



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION

MINUTES
STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR TELEPHONIC MEETING
Via Teams

Additional Methods to Attend This Meeting Include:

For public access, please click: Stream on YouTube (<https://youtube.com/@ctseec>)

Stream on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/ctseec/live>)

February 18, 2026

9:30 A.M.

I. Call to Order

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

II. Approval of the Minutes

1. Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of February 4, 2026

It was moved by Commissioner Piecuch and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist to approve the Minutes of the Meeting of February 4, 2026. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

III. Administrative Reports

1. Report of Executive Director and General Counsel Ryan Burns

Executive Director Ryan Burns delivered the Administrative Report, welcoming members and introducing the Commission's new meeting platform on Microsoft Teams. He noted that several other state agencies have successfully implemented this platform to enhance accessibility and efficiency.

IT Updates:

The agency is currently undergoing a long-overdue upgrade process for its servers and applications. As a result, there will be periodic downtime affecting internal operations, eCRIS servers, and the agency website. These interruptions will occur on Thursday afternoons and will continue through the beginning of May, when CEP grant season starts. At that point, upgrades will pause until the conclusion of

the CEP grant season. Thursdays were selected to minimize impact, as the downtime will occur the day after Commission meetings and is expected to have the least disruption for both the Commission and the regulated community.

The agency has also begun interviews for the Account Examiner position and anticipates filling this final vacancy in the near future.

Enforcement and Audit Updates:

The enforcement docket currently reflects 144 active cases, including 36 non-filer matters and 108 matters concerning complaints, referrals, or Commission-initiated investigations.

The pending audit report reflects 45 audits in progress 30, related to the 2024 cycle and 15 related to the 2022 cycle. All 2022 and 2024 audits remain on track to be completed prior to the start of Grant Season in May.

With respect to 2022 and 2020 audit referrals, staff are actively meeting internally to address matters stemming from campaigns that occurred some time ago. The agency intends to bring all remaining 2022 and 2020 matters forward at a single meeting in approximately one month to effectuate an efficient and consistent resolution.

Legislative Session Update:

Executive Director Burns reported that his ongoing meetings during the legislative session have been productive and have generated positive feedback.

There are three general categories of bills being monitored:

1. Placeholder Bills: These bills have been introduced without substantive language and may be amended at a later date. The agency is monitoring developments and will report back as additional information becomes available.
2. Budget and Appropriations: As noted previously, the Governor's proposed budget does not include cuts to the agency. However, there is an approximately \$1 million reduction proposed to the Secretary of the State's budget. Because certain systems used by the agency are funded through that office, these reductions could indirectly impact agency operations. The agency will continue to monitor the situation to ensure its minimum funding levels are protected.
3. Policy Bills of Concern:
 - a. Artificial Intelligence / "Deepfake" Legislation: A bill addressing AI-generated content has been introduced. Some legislators have expressed concerns that such technology may misrepresent candidates by placing words in their mouths. While the policy goals are understandable, Executive Director Burns expressed concern about the agency's involvement. The Commission has historically remained

message-neutral and avoids engaging in matters that could draw it into political content disputes. Additionally, enforcement of such legislation could require specialized digital forensic expertise beyond the agency's current technological or staffing capacity. Should the bill advance in a manner that would materially impact the agency, additional legislative action from the Commission may be requested.

- b. Fire District Meetings and Elections (SEEC Oversight): Another bill would expand the Commission's jurisdiction over fire district meetings and elections. Currently, the agency does not have oversight authority in this area, which aligns with the fact that fire district operations are not structured in the same manner as traditional elections. The proposed legislation would not only expand jurisdiction but also require affirmative education, administration, and oversight responsibilities, functions that are presently handled by the Secretary of the State and local Registrars of Voters. Executive Director Burns noted this bill raises operational and resource concerns. He has been asked to provide testimony before the Government Oversight and General Operations Committee next week and will continue discussions on the matter. The proposal remains a concern for the Commission.

Executive Director Burns concluded by noting that the agency will continue to monitor legislative developments closely and will keep the Commission informed of any changes that may affect operations or resources.

IV. Pending Complaints, Investigations and Audits

A. Public Session

In the Matter of a *SEEC Initiated Investigation into "Bush2020CT"*

File No. 2023-130 & 2023-130A

Proposed Consent Orders & Agreements

Respondents:

Richard Bush & Gregor

Kevrekian

Attorney:

Mario Borelli

Legal Investigator:

Sheri-Lyn Lagueux

Attorney Mario Borelli summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2023-130B. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in this matter.

It was moved by Commissioner Piecuch and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist to adopt the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2023-130B. So voted by a vote of 3-0-1, Commissioner Piecuch abstaining.

Attorney Mario Borelli summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2023-130A. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in this matter.

It was moved by Commissioner Piecuch and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist to adopt the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement with a henceforth order and civil penalty of \$400 in File No. 2023-130A. So voted by a vote of 3-0-1 with Commissioner Piecuch abstaining

1. Audit Reports

2022

1. "Burnes for 121," Gregory Burnes
Accounts Examiner: Patrick Dotse
2. "Desmarais 2022," Jeffrey Desmarais
Accounts Examiner: Patrick Dotse
3. "Felipe 2022," Antonio Felipe
Accounts Examiner: Patrick Dotse
4. "Foster for 57," Jaime Foster
Accounts Examiner: Rhonda Salvatore
5. "Gibson 2022," Bobby G. Gibson, Jr.
Accounts Examiner: Salman Munir
6. "Rosario 22," Christopher Rosario
Accounts Examiner: Krysta Palozie
7. "Stephanie Thomas for CT," Stephanie Thomas
Accounts Examiner: Nicole Duffany
8. "Gary 2022," Gary Winfield
Accounts Examiner: Patrick Dotse

2024

9. "Salema4CT," Salema Davis
Accounts Examiner: Patrick Dotse

10. "Edelson For Connecticut," Edward Edelson
Accounts Examiner: Kyla Huband
11. "Kami for District 26," Kami Evans
Accounts Examiner: Patrick Dotse
12. "Felipe 2024," Antonio Felipe
Accounts Examiner: Nicole Duffany
13. "Anabel Figueroa 2024," Anabel Figueroa
Accounts Examiner: Rhonda Salvatore
14. "Maher2024," Cecilia Maher
Accounts Examiner: Kyla Huband
15. "Mandato for the 34th," Brandi A. Mandato
Accounts Examiner: Patrick Dotse
16. "Quinn for CT," Sheila S Quinn
Accounts Examiner: Nicole Duffany
17. "ShakeForStateRep2024," Kaitlyn Shake
Accounts Examiner: Rhonda Salvatore

Director of Campaign Disclosure and Audit Salman Munir provided an overview of the draft audit reports and recommended that the Commission make final items numbers 1 through 17. Acceptance of the audit results was moved by Commissioner Picuch and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

V. *Executive Session per General Statutes §§ 1-200(6)(B),(E), and 1-210(b)(1), (3),(4),(10) and General Statutes §9-7a.*
(Preliminary draft and agency consideration of enforcement action and exempt records relative thereto)

It was moved by Commissioner Picuch and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist at 9:38 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, Bergquist, and Picuch were present via Teams. Staff members present via Teams were: Executive Director and General Counsel Ryan Burns, Legal Program Director Shannon Clark Kief, Director of Disclosure and Audit Salman Munir, Associate Account Examiner Kysta Palozie, Enforcement Director William Smith, Staff Attorneys Johnny Ross, III, Zak Jazlowiecki, Mario Borelli, Joshua Foley, Aaron Charney, Maryam Bitar, Legal Investigators Scott

Branfuhr, Ron Perry, Stephanie Fish, Elections Officer Kaitlin Flynn, Information Technology Manager Irene Jeremic, Information Technology Analyst Jonathan Ortiz, Nathan Diaz-Rolan, and Commission Clerks Sheri-Lyn Lagueux, Stephen Palmer, and Cynthia Ortiz.

VI. *Consideration of Matters Discussed in the above Executive Session*

At 10:15 A.M., the Commissioners came out of Executive Session and noted that no matters were decided and no vote was taken during Executive Session. The Commissioners then considered the following matters discussed in Executive Session.

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 11, 2026 and requested that two (2) matters be moved to be investigated.

It was moved by Commissioner Piecuch and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist to take a determination that it is necessary to investigate violations relating to complaint, File No. 2026-004. So approved by the Commission. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

It was moved by Commissioner Piecuch and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist to take a determination that it is necessary to investigate violations relating complaint, File No. 2026-005. So approved by the Commission. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

2. In the Matter of a Referral by the Secretary of the State
File No. 2024-003A
Recommendation of Counsel
Attorney:
Legal Investigator:

William B. Smith
Ronald Perry

Attorney William B. Smith summarized the above referenced complaint and Recommendation of Counsel in File No. 2024-003A. He recommended adoption of the Notice of Case Closure in this matter.

It was moved by Commissioner Piecuch and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist to adopt the Notice of Case Closure in File No. 2024-003A. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

3. In the Matter of a SEEC Initiated Complaint Regarding Michael Defillipo
File No. 2018-027
Recommendation of Counsel
Attorney: William B. Smith
Legal Investigator: Scott Branfuhr

Attorney William B. Smith summarized the above referenced complaint and Recommendation of Counsel in File No. 2018-027. He recommended adoption of the Notice of Case Closure in this matter.

It was moved by Commissioner Piecuch and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist to adopt the Notice of Case Closure in File No. 2018-027. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

4. In the Matter of a Complaint by Rand Stanley, Broad Brook
File No. 2025-035
Recommendation of Counsel
Attorney: Mario Borelli
Legal Investigator: Ronald Perry

The matter is continued.

5. In the Matter of a Referral by ROV Michele May, Hebron
In the Matter of a Complaint by Jason L. Guidone, Hebron
File Nos. 2025-110 and 2025-125
Recommendations of Counsel
Attorney: Mario Borelli
Legal Investigator: Stephanie Fish

The matter is continued.

6. In the Matter of a Referral by the Fairfield Registrars of Voters
File No. 2025-119
Recommendation of Counsel
Attorney: Mario Borelli
Legal Investigator: Sheri-Lyn Lagueux

The matter is continued.

7. In the Matter of a *SEEC Initiated Investigation into "Re-Elect Gaston 2024"*
File No. 2025-124
Recommendation of Counsel
Attorney: Mario Borelli
Legal Investigator: Sheri-Lyn Lagueux

Attorney Mario Borelli summarized the above referenced complaint and Recommendation of Counsel in File No. 2025-124. He recommended adoption of the Notice of Case Closure in this matter.

It was moved by Commissioner Piecuch and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist to adopt the Notice of Case Closure in File No. 2025-124. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

8. In the Matter of a Referral by the Town Clerk, Brookfield
File No. 2024-046
Recommendation of Counsel
Attorney:

Johnny Ross, III

Attorney Johnny Ross, III summarized the above referenced complaint and Recommendation of Counsel in File No. 2024-046. He recommended adoption of the Notice of Case Closure in this matter.

It was moved by Commissioner Piecuch and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist to adopt the Notice of Case Closure in File No. 2024-046. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

9. In the Matter of a Referral by the Town Clerk, Brookfield
File No. 2024-047
Recommendation of Counsel
Attorney:

Johnny Ross, III

Attorney Johnny Ross, III summarized the above referenced complaint and Recommendation of Counsel in File No. 2024-047. He recommended adoption of the Notice of Case Closure in this matter.

It was moved by Commissioner Piecuch and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist to adopt the Notice of Case Closure in File No. 2024-047. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

10. In the Matter of a Complaint by Robert J. Ham, Cheshire
File No. 2025-102
Recommendation of Counsel
Attorney:
Legal Investigator:

Zak Jazlowiecki
Sheri-Lyn Lagueux

Attorney Zak Jazlowiecki summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Findings & Conclusions in File No. 2025-102. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Picuch and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist to adopt the Proposed Findings & Conclusions in File No. 2025-102. So voted a vote of 4-0-0.

11. In the Matter of a Complaint by Maria Gant, New Haven
File No. 2025-114
Recommendation of Counsel

Attorney: Zak Jazlowiecki
Legal Investigator: Sheri-Lyn Lagueux

Attorney Zak Jazlowiecki summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Findings & Conclusions in File No. 2025-114. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions in this matter.

It was moved by Commissioner Picuch and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist to adopt the Proposed Findings & Conclusions in File No. 2025-114. So voted a vote of 4-0-0.

VII. Adjournment

It was moved by Commissioner Picuch and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist at 10:35 a.m. to adjourn the meeting. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0. Unless otherwise noted, all votes of the Commission are unanimous.


Sheri-Lyn Lagueux
Clerk of the State Elections Enforcement Commission

March 4, 2026
Date approved
(By the State Elections Enforcement Commission)