



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION

MINUTES
STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR TELEPHONIC MEETING
Via Webex
February 7, 2024
9:30 A.M.

I. Call to Order

Commissioner Penny was present via Webex and called the meeting to order at 9:41 A.M. Commissioners Michael Ajello, Shannon Bergquist, Sonia Asare and Greg Piecuch 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 January 17, 2024

It was moved by Commissioner Bergquist and seconded by Commissioner Asare to approve the Minutes of the Meeting of January 17, 2024. So voted by a vote of 3-0-2 with Commissioners Bergquist and Asare abstaining.

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. Public Session

1. Discussion of Agency Organization, Staff Roles and Internal Process

Commissioner Piecuch summarized the Minutes of Special Meeting of the SEEC from March 23, 2023. Commissioner Piecuch recommended scheduling an in-person meeting of the Commission for this item.

Commissioner Penny directed the clerk of the commission to circulate a copy of the minutes for inclusion at the SEEC's next regular monthly meeting at which time engage in further discussion about setting a date for in in person meeting.

V. Pending Complaints and Investigations

A. Public Session

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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 Asare at 9:49 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 5-0-0.

Commissioners Penny, Ajello, Bergquist, Asare and Piecuch were present via Webex. Staff members present via Webex were: Shannon Clark Kief, Salman Munir, Renata Rydzewski, William Smith, James Heffernan, Johnny Ross, III, Stephanie Fish, Ron Perry, Joshua Foley, Patricia Mwilwa, Maryam Bitar, Ashley Socquet, Stephen Palmer, and Sheri-Lyn Lagueux.

The Commission returned to public session at 11:35 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 February 2, 2024 and requested that ten (10) matters be moved to investigate.

It was moved by Commissioner Bergquist and seconded by Commissioner Asare to make a determination that it is necessary to investigate violations relating to ten (10) complaints, File No. 2024-001, File No. 2024-002, File No. 2024-003, File No. 2024-005, File No. 2024-006, File No. 2024-007, File No. 2024-008, File No. 2024-009, File No. 2024-010 and File No. 2024-011. So approved by the Commission, 5-0-0. So voted.

2. 2024-004 – Pohl Mailed Response and Exhibits

Attorney:

William B. Smith

Attorney William B. Smith summarized the Recommendation of Counsel dated February 2, 2024 and requested that one (1) matters be moved to investigate.

It was moved by Commissioner Bergquist and seconded by Commissioner Asare to make a determination that it is necessary to investigate violations relating to one (1) complaint, File No. 2024-004. Commissioner Penny

recused himself from discussion. So approved by the Commission, 4-0-1 with Commission Penny abstaining. So voted.

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

No formal action needed on progress report.

4. In re: SEEC Initiated – Referral of the Office of the Attorney General
Recommendation of Counsel

Attorney:

William B. Smith

Attorney William B. Smith summarized the above referenced referral and Recommendation of Counsel. He recommended that “an investigation shall be initiated into whether North Canaan Town Clerk Jean Jacquier violated provisions of campaign finance laws by failing to administer filing requirements pertaining to municipal candidate committee and that the matter be entitled: *In re. Commission Initiated Investigation into the Attorney General’s Referral Concerning the North Canaan Town Clerk*”

It was moved by Commissioner Bergquist and seconded by Commissioner Asare to initiate an investigation. So voted by a vote of 5-0-0.

5. In re: SEEC Initiated Gibson PAC
Recommendation of Counsel

Attorney:

William B. Smith

Attorney William B. Smith summarized the above referenced referral and Recommendation of Counsel for “Gibson PAC”. He recommended that “an investigation shall be initiated into whether chairperson Bobby Gibson, Jr., violated General Statutes 9-602 by failing to amend the registration of “Gibson PAC” appointing a new treasurer within ten days and the matter be entitled: *In re. Commission Initiated Investigation into “Gibson PAC,” Bobby Gibson, Jr.*”

It was moved by Commissioner Bergquist and seconded by Commissioner Asare to initiate an investigation. So voted by a vote of 5-0-0.

6. 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:

Legal Investigator:

James B. Heffernan
Stephanie Fish

Attorney James Heffernan summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Findings & Conclusions in File No. 2023-015. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Bergquist and seconded by Commissioner Asare to adopt the Findings & Conclusions as to a dismissal in File No. 2023-015. So voted by a vote of 5-0-0. The Findings & Conclusions will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

7. 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

Attorney Johnny Ross, III summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Findings & Conclusions in File No. 2023-022. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Bergquist and seconded by Commissioner Asare to adopt the Findings & Conclusions as to a dismissal in File No. 2023-022. So voted by a vote of 5-0-0. The Findings & Conclusions will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

8. 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.

9. 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.

10. Draft Audit Reports

1. "Kelvin Ayala for State Rep," Kelvin Ayala
Accounts Examiner: Dinorah Collado
2. "Leone for State Senate," Carlo Leone

Accounts Examiner: Dinorah Collado

Director of Disclosure & Audit, Salman Munir provided an overview of the draft audit reports and recommended that the Commission make audit numbers 1 & 2 as final. So moved by Commissioner Bergquist and seconded by Commissioner Asare by a vote of 5-0-0.

3. "Matthews for 72nd 2020," Vernon Matthews
Attorney: William B. Smith
4. "Felipe 2020," Antonio Felipe
Attorney: William Smith

Attorney William B. Smith provided an overview of the draft audit reports and recommended that the Commission refer to the enforcement unit numbers 3 & 4. So moved by Commissioner Bergquist and seconded by Commissioner Asare by a vote of 5-0-0.

VII. Consideration of Matters Discussed in Executive Session

VIII. Adjournment

It was moved by Commissioner Bergquist and seconded by Commissioner Asare at 11:51 A.M. to adjourn the meeting. So voted by a vote of 5-0-0. Unless otherwise noted, all votes of the Commission are unanimous.

Sheri-Lyn Lagueux
Clerk of the State Elections Enforcement Commission



February 21, 2024

Date approved

(By the State Elections Enforcement Commission)