



REGULAR TELEPHONIC MEETING via Webex MINUTES

April 6, 2022 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, Shannon Berquist and Andrew Cascudo were present via Webex. Agency staff was also present and present via Webex.

II. Approval of the Minutes

1. Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of March 02, 2022

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Cascudo to approve the Minutes of the Meeting of March 2, 2022. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

2. Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of March 16, 2022

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Cascudo to approve the Minutes of the Meeting of March 16, 2022. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

III. Administrative Reports

Director Brandi advised about the budget. The Public Auditors are auditing the last three years of our operational budget and we are working actively with them. The SEEC had 3 retirements, with Linda Waterman, Doug Frost and Amjad Mahmood have officially retired as of March 31st. Linda is still back with us as a Temporary Worker Retiree and Amjad & Doug are going to be doing the same thing in order to assist us with operations until we can hire replacements. Things we are looking at budget wise: 1) payout for their retirements until the end of the fiscal year, so we are keeping an eye on the payments and 2) also now the unions have now come to an agreement with the State regarding wage increases so we will be looking to see what our budget adjustments will be related to adjustments to payroll with the additional salary adjustments. Part of that appears to be a bonus structure which would be a payout from our budget and we are monitoring final passage of the union collective bargaining agreement through the legislature.

In addition to the retirements, the SEEC has added 2 staff members in the past month. Joyce Figueroa has started as our office assistant and Jonathan Ortiz who will replace Amjad's position which is key staff IT staff to our database management.

SEEC staff has engaged in our PAR process for the Citizens' Election Program.. The number of phone calls and questions from committees and treasurers is on the steep incline right now. We are in the filing period right now. Candidate committees and treasurers for general assembly candidates can bring in PAR's through April 11th. Even today our elections officers are quite busy with eight PARS coming in today. We received 17 for March and we are anticipating 30 to 40 new PARS for April cycle.

Director Brandi updated that for the new Commissioners, the PARs process was something we implemented a few years ago for pre-qualification of the application to give candidate committees an earlier gauge as to how they are doing on their fundraising. A lot of them will pre-qualify and then once they obtain ballot position in May they can file their full grant application request. If these applications already are pre-qualified, they don't have to go through the entire process. Its been a really successful program with the General Assembly and we are hoping this year that we can pre-qualify upwards of 50 candidate committees before the May cycle begins.

Director Brandi reported that legislation wise, we are actively watching the legislative agenda. There were 4 bills in front of the GAE, three of which were our proposals. So Senate Bill 431 our independent expenditure bill passed through committee. House Bill 5455 which is our bill related to the consultants and House Bill 5457 which is our proposal for the Municipal Program, which is to take the municipal filings from the town clerks and to bring those up to eCRIS all passed through committee. These bills are headed to the floor of the House and the Senate so, we'll continue to monitor the floor and see if any of the bills do come up for a vote. Just pleased to report at least that all three of those bills did get Joint Favorable out of committee to the floor.

Director Brandi advised that contained in the Commissioners' packet today, you received copies of links to the guidebooks. All of our guidebooks related to the Citizens' Election Program have been published. This is for your review so that you can see what type of product the Compliance Unit is continually updating and what we have in place for candidates and committees.

Director Brandi updated the Commissioners and provided them with the appellate papers for the Sampson/Markley case. These are just the initial papers for your review. The appeal was filed at the end of last week and we will wait further information from the Office of the Attorney General relative to the schedule and process with the appeal.

IV. Pending Complaints and Investigations

A. Public Session

1. In the Matter of a Complaint by Elaine Dove, Hamden
File No. 2021-003
Proposed Consent Order & Agreement

Respondent: David Huston
Staff Attorney: James M. Talbert-Slagle
Legal Investigator: Stephanie Fish

Attorney James M. Talbert-Slagle summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2021-003. 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. 2021-003. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0. The Consent Order & Agreement will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

2. In the Matter of a Complaint by Alyse McEwen, Middletown
File No. 2021-053
Proposed Findings & Conclusions

Staff 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. 2021-053. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Cascudo to adopt the Findings & Conclusions in File No. 2021-053. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0. The Findings & Conclusions will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

3. In the Matter of a Complaint by Lucy von Brachel, Greenwich
File No. 2021-031
Proposed Consent Order & Agreement

Respondent: Maxwell Hawkins
Staff Attorney: James M. Talbert-Slagle
Legal Investigator: Scott Branfuhr

Attorney James M. Talbert-Slagle summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2021-031. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement upon receipt within 10 days.

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Cascudo to adopt the Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2021-031. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0. The Consent Order & Agreement will be available on our website under Commission Decisions upon receipt within 10 days.

4. *In re. Commission Initiated Investigation: Bosak for Senate*

File No. 2021-158B

Proposed Consent Order & Agreement

| | |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| Respondent: | Gerald Bosak |
| Staff Attorney: | James M. Talbert-Slagle |
| Legal Investigator: | Ronald Perry |

Attorney James M. Talbert-Slagle summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2021-158B. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement upon receipt within 10 days.

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Cascudo to adopt the Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2021-158B. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0. The Consent Order & Agreement will be available on our website under Commission Decisions upon receipt within 10 days.

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 Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Cascudo 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 by a vote of 4-0-0.

Commissioners Stephen Penny, Michael Ajello, Shannon Bergquist and Andrew Cascudo were present via Webex. Staff members present via Webex were Michael J. Brandi, James Talbert-Slagle, Kevin Ahern, William B. Smith, Joshua Foley, Lindsey Leung, Stephanie Fish, Lisa Drew, Salman Munir, Linda Waterman, Shannon Kief, and Stephen Palmer.

The Commission returned to public session at 10:59 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 31, 2022 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. 2022-014, 2022-015, 2022-016, 2022-017, 2022-018, 2022-019 and 2022-020. So approved by the Commission, 4-0-0. So voted.

2. In the Matter of a Complaint by Keith Hedrick, Groton
File No. 2021-122
In the Matter of a Complaint by Deborah DeMuisis, Guilford
File No. 2021-174
In the Matter of a Referral by Newington Registrar of Voters Marie Fox
File No. 2021-176
In the Matter of a Referral by Newington Registrar of Voters Jennifer Ancona
File No. 2021-177
In the Matter of a Complaint by Jessica Rodi, Shelton
File No. 2021-179
In the Matter of a Complaint by Sandra Coppola, Berlin
File No. 2021-180
In the Matter of a Complaint by Jean-Claude Ambroise, Groton
File No. 2021-184
In the Matter of a Referral by the Berlin Town Clerk
File No. 2021-185
In the Matter of a Referral by the New Britain Town Clerk
File No. 2021-186
Recommendation of Counsel
In the Matter of a Referral by Stratford Registrar of Voters Louis DeCilio
File No. 2021-187
In the Matter of a Complaint by Richard Marcone, Stratford
File No. 2021-189
In the Matter of a Complaint by Stephanie Weintraub, South Windsor
File No. 2021-191
In the Matter of a Complaint by Robert Dempsey, Norwich
File No. 2021-203
In the Matter of a Complaint by Anthony Simonetti, Shelton
File No. 2021-206
In the Matter of a Complaint by Anthony Simonetti, Shelton
File No. 2021-207
In the Matter of a Complaint by Richard Kilby, et al, Bristol
File No. 2021-213
In the Matter of a Complaint by Michael Ludwick, Enfield
File No. 2022-001
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 Nos. 2021-122; 2021-174; 2021-176; 2021-177; 2021-179; 2021-180; 2021-184; 2021-185; 2021-186; 2021-187; 2021-189; 2021-191; 2021-203; 2021-206; 2021-207; 2021-213 and 2022-001. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Cascudo to adopt the Findings & Conclusions as to a dismissal in count one and no further action in count two in File Nos. 2021-122; 2021-174; 2021-176; 2021-177; 2021-179; 2021-180; 2021-184; 2021-185; 2021-186; 2021-187; 2021-189; 2021-191; 2021-203; 2021-206; 2021-207; 2021-213 and 2022-001. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0. The Findings & Conclusions will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

3. In the Matter of a Complaint by Philip S. Augur, Durham
File No. 2021-129A

Recommendation of Counsel

Attorney:

William B. Smith

Legal Investigator:

Ronald Perry

Attorney William B. Smith summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2021-129A. 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. 2021-129A. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0. The Consent Order & Agreement will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

4. In the Matter of Complaint by Carole T. Young-Kleinfeld, et al, Wilton
File No. 2017-034

Recommendation of Counsel

Attorney:

William B. Smith

Legal Investigator:

Attorney William B. Smith summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2017-034. 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 as to a dismissal in File

No. 2017-034. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0. The Consent Order & Agreement will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

5. In the Matter of a Complaint by Lynda Szyrkowicz, Middletown
File No. 2021-076A
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. 2021-076A. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Cascudo to adopt the Findings & Conclusions as to no further action in File No. 2021-076A. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0. The Findings & Conclusions will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

6. In the Matter of a Complaint by Linda Szyrkowicz, Middletown
File No. 2021-076B
Recommendation of Counsel
Attorney: William B Smith
Legal Investigator: Stephanie Fish

The matter is marked off.

7. *In re. Commission Initiated Investigation into Contributions Received by the "Vargas 2020 Committee"*
File No. 2020-056
Recommendation of Counsel
Attorney: William B. Smith
Legal Investigator: Stephanie Fish

The matter is continued.

8. Draft Audit Reports
1. "Candelaria 2020," Juan Candelaria
Accounts Examiner: Krysta Palozie
 2. "DiGi for the 74th," Michael DiGiovancarlo
Accounts Examiner: Ergys Guni
 3. "Hartley 20," Joan Hartley
Accounts Examiner: Nicole Petit

4. "Reelect Betts 2020," Whit Betts
Accounts Examiner: Krysta Palozie
5. "Gennaro2020," Anthony S. Gennaro
Accounts Examiner: Dinorah Collado

Linda Waterman summarized the above referenced Draft Audit Reports 1 through 5 and recommended the draft audit reports become final.

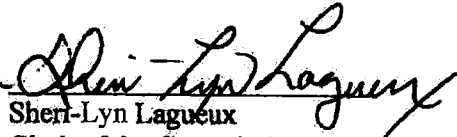
It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Cascudo to adopt as final the audit reports of "Candelaria 2020," Juan Candelaria, "DiGi for the 74th," Michael DiGiovancarlo, "Hartley 20," Joan Hartley, "Reelect Betts 2020," Whit Betts and "Gennaro2020," Anthony S. Gennaro. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

VI. Consideration of Matters Discussed in Executive Session

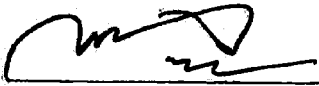
VII. Adjournment

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Cascudo at 11:15 A.M. to adjourn the meeting. So voted by a vote of 3-0-0. Unless otherwise noted, all votes of the Commission are unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,


Sheri-Lyn Lagueux
Clerk of the Commission

Adopted this 20th day of April, 2022 at Hartford, Connecticut.


Stephen T. Penny
By Order of the Commission

The next regular scheduled meeting is April 20, 2022 at 9:30 A.M. via Webex.