

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT**  
**STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION**

In the Matter of a Complaint by John Rodolico  
Ledyard

File No. 2020-010

**AGREEMENT CONTAINING CONSENT ORDER**

This agreement by and between Gregory Wong of the Town of Ledyard, County of New London, State of Connecticut (hereinafter “Respondent”) and the authorized representative of the State Elections Enforcement Commission is entered into in accordance with § 9-7b-54 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies and § 4-177(c) of the General Statutes of Connecticut. In accordance herewith, the parties agree that:

1. Complainant John Rodolico of Ledyard filed this complaint on Jan. 23, 2020,<sup>1</sup> alleging that the Democratic town committee in Ledyard had failed adequately to report several expenditures that it had made and contributions that it had received. Rodolico pointed to four instances where he claimed the Ledyard DTC had not followed Connecticut’s campaign finance statutes. Specifically, Complainant alleged that the Ledyard Democratic Town Committee:
  - Failed to report contributions of \$160 and \$700 that it had received from Ten Town PAC on April 1, 2019 and September 3, 2019, respectively;
  - Failed to report expenditures for campaign-related items, such as palm cards, lawn signs, and mailings;
  - Failed to itemize contributions made to Ledyard DTC as purchases from a barbecue fundraiser held on May 28, 2019, and:
  - Failed to report expenditures made or income received related to a refreshment booth hosted by the town committee at the Ledyard Town Fair on September 6 through 8, 2019.
  
2. In 2019, Ledyard held municipal elections for the offices of mayor, town council, and board of education. Voters elected nine individuals to both the town council and board of

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<sup>1</sup> General Statutes § 9-7a(g)(1) prescribes that all complaints shall be resolved within one year of their receipt by the Commission. Executive Order No. 7M, issued by the Governor’s office on March 20, 2020, authorized the extension of all statutory and regulatory administrative deadlines by 90 days. See Executive Order No. 7M (March 20, 2020).

education. The Democratic Party fielded candidates for both the town council and board of education. The Democratic Party did not put forward a candidate in the mayoral race.

3. The candidates running for the town council and the board of education registered as candidates with the Ledyard Town Clerk. All the Democratic candidates filed exemptions from forming candidate committees.<sup>2</sup> Ten of the eleven candidates indicated that they were exempt from forming a candidate committee because they would be solely funded by the Ledyard Democratic Town Committee. The only outlier was town council candidate Anthony F. Sabilia, who claimed an exemption from forming a candidate committee on the basis that was funding his candidacy himself and would neither request nor receive contributions from any other individual or committee.
4. The Ledyard Democratic Town Committee filed campaign finance disclosure reports as required during the 2019 municipal election cycle. Several of those reports, however, lacked details to show receipts and expenditures for the committee. After this complaint was docketed, the treasurer amended the committee's reports. In its July 2019 report, which covered the dates from April 1, 2019 through June 30, 2019, the town committee reported that it had received \$1,354 from a barbecue event that it held during the Memorial Day Parade in Ledyard. The committee categorized those contributions as ones collected

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<sup>2</sup> See SEEC Form 1 – Registration by Candidate (Janis Vajdos – Board of Education) (Filed July 23, 2019) (declaring that candidate was part of slate solely funded by Ledyard Democratic Town Committee); SEEC Form 1 – Registration by Candidate (Elizabeth Schwebel – Town Council) (Filed July 30, 2019) (declaring that candidate was part of slate solely funded by Ledyard Democratic Town Committee); SEEC Form 1 – Registration by Candidate (Kathryn DiPalma-Herb – Board of Education) (Filed July 30, 2019) (declaring that candidate was part of slate solely funded by Ledyard Democratic Town Committee); SEEC Form 1 – Registration by Candidate (Anthony F. Sabilia – Town Council) (Filed July 23, 2019) (declaring that candidate was funding campaign solely from personal funds and would not request or receive contributions from other individuals or committees); SEEC Form 1 – Registration by Candidate (Hilary J. Evans – Town Council) (Filed July 23, 2019) (declaring that candidate was part of slate solely funded by Ledyard Democratic Town Committee); SEEC Form 1 – Registration by Candidate (Joanne M. Kelley – Board of Education) (Filed July 29, 2019) (declaring that candidate was part of slate solely funded by Ledyard Democratic Town Committee); SEEC Form 1 – Registration by Candidate (Mary K. McGrattan – Town Council) (Filed July 23, 2019) (declaring that candidate was part of slate solely funded by Ledyard Democratic Town Committee); SEEC Form 1 – Registration by Candidate (Alexander M. Rode – Town Council) (Filed July 23, 2019) (declaring that candidate was part of slate solely funded by Ledyard Democratic Town Committee); SEEC Form 1 – Registration by Candidate (Stephanie R. Calhoun – Board of Education) (Filed July 23, 2019) (declaring that candidate was part of slate solely funded by Ledyard Democratic Town Committee); SEEC Form 1 – Registration by Candidate (William D. Saums – Town Council) (Filed July 23, 2019) (declaring that candidate was part of slate solely funded by Ledyard Democratic Town Committee); and SEEC Form 1 – Registration by Candidate (S. Naomi Rodriguez – Board of Education) (Filed July 29, 2019) (declaring that candidate was part of slate solely funded by Ledyard Democratic Town Committee).



during a mass event or fair, given that they were received as part of the community Memorial Day parade.

5. The July 10, 2019 report failed to show that the Ledyard Democratic Town Committee had received a contribution of \$160 from Ten Town PAC on April 1, 2019. The contribution was one of two identified by the complainant in this complaint. As a result of this complaint, the July 10, 2019 reported was amended on October 25, 2020, to reflect the \$160 contribution from Ten Town PAC.
6. The Ledyard Democratic Town Committee's October 10, 2019 campaign disclosure filing did not record some of the expenditures that were made by the committee as well as another contribution from Ten Town PAC. The original filing submitted by treasurer Wong reported that the committee had \$808.30 on hand and had neither spent nor received any funds during the reporting period. An amended report filed on October 25, 2020 reflected the \$700 contribution received from Ten Town PAC on September 3, 2019. The committee still reported no expenditures during this period.
7. Similarly, the town committee's original Seventh Day Preceding General Election campaign finance disclosure report filed on October 28, 2019 reflected no expenditures and no receipts for the relevant reporting period. The report showed \$808.30 on hand. An amended report filed on January 10, 2020 – after this complaint was received – showed that the committee received contributions totaling \$1,518.17 from individuals and \$500 from AFT PAC. The amended report also showed that the committee had spent \$583.25 during the reporting period, leaving it with a balance on hand of \$2,243.22.
8. The committee filed its January 10 campaign finance disclosure report on January 10, 2020, to close out the 2019 calendar year. The original report showed that the committee had on hand \$2,453.22 at the beginning and end of the reporting period and, according to the original report, neither spent nor received any funds during the reporting period. This report was amended on January 3, 2021 to reflect that the committee had spent \$2,209.53 on lawn signs, which were paid for on November 25, 2019.
9. The Ledyard DTC initially failed to report contributions that it received Ten Town PAC in 2019. Ten Town PAC, which was established by Kathy Osten in 2018, made contributions to several Democratic Town Committees in 2019, including the Ledyard DTC. Those contributions totaled \$860 and were made in two transactions, one of \$160 in April and

another of \$700 in September. The Ledyard Democratic Town Committee did not report those contributions when received.

10. General Statutes § 9-618(c)(2) allows an ongoing political committee, such as Ten Town PAC, to make contributions to a town party committee, such as the Ledyard Democratic Town Committee, of as much as \$1,500 per calendar year. Once received by the town committee, it must report the contribution as required under General Statutes § 9-608(c)(1)(A). While the Ledyard DTC was permitted to accept contributions from Ten Town PAC, it had an obligation to report the receipt of those contributions at the time it received them.
11. Ledyard DTC amended its campaign finance disclosure statements on October to reflect the contributions that it received from Ten Town PAC. While those contributions were ultimately reported, the committee only made those changes after the filing of this complaint.
12. The party committee, which served as the primary funding vehicle for municipal candidates running in Ledyard, failed to report expenditures that it had made for those candidates for school board and town council. Ultimately, the committee's filings were amended to reflect funds that that municipal office in 2019. The expenditures included \$430 for postage for post cards, \$153.25 for advertising in a magazine and newspaper, and \$2,209.53 for lawn signs.
13. A committee may make expenditures to support candidates, but it must report those expenditures during the relevant reporting period. General Statutes § 9-608 requires the committee's treasurer to report all expenditures made by the committee, including those incurred but not yet paid by the committee. Here the committee did not report expenditures in a timely manner. Payments for lawn signs, mailings, and advertisements in October of 2019 were not reported promptly.
14. The party committee held this fundraiser in conjunction with the Ledyard Memorial Day Parade, which occurred on Sunday, May 26, 2019 along Colonel Ledyard Highway in Ledyard. General Statutes § 9-608(c)(1) allows a committee to report all payments for food or beverages collected at a community fair or mass gathering as one lump sum, instead of itemizing all of those receipts, as long as the amount purchased by a single individual does not exceed \$100. The Ledyard Democratic Town Committee reported that it had raised a

total of \$1,354 at the event.<sup>3</sup> The parade, however, would qualify as a mass gathering, which would exempt the party committee from the requirement to itemize contributions received at the event.

15. Like the event held in conjunction with the parade, contributions received via the refreshment booth at the Ledyard Town Fair would not need to be itemized since they were collected at a community fair. But contributions received and expenditures made must be reported by the committee for the event, even if they are not itemized
16. The Ledyard Democratic Town Committee has reported nothing related to this event. According to the respondents, the committee sells sodas and gives away literature. They have not reported the proceeds or expenditures related to this event.
17. Respondent Wong, as treasurer of the committee, failed to report contributions received by the Ledyard Democratic Town Committee and failed to report expenditures made to support candidates for the 2019 municipal election in Ledyard in a timely manner. He also failed to report expenditures made and contributions received as part of the committee's activities during the Ledyard Town Fair. Each of the violations of General Statutes § 9-608 carries a potential civil penalty of \$2,000.
18. As enumerated in § 9-7b-48 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies:  
In its determination of the amount of the civil penalty to be imposed, the Commission shall consider, among other mitigating or aggravating circumstances:
  - (1) the gravity of the act or omission;
  - (2) the amount necessary to insure immediate and continued compliance;
  - (3) the previous history of similar acts or omissions; and
  - (4) whether the person has shown good faith in attempting to comply with the applicable provisions of the General Statutes.

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<sup>3</sup> The Memorial Day Parade in 2019 was held on May 26. The committee's filing erroneously listed the date as May 28, 2019.



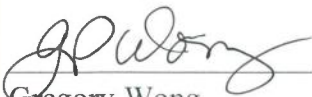
19. The Commission possesses the authority to set the punishment it metes out to individuals who violate the statutes under its authority. While the maximum penalty available under the enabling statute is \$2,000 per offense or twice the amount of any improper expenditure, the Commission also has the authority to set a lesser penalty where circumstances call for such leniency.
20. It is understood and agreed that this agreement will be submitted to the Commission at its next meeting and, if it is not accepted by the Commission, it is withdrawn by the Respondent and may not be used by either party as an admission in any subsequent hearing or against the Company in any proceeding, if the same becomes necessary.
21. Respondent waives:
  - a. any further procedural steps;
  - b. the requirement that the Commission's decision contain a statement of findings of fact and conclusions of law, separately stated; and
  - c. all rights to seek judicial review or otherwise to challenge or contest the validity of the Order entered into pursuant to this agreement.
22. Upon Respondent's compliance with the Order hereinafter stated, the Commission shall not initiate any further proceedings against Respondent

**ORDER**

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT the Respondent shall pay a civil penalty of \$1,000 and shall strictly comply with the requirements of General Statutes § 9-608.

The Respondent:

BY:

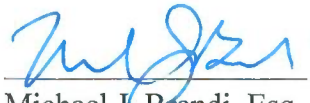


Gregory Wong  
20 Partridge Hollow Lane  
Gales Ferry, Connecticut

Dated: 3/3/2021

For the State of Connecticut:

BY:



Michael J. Brandi, Esq.  
Executive Director and General Counsel  
And Authorized Representative of the  
State Elections Enforcement Commission  
20 Trinity Street, Suite 101  
Hartford, Connecticut

Dated: 3/10/2021

Adopted this 17<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2021, at Hartford, Connecticut



Commissioner Stephen T. Penny  
By Order of the Commission