



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION

MINUTES
STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR TELEPHONIC MEETING

Via Webex
June 26, 2024
9:30 A.M.

I. Call to Order

Commissioner Penny was present via Webex and called the meeting to order at 9:35 A.M. Commissioners Michael Ajello, Sonia Asare and Greg Picuch were present via Webex. Agency staff was also present and present via Webex.

Commissioner Penny made a motion to add to the Agenda to Section V.B. 4 Continuation of Prior Applications to Section B as Follows:

- #3) "Harding 24," Stephen Harding
- #4) "Kim Healy for CT," Kim Healy
- #5) "Geoff 2024," Geoffrey Luxenberg
- #6) "Werstler2024," Ethan Werstler

Commissioner Penny made a motion to add to the Agenda a Report of Bridgeport proceedings to Section VII.

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Asare to add these items to the Agenda. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

II. Approval of the Minutes

1. Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of May 15, 2024

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Asare to approve the Minutes of the Meeting of May 15, 2024. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

2. Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of May 22, 2024

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Asare to approve the Minutes of the Meeting of May 22, 2024. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

3. Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of May 30, 2024

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Asare to approve the Minutes of the Meeting of May 30, 2024. So voted by a vote of 3-0-1 with Commissioner Ajello abstaining.

4. Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of June 5, 2024

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Asare to approve the Minutes of the Meeting of June 5, 2024. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

5. Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of June 12, 2024

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Asare to approve the Minutes of the Meeting of June 12, 2024. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

6. Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of June 20, 2024

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Asare to approve the Minutes of the Meeting of June 20, 2024. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

III. Administrative Reports

Executive Director Brandi updated the Commission on the Commission's Affirmative Action Plan. The Commission's met with CHRO on the Commission's plan which has been approved. This plan will be re-upped in one year, moving forward after the first year it will be re-upped on a bi-annual basis. Director Brandi thanks Charla Vincent and Muriel Carpentier for their efforts in putting together the plan

Executive Director Brandi reports that the Auditors of Public Accounts has started their audit review of the SEEC for the 2022 – 2023 fiscal years. The Commission is working diligently and cooperatively with the auditors to provide all requested documentation. This is a standard audit and is expected to span 3 to 4 months.

Executive Director Brandi advises that this is the end of the fiscal year. The fiscal unit is busy closing out inventory of assets and reviewing operating expenditures. CoreCT will shut down in the next 10 days or so. The SEEC does have a process during this time. CEP will continue to be available and data can be entered into the system for a period of 3 or 4 days where grants will be entered into the system, but

not disbursed. Executive Director Brandi notes that this is a standard process through the Comptroller's office, due to the changeover in fiscal year.

Executive Director Brandi updated the Commission as to the SEEC's new hires. One new paralegal starts Friday June 28, 2024, along with two new fiscal trainees. New staff are coming in at a good time, so that we can introduce them to CEP processes and get them trained for the new fiscal year. Regarding the Election officer position, Commission staff is close to the final interviews and making an offer. SEEC Staff is waiting for the final approvals for the Staff Attorney II position. The SEEC is finally at a breakthrough with the IT Manager position. Staff is currently working on issues that have to be discussed with the Office of State Ethics on a candidate the SEEC hopes to hire soon.

Executive Director Brandi reported that staff are in a very busy portion of the season of CEP. There are currently 65 pending applications and 57 applications have been previously approved. The workload will continue to ramp up through the month of July, with the impending primaries. Staff has been doing a great job working with candidates and treasurers and the Compliance Unit has been full boar with working with those campaigns. The Audit Unit has been doing a great job processing applications. Salman has literally been working seven days a week so thanks to him and Krysta and the whole audit team for the hours that they are putting in. It's a busy time and they are really doing a great job getting through the process.

Kudos to everyone in the agency who has been pulling together during CEP. Commissioner Penny seconded those sentiments on behalf of the Commission which appreciates the hard work that is required this time of year on top of normal schedules.

Commissioner Piecuch requests a decision on the state supreme court's ruling to remanded a case back to the Superior Court. Further request for a debrief on this matter, perhaps in an Executive Session, to include the responsible attorney on the case at hand. Commissioner Brandi confirms that the above-referenced case is set as No. 13 on the Executive Session.

IV. 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)

1. Recommendation of Counsel: Discussion of Candidate Committee Validation Memoranda

Executive session was not convened.

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

A. *New Applications*

1. *"Cohen for Senate," Christine Cohen*

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Asare to approve the grant application for *"Cohen for Senate," Christine Cohen*. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

2. *"Deane 2024," Lisa Deane*

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Asare to approve the grant application for *"Deane 2024," Lisa Deane*. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

3. *"MichelleKu4Newtown," Michelle Embree Ku*

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Asare to approve the grant application for *"MichelleKu4Newtown," Michelle Embree Ku*. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

4. *"Fishbein for Connecticut," Craig Fishbein*

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Asare to approve the grant application for *"Fishbein for Connecticut," Craig Fishbein*. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

5. *"Friends of Kerry," Kerry Wood*

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Asare to approve the grant application for *"Friends of Kerry," Kerry Wood*. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

6. *"Lettieri for State Rep," Cinzia Lettieri*

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Asare to approve the grant application for *"Lettieri for State Rep," Cinzia Lettieri*. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

7. *"Savet for the 42nd," Savet Constantine*

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Asare to approve the grant application for *"Savet for the 42nd," Savet Constantine*. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

8. *"ShakeForStateRep2024," Kaitlyn Shake*

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Asare to approve the grant application for *"ShakeForStateRep2024," Kaitlyn Shake*. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

9. *"Re-Elect Dave," David Yaccarino*

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Asare to approve the grant application for *"Re-Elect Dave," David Yaccarino*. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

10. *"Alexander 2024," David Alexander*

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Asare to continue the grant application for items #10 through #22 *"Alexander 2024," David Alexander; "Cook 2024," Michelle Cook; Anabel Figueroa 2024," Anabel Figueroa; "Foster Forward," Jaime Foster; "Jonathan Jacobson for State Representative," Jonathan Jacobson; "Committee to Re-Elect Senator John A. Kissel," John Kissel; "Tracy Marra for CT," Tracy Marra; "David Michel 2024," David Michel; "Pizzuto 24," William Pizzuto; "Rivers for Rep48," Christopher Rivers; "Friends of Travis Simms," Travis Simms; "Sweet for State," Laurie Sweet; "Campaign for Jane 2024," Jane Wisialowski*. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

11. *"Cook 2024," Michelle Cook*

12. *"Anabel Figueroa 2024," Anabel Figueroa*

13. *"Foster Forward," Jaime Foster*

14. *"Jonathan Jacobson for State Representative," Jonathan Jacobson*

15. *"Committee to Re-Elect Senator John A. Kissel," John Kissel*

16. *"Tracy Marra for CT," Tracy Marra*

17. *"David Michel 2024," David Michel*

18. *"Pizzuto 24," William Pizzuto*

19. *"Rivers for Rep48," Christopher Rivers*

20. *"Friends of Travis Simms," Travis Simms*

21. *"Sweet for State," Laurie Sweet*

22. *"Campaign for Jane 2024," Jane Wisialowski*

B. Continuation of Prior Applications Awaiting Additional Information to Qualify for a Grant

1. *"DeCaprio4CT48th," Mark DeCaprio*

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Asare to approve the grant application for *"DeCaprio4CT48th," Mark DeCaprio*. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

2. *“Carney 2024,” Devin Carney*

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Asare to approve the grant application for *“Carney 2024,” Devin Carney*. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

3. *“Harding24,” Stephen Harding*

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Asare to approve the grant application for *“Harding24,” Stephen Harding*. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

4. *“Kim Healy for CT,” Kim Healy*

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Asare to approve the grant application for *“Kim Healy for CT,” Kim Healy*. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

5. *“Geoff2024,” Geoffrey Luxenberg*

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Asare to approve the grant application for *“Geoff2024,” Geoffrey Luxenberg*. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

6. *“Werstler2024,” Ethan Werstler*

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Asare to approve the grant application for *“Werstler2024,” Ethan Werstler*. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

VI. *Pending Complaints and Investigations*

A. *Public Session*

There were no items for public session.

VII. *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 Asare at 10:02 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 Penny, Ajello, Asare, and Picuch were present via Webex. Staff members present via Webex were: Michael Brandi, Executive Director & General

Counsel, Sheri-Lyn Lagueux, Shannon Clark Kief, Legal Program Director, Salman Munir, Director of Audit & Disclosure, William B. Smith, Johnny Ross, III, Stephanie Fish, Scott Branfuhr, Josh Foley, Patricia Mwilwa, Stephen Palmer, Jonathan Ortiz, and Maryam Bitar.

Commissioner Asare left the meeting at 11:30 A.M.

The Commission returned to public session at 11:35 P.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 June 21, 2024 and requested that seventeen (17) 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 seventeen (17) complaints, File No. 2024-039; File No. 2024-040; File No. 2024-041; File No. 2024-042; File No. 2024-043; File No. 2024-044; File No. 2024-045; File No. 2024-046; File No. 2024-047; File No. 2024-048; File No. 2024-049; File No. 2024-050; File No. 2024-051; File No. 2024-052; File No. 2024-053 and File No. 2024-054.

Additionally the Commission determines that it is necessary to investigate alleged violations and make a referral for “Friends of Kathy Osten” and docket the matter as *In re. Referral by SEEC Audit and Disclosure Unit Regarding Certain Contributions Made to the “Friends of Kath Osten” Candidate Committee*. So voted by a vote of 3-0-0. So voted.

2. In the Matter of a Referral by the Audit and Disclosure Unit of the SEEC re: “Rogers 2018”
File No. 2023-008
Recommendation of Counsel
Attorney: William B. Smith
Legal Investigator: Sheri-Lyn Lagueux

Attorney William B. Smith summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2023-008. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement upon receipt in (10) ten days.

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Piecuch to adopt the Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2023-008 upon receipt in

ten (10) days. So voted by a vote of 3-0-0. The Consent Order & Agreement will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

3. In the Matter of a Complaint by Debra Gaudette, South Windsor
File No. 2023-032
Recommendation of Counsel
Attorney: William B. Smith
Legal Investigator: Ronald Perry

Attorney William B. Smith summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Findings & Conclusions in File No. 2023-032. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Picuch to adopt the Findings & Conclusions in File No. 2023-032. So voted by a vote of 3-0-0. The Findings & Conclusions will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

4. In the Matter of a Complaint by Nelson B. Stalker & Tammy A. Stalker, Sterling
File No. 2023-035
Recommendation of Counsel
Attorney: William B. Smith
Legal Investigator: Sheri-Lyn Lagueux

Attorney William B. Smith summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Findings & Conclusions in File No. 2023-035. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Picuch to adopt the Findings & Conclusions in File No. 2023-035. So voted by a vote of 3-0-0. The Findings & Conclusions will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

5. In the Matter of a Complaint of Robert Giusti, Bridgeport
File No. 2023-066
Recommendation of Counsel
Attorney: William B. Smith
Legal Investigator: Ronald Perry

Attorney William B. Smith summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Findings & Conclusions in File No. 2023-066. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.