



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION

MINUTES
STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR TELEPHONIC MEETING
Via Webex
January 17, 2024
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 and Greg Picuch 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 December 20, 2023

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Picuch to approve the Minutes of the Meeting of December 20, 2023. So voted by a vote of 2-0-1 with Commissioner Picuch abstaining.

2. Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of January 10, 2024

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Picuch to approve the Minutes of the Meeting of January 10, 2024. So voted by a vote of 3-0-0.

III. Administrative Reports

Legal Program Director Shannon Kief welcomes Maryam Bitar to the compliance department as an attorney. Since the last commission meeting the agency has posted the fiscal and IT positions, and additionally staff is working on the elections officer position and hopes to have somebody in place within the next few weeks.

IV. Pending Complaints and Investigations

A. Public Session

1. In the Matter of a Complaint by Debra Fellenbaum and Kerri Rowland,
Milford
File No. 2023-002
Proposed Consent Order & Agreement
Respondents:

Michael T. Holodnak
and Elisha Fino

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Attorney:
Legal Investigator:

William B. Smith
Scott Branfuhr

Attorney William B. Smith summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2023-002. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement upon receipt in ten (10) days.

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Piecuch to adopt the Consent Order & Agreement upon receipt in ten (10) days in File No. 2023-002. So voted by a vote of 3-0-0. The Consent Order & Agreement will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

2. In the Matter of a Complaint by Daniel Garrett, Hamden
File No. 2023-054
Proposed Consent Order & Agreement

Respondents:

Lushonda Howard,
Anthony Esposito and
Edward J. Broderick
William B. Smith

Attorney:

Attorney William B. Smith summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2023-054. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement.

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Piecuch to adopt the Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2023-054. So voted by a vote of 3-0-0. The Consent Order & Agreement will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

- 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 9:48 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 by a vote of 3-0-0.

Commissioners Penny, Ajello and Piecuch were present via Webex. Staff members present via Webex were: Michael J. Brandi, Shannon Clark Kief, Salman Munir, Renata Rydzewski, William Smith, James Heffernan, Johnny Ross, III, Stephanie Fish, Joshua Foley, Aaron Charney, Patricia Mwilwa, Maryam Bitar, Stephen Palmer, and Sheri-Lyn Lagueux.

The Commission returned to public session at 11:18 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 January 12, 2024 and requested that eight (8) matters be moved to investigate.

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Piecuch to make a determination that it is necessary to investigate violations relating to eight (8) complaints, File No. 2023-119, 2023-120, 2023-121, 2023-122, 2023-123, 2023-124, 2023-125 and File No. 2023-128. So approved by the Commission, 3-0-0. So voted.

2. Recommendation of Counsel: Progress Report on Cases Handled by the SEEC Regarding the 2023 Bridgeport Primary

No formal action needed on progress report.

3. In the Matter of a Complaint by Debra Fellenbaum and Kerri Rowland, Milford
File No. 2021-135A
Recommendation of Counsel
Attorney: William B. Smith
Legal Investigator: Ronald Perry

Attorney William B. Smith summarized the above referenced complaint and Recommendation of Counsel in File No. 2021-135A. He recommended that the Commission forgo the exercise of its civil authority in this instance and that this matter be administratively closed.

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Piecuch to administratively close File No. 2021-135A. So voted by a vote of 3-0-0.

4. In re: Commission Initiated Investigation of September 14, 2023 Referral by Bridgeport Police Department
File No. 2023-052
Recommendation of Counsel
Attorney: William B. Smith
Legal Investigator: Scott Branfuhr

Attorney William B. Smith summarized the above referenced complaint in File No. 2023-052 and made the following motion:

“Pursuant to General Statutes § 9-7b and § 9-7b-28 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, the Commission authorizes a subpoena to the agent of record at the State of Connecticut, Office of Policy Management to appear and produce documents, records and materials to the Commission office relating to requests for access to the Renter’s Rebate Program database in connection with matters that are under review by the Commission.” It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Picuch to authorize a subpoena in File No. 2023-052. So voted by a vote of 3-0-0.

5. In the Matter of a Complaint by Donald A. Brown and William A. Warner, Thompson & North Grosvenordale
File No. 2023-015
Recommendation of Counsel
Attorney: James B. Heffernan
Legal Investigator: Stephanie Fish

The matter is marked off.

6. In the Matter of a Complaint by Matthew Hennessy, Hartford
File No. 2023-028
Recommendation of Counsel
Attorney: James B. Heffernan
Legal Investigator: Stephanie Fish

Attorney James Heffernan summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Findings & Conclusions in File No. 2023-028. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement.

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Picuch to adopt the Findings & Conclusions as to a dismissal in File No. 2023-028. So voted by a vote of 3-0-0. The Findings & Conclusions will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

7. In the Matter of a Complaint by Susan Huizenga, Wallingford
File No. 2023-094
Recommendation of Counsel
Attorney: James B. Heffernan
Legal Investigator: Ronald Perry

Attorney James Heffernan summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Findings & Conclusions in File No. 2023-094. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement.

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Picuch to adopt the Findings & Conclusions as to a dismissal in File No.

2023-094. So voted by a vote of 3-0-0. The Findings & Conclusions will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

8. In re. Referral by the Greenwich Registrar of Voters, Fred A. DeCaro
File No. 2023-022
Recommendation of Counsel
Attorney: Johnny Ross, III
Legal Investigator: Ronald Perry

The matter is continued.

9. In the Matter of a Complaint by Silvia Ramos, Bridgeport
File No. 2023-030
Recommendation of Counsel
Attorney: Johnny Ross, III
Legal Investigator: Stephanie Fish

The matter is continued.

10. In the Matter of a Complaint by Eneida Martinez, Bridgeport
File No. 2023-031
Recommendation of Counsel
Attorney: Johnny Ross, III
Legal Investigator: Stephanie Fish

The matter is continued.

11. Draft Audit Reports

1. "Aniskovich for State Rep," Christopher Aniskovich
Accounts Examiner: Rhonda Salvatore

Director of Disclosure & Audit, Salman Munir provided an overview of the draft audit reports and recommended that the Commission make audit number 1 as final. So moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Piecuch by a vote of 3-0-0.

VI. Consideration of Matters Discussed in Executive Session

VII. Adjournment

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Picuch at 11:32 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 by,



Sheri-Lyn Lagueux

Clerk of the State Elections Enforcement Commission

February 7, 2024

Date approved

(By the State Elections Enforcement Commission)