public session at 11:08 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 Recommendations of Counsel dated July 16, 2021 and July 21, 2021 and requested that ten (10) matters be moved to investigate.

It was moved by Commissioner Bergquist and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to make a determination that it is necessary to investigate violations relating to

seven (7) complaint File Nos.: 2021-136, 2021-137, 2021-138, 2021-139, 2021-140, 2021-141, 2021-142. So approved by the Commission, 4-0-0. So voted.

It was moved by Commissioner Bergquist and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to make a determination that it is necessary to investigate violations relating to three (3) complaint File Nos 2021-143, 2021-144 and 2021-145. So approved by the Commission, 4-0-0. So voted.

2. In the Matter of a Complaint by Kimberly Agyekum, New Haven
File No. 2021-118
Recommendation of Counsel
Attorney: William B. Smith
Legal Investigator: Stephanie Fish

Attorney William B. Smith summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Findings & Conclusions in File No. 2021-118. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Bergquist and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to adopt the Findings & Conclusions as to a dismissal in File No. 2021-118. So voted by a vote 4-0-0. The Findings & Conclusions will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

3. In re: Commission Initiated Investigation into "Larry Groh Jr. for 51st District,"
File No. 2018-061
Recommendation of Counsel
Attorney: Kevin M. Ahern
Legal Investigator: Scott Branfuhr

The matter is continued.

4. In the Matter of a Complaint by John Flynn, Norwalk
File No. 2021-032
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. 2021-032. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Bergquist and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to adopt the Findings & Conclusions as to a dismissal in File No. 2021-032. So voted by a vote 4-0-0. The Findings & Conclusions will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

5. Request For A Finding of Reason to Believe A Violation of General Statutes §§ 9-604, 9-608, or 9-712 Has Been Committed Pursuant to Section 9-7b-35 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies
File No. 2020-033, Respondent Laura Woodie
File No. 2021-026, Respondent Fabio Mazo
File No. 2021-036, Respondent Meredith Devanney
File No. 2021-037, Respondent Alan Shaw
File No. 2021-038, Respondent Dorian Benitez
File No. 2021-039, Respondent Robert Farrington
File No. 2021-040, Respondent Robert Keeley
File No. 2021-002, Respondent Andrew Ziemba
File No. 2021-005, Respondent Farouk Rajab
File No. 2021-010, Respondent Kristyn Hanewicz
File No. 2021-011, Respondent Pamela Allen
File No. 2021-013, Respondent Hannah M. Bandy
File No. 2021-015, Respondent Catherine A. Vargati
File No. 2021-019, Respondent Rebeqa G. Abrams
File No. 2020-023, Respondent Alan Shaw
Recommendation of Counsel
Attorney: Ryan M. Burns

Attorney Kevin M. Ahern summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Request for Reason to Believe a Violation of General Statutes §§ 9-604, 9-608 and 9-712 in File Nos. 2020-033, 2021-026, 2021-036, 2021-037, 2021-038, 2021-039, 2021-040, 2021-002, 2021-005, 2021-010, 2021-011, 2021-013, 2021-015, 2021-019 and 2020-023.

It was moved by Commissioner Bergquist and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to Find a Reason to Believe in File Nos. 2020-033, 2021-026, 2021-036, 2021-037, 2021-038, 2021-039, 2021-040, 2021-002, 2021-005, 2021-010, 2021-011, 2021-013, 2021-015, 2021-019 and 2020-023. So voted by a vote 4-0-0. Commissioner Ajello has been appointed as hearing officer for these matters.

6. In the Matter of a complaint by Paula Gallo, Fairfield
File No. 2020-085
Recommendation of Counsel
Attorney: Ryan M. Burns
Legal Investigator: Stephanie Fish

Attorney Kevin M. Ahern summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Findings & Conclusions in File No. 2020-085. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Bergquist and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to adopt the Findings & Conclusions as to a dismissal in File No. 2020-085. So voted by a vote 4-0-0. The Findings & Conclusions will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

7. In the matter of a Complaint by Nicoletta Bleuins, Hartford
File No. 2020-065
Recommendation of Counsel
Attorney: James M. Talbert-Slagle
Legal Investigator: Stephanie Fish

The matter is continued.

8. In the matter of a Complaint by Joseph Angland, Greenwich
File No. 2020-068
Recommendation of Counsel
Attorney: James M. Talbert-Slagle
Legal Investigator: Stephanie Fish

The matter is continued.

9. Consideration of Draft Audit Reports

1. "Albis 2018," James M. Albis
Accounts Examiner: Karen Walauskas
2. "Colin Hosten Election Committee," Colin Hosten
Accounts Examiner: Ergys Guni
3. "Harding 2018," Stephen G. Harding
Accounts Examiner: Matthew Lombardi
4. "Friends of Madeleine," Madeline M. Levielle
Accounts Examiner: Dinorah Collado
5. "Napoli 2018," Ronald A. Napoli
Accounts Examiner: Ergys Guni

Linda Waterman summarized the above referenced Draft Audit Reports and recommended the draft reports become final.

It was moved by Commissioner Bergquist and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to adopt as final 5 audit reports as listed above. 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 Cascudo at 11:35 A.M. to adjourn the meeting. Unless otherwise noted, all votes of the Commission are unanimous.

The next regular scheduled meeting is August 4, 2021 at 9:30 A.M. via WebEx.