



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION

MINUTES

STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION

REGULAR MEETING

August 5, 2026
9:30 AM

I. Call to Order

Commissioner Penny was present via Teams and called the meeting to order at 9:31 AM. Commissioners Michael Ajello, Shannon Bergquist 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 July 15, 2026

It was moved by Commissioner Piecuch and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist to approve the Minutes of the Meeting of *July 15, 2026*. So voted by a vote of 3-0-1 with Commissioner Piecuch abstaining.

2. Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of July 22, 2026

It was moved by Commissioner Piecuch and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist to approve the Minutes of the Meeting of *July 22, 2026*. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

3. Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of July 29, 2026

It was moved by Commissioner Piecuch and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist to approve the Minutes of the Meeting of *July 29, 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 & General Counsel Ryan Burns reported that the agency has approved 177 grant applications, which puts the agency well past half way through the grant season.

Staff expect the vast majority of grants to be in before the grant reduction schedule of August 24, 2026.

Executive Director Burns updated that there are just under 180 active complaints, referrals and SEEC initiated matters. Removing all the cases on hold for referral, those that are in collection and the non-filers we're back under 100 cases, which is manageable as we continue to work through that docket.

Executive Director Burns provided brief updates on Litigation matters- *Santanella v. Jerez* and *Concepcion v. Feliciano*. Both matters were heard by the Connecticut Supreme Court last week. There were opposite decisions, but both resulted in primaries.

In *Concepcion v. Feliciano*, the court upheld the lower court ruling and we continue to have a primary.

In *Santanella v. Jerez*, because of the timing, they have ordered the lower court to set a new primary. That triggers different pieces of our statute determining what grants should be issued. We've been in contact with the participating candidate in the race, discussed what grants will be issued and how we're going to calculate further adjustments down the road depending on who wins that new primary. We will be in contact with the campaigns and with the Commission should further votes be required.

Staff were advised just a day or two ago of another case which is the *Morales v. Feliciano*, we were not noticed on this as would have been typical, it was another petitioning case. The end result was that the Court sided with the defendant and there's no change in our posture with regard to that case. There's nothing for the Commission to do.

IV. 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)

Executive Session was not convened

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

No action was taken.

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

A. New Applications

1. *"Erick Russell for State Treasurer 26," Erick A. Russell*

It was moved by Commissioner Piecuch and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist to continue without prejudice the grant application for *"Erick Russell for State Treasurer 26," Erick A. Russell*. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

2. *"Scanlon 2026," Sean M. Scanlon*

It was moved by Commissioner Piecuch and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist to approve the grant application for *"Scanlon 2026," Sean M. Scanlon*. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

3. *"ReidForStateSenate2026," Carolann K. Reid*

It was moved by Commissioner Piecuch and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist to approve the grant application for *"ReidForStateSenate2026," Carolann K. Reid*. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

4. *"Friends of Dominique Johnson 26," Dominique E. Johnson*

It was moved by Commissioner Piecuch and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist to continue without prejudice the grant application for *Friends of Dominique Johnson 26," Dominique E. Johnson*. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

5. *"Linda Pierce for District 30," Linda M. Pierce*

It was moved by Commissioner Piecuch and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist to continue without prejudice the grant application for *"Linda Pierce for District 30," Linda M. Pierce*. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

6. *"Amy for State Rep," Amy Morrin Bello*

It was moved by Commissioner Piecuch and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist to approve the grant application for *"Amy for State Rep," Amy Morrin Bello*. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

7. *"Matt Lesser 2026," Matthew L. Lesser*

It was moved by Commissioner Piecuch and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist to continue without prejudice the grant application for *"Matt Lesser 2026," Matthew L. Lesser*. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

8. *"Tricia Ciccone for State Representative," Tricia Ciccone*

It was moved by Commissioner Piecuch and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist to approve the grant application for *"Tricia Ciccone for State Representative," Tricia Ciccone*. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

9. *"Nolan for New London 2026," Anthony Nolan*

It was moved by Commissioner Piecuch and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist to approve the grant application for *"Nolan for New London 2026," Anthony Nolan*. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

10. *"Vote Astarita," Kenneth Astarita*

It was moved by Commissioner Piecuch and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist to approve the grant application for *"Vote Astarita," Kenneth Astarita*. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

11. *"Kiner for Senate," David W. Kiner*

It was moved by Commissioner Piecuch and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist to approve the grant application for *"Kiner for Senate," David W. Kiner*. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

12. *"Re-elect Piscopo 2026," John E. Piscopo*

It was moved by Commissioner Piecuch and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist to approve the grant application for *"Re-elect Piscopo 2026," John E. Piscopo*. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

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

1. *"Jenn Jennings 4 Senate," Jenn Jennings*

It was moved by Commissioner Piecuch and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist to approve the grant application for *"Jenn Jennings 4 Senate," Jenn Jennings*. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

VI. Pending Complaints and Investigations

A. Public Session

1. In the Matter of a Self-Initiated Investigation by SEEC *"Melissa Santana for the 110th"*

File No. 2026-041A

Proposed Agreement Containing Consent Order

Respondent:

Attorney:

Legal Investigator:

Anna C. Nicolin

Mario Borelli

Sheri-Lyn Lagueux

Attorney Mario Borelli summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Agreement Containing Consent Order in File No. 2026-041A. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Agreement Containing Consent Order in this matter.

It was moved by Commissioner Piecuch and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist to adopt the Proposed Agreement Containing Consent Order in 2026-041A. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

2. In the Matter of a Self-Initiated Investigation by SEEC “*Melissa Santana for the 110th*”
File No. 2026-041B
Proposed Agreement Containing Consent Order
Respondent: Melissa B. Santana
Attorney: Mario Borelli
Legal Investigator: Sheri-Lyn Lagueux

Attorney Mario Borelli summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Agreement Containing Consent Order in File No. 2026-041B. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Agreement Containing Consent Order in this matter.

It was moved by Commissioner Piecuch and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist to adopt the Proposed Agreement Containing Consent Order in 2026-041B. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

3. In the Matter of a Self-Initiated Investigation Into Certain Contributions to “*Friends of Cathy Osten,*” Hartford
File No. 2024-059
Proposed Agreement Containing Consent Order
Respondent: Angel Mieses
Attorney: Mario Borelli
Legal Investigator: Scott Branfuhr

Attorney Mario Borelli summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Agreement Containing Consent Order in File No. 2024-059. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Agreement Containing Consent Order in this matter.

It was moved by Commissioner Piecuch and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist to adopt the Proposed Agreement Containing Consent Order in 2024-059. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

VII. 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 Piecuch and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist at 9:58 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 Piecuch were present via Teams. Staff members present via Teams were: Executive Director and General Counsel Ryan Burns, Senior Counsel, Joshua Foley, Legal Program Director Shannon Clark Kief, Director of Disclosure & Audit Salman Munir, Associate Accounts Examiner Kysta Palozie, Enforcement Director William B. Smith, Staff Attorneys Mario Borelli, Zak Jazlowiecki, Maryam Bitar, Aaron Charney, Patricia Mwilwa, Legal Investigators Scott Branfuhr, Stephaie Fish, Ronald Perry, Information Technology Manager Irene Jeremic, Information Technology Analyst Nathan Diaz-Rolon, and Commission Clerks Stephen Palmer and Sheri-Lyn Lagueux.

VIII. Consideration of Matters Discussed in the above Executive Session

At 11:09 AM, 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

Attorney William B. Smith summarized the Recommendation of Counsel dated July 30, 2026 and requested that six (6) matters be moved to be investigated.

It was moved by Commissioner Piecuch and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist to make a determination that it is necessary to investigate violations relating to complaints, File No. 2026-074, 2026-075, 2026-080, 2026-081, 2026-082 and 2026-084. 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 make a determination that it is necessary to investigate violations relating to complaint, File No. 2026-076 and adopt the following motion: In the matter of File No. 2026-076 the Commission authorizes staff to dismiss this matter as to all Respondents through a diversionary remedy by which the Respondent agrees to (1) training by Commission staff regarding proper compliance with the attribution statutes in exchange for a dismissal by the Committee; and (2) a public statement in the dismissal that the Respondent Treasurer agreed to educational training as a condition of full resolution of the complaint. So approved by the Commission. So voted by a vote of 3-0-1 with Commissioner Piecuch abstaining.

It was moved by Commissioner Piecuch and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist to make a determination that it is necessary to investigate violations relating to complaint, File No. 2026-083 and adopt the following motion: Pursuant to § 9-7b (a), the Commission finds it necessary to further investigate the matter in File No. 2026-083 for the limited purposes of determining whether the alleged expenditures for opposition research against the Bradley campaign violated campaign finance laws in connection with the Ganim committee treasurer Respondent Gallant and Respondent Monks. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

2. Recommendation of Counsel: Litigation Update

Attorney William B. Smith provided a litigation update and Recommendation of Counsel regarding Santanella, John v. Jerez, Beth, et al HHD-CV-26-6227409-S.

It was moved by Commissioner Piecuch and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist to adopt the following motion: Pursuant to General Statutes § 9-7b (a), the Commission initiates an investigation into potential election law violations pertaining to the issuance of nominating petitions in connection with the August 11, 2026 primary in the 58th General Assembly District. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

3. Recommendation of Counsel: Commission Initiated Investigation Pursuant to General Statutes Sec. 9-7b (a) (1)

Attorney William B. Smith provided a Recommendation of Counsel regarding Sead “Seyo” Cecunjanin who may have potentially registered to vote and recommend that the Commission initiate an investigation.

It was moved by Commissioner Piecuch and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist to adopt the following motion: The Commission pursuant to General Statutes § 9-7b (a) (1) initiates an investigation into whether any election laws were violated surrounding the alleged registration of Sead “Seyo” Cecunjanin to vote in Connecticut. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

4. In the Matter of a Complaint by Benjamin Shaiken, Mansfield Center
File Nos. 2025-062, 2026-034, 2026-039 & 2026-040
Recommendation of Counsel

Attorney:

Johnny Ross, III

Legal Investigator:

Stephanie Fish

Attorney Mario Borelli summarized the above referenced complaint and Recommendation of Counsel in File No. File Nos. 2025-062, 2026-034, 2026-039 & 2026-040. He recommended Notice of Dismissal in this matter.

It was moved by Commissioner Piecuch and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist to adopt the Proposed Notice of Dismissal in File No. File Nos. 2025-

062, 2026-034, 2026-039 & 2026-040. So voted by a vote of 3-0-0 with Commissioner Ajello recusing himself from consideration of this matter.

Attorney Mario Borelli summarized the above referenced complaint and Recommendation of Counsel in File No. File Nos. 2025-062, 2026-034, 2026-039 & 2026-040. He recommended continuation of this matter as to the treasurer William Jenkins.

5. In the Matter of a Complaint by Benjamin Barnes, Stratford
File No. 2025-081
Recommendation of Counsel

Attorney: Johnny Ross, III
Legal Investigator: Stephanie Fish

Attorney Zak Jazlowiecki summarized the above referenced complaint and Recommendation of Counsel in File No. 2025-081. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Agreement Containing a Consent Order as to Noreen McGorty and a Proposed Notice of Dismissal concerning the other respondents in this matter.

It was moved by Commissioner Piecuch and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist to adopt the Proposed Agreement Containing a Consent Order as to Noreen McGordy and a Proposed Notice of Dismissal concerning the other respondents in File No. 2025-081. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

6. In the Matter of a Complaint by Fred DeCaro & Mary Hegary, Greenwich
File No. 2026-010
Recommendation of Counsel

Attorney: Zak Jazlowiecki
Legal Investigator: Ronald Perry

The matter is continued.

7. In the Matter of a Complaint by Hanna Zholnerchyk, Norwalk
File No. 2026-064
Recommendation of Counsel

Attorney: Zak Jazlowiecki
Legal Investigator: Sheri-Lyn Lagueux

Attorney Zak Jazlowiecki summarized the above referenced complaint and Recommendation of Counsel in File No. 2026-064. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Notice of Dismissal in this matter.

It was moved by Commissioner Piecuch and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist to adopt the Proposed Notice of Dismissal in File No. 2026-064. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

8. In the Matter of a Complaint by Emily Marquis, Willington
File No. 2026-066

Recommendation of Counsel

Attorney:

Mario Borelli

Legal Investigator:

Scott Branfuhr

Attorney Mario Borelli summarized the above referenced complaint and Recommendation of Counsel in File No. 2026-066. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Notice of Dismissal in this matter.

It was moved by Commissioner Piecuch and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist to adopt the Proposed Notice of Dismissal in File No. 2026-066. So voted by a vote of 4-0-0.

9. In the Matter of a Complaint by Jo Ann Gerardi-Voccio and Rick Ives, Brooklyn
File No. 2024-080

Recommendation of Counsel

Attorney:

Mario Borelli

Legal Investigator:

Stephanie Fish

The matter is continued.

10. In the Matter of a Complaint by Jackie Heftman, Stamford
File No. 2025-100

Recommendation of Counsel

Attorney:

Mario Borelli

Legal Investigator:

Scott Branfuhr

The matter is continued.

11. In the Matter of a Complaint by Joan Fox, Hampton
File No. 2025-111

Recommendation of Counsel

Attorney:

Mario Borelli

Legal Investigator:

Stephanie Fish

The matter is continued.

IX. Adjournment

It was moved by Commissioner Piecuch and seconded by Commissioner Bergquist at 11:27 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.

Respectfully submitted by,



Sheri-Lyn Lagueux

Clerk of the State Elections Enforcement Commission

August 19, 2026

Date approved

(By the State Elections Enforcement Commission)