

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION

In re Audit Report *Committee to Elect John French*

File No. 2012-034

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The Commission initiated this investigation pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes § 9-7b (a) (1). While conducting an audit of the "Committee to Elect John French" (the "Committee"), the Commission's Campaign Disclosure and Audit Unit (the "Audit Unit") was unable to secure certain campaign records from the Committee treasurer through voluntary document requests. When such records were not provided by the Committee treasurer in the regular course of the audit, the Commission initiated the instant investigation based on a reasonable suspicion that such documents may have not been maintained by the treasurer pursuant to General Statutes § 9-607 (f). Shortly after the initiation of the instant investigation, such documents were provided in the course of the audit, reviewed by the Commission's Audit Unit and deemed sufficient for purposes of the audit review process.

After an investigation, the Commission makes the following findings and conclusions:

1. At all times relevant hereto, the Respondent, William Navratil, was the treasurer of the Committee, a candidate committee formed to support the election of John E. French for the General Assembly in 2010.
2. Pursuant to the Commission's powers to inspect and audit campaign records under General Statutes § 9-7b (a) (5), Commission staff attempted to secure the voluntary production of campaign records required to be maintained by the Respondent for four years pursuant to his duties as a treasurer under General Statutes § 9-607 (f).
3. Although multiple records were provided to the Audit Unit in the regular audit process pursuant to such requests, such records did not include three contracts between the Committee and vendors associated with payments otherwise reported on the Itemized Campaign Finance Disclosure Statements (SEEC Form 30). This fact raised reasonable suspicion that such records may not have been maintained by the Respondent pursuant to § 9-607 (f).
4. Shortly after the initiation of the instant investigation, and apparently prompted by the investigation, such records were provided to the Commission's Audit Unit, reviewed by the Audit Unit and deemed sufficient for purposes of the audit review process.
5. General Statutes § 9-607 (f) concerns the treasurer's responsibility for preserving the internal documents of the committee and reads, in pertinent part:

The campaign treasurer *shall preserve* all internal records of transactions required to be entered in reports filed pursuant to section 9-608 for four years from the date of the report in which the transactions were entered. Internal records required to be maintained in order for any permissible expenditure to be paid from committee funds include, but are not limited to, contemporaneous invoices, receipts, bills, statements, itineraries, or other written or documentary evidence showing the campaign or other lawful purpose of the expenditure. . . . (Emphasis added.)

6. Based on a review of the relevant records by the Commission's Audit Unit, there is insufficient evidence to find a violation of § 9-607 (f).

ORDER

The following Order is recommended on the basis of the aforementioned findings:

That no further action be taken.

Adopted this 24 th day of October, 2012 at Hartford, Connecticut.


Stephen F. Cashman, Chairperson
By Order of the Commission