

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION

In the Matter of a Complaint by Andrea Gartner
Danbury

File No. 2021-133

FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS

Complainant Andrea Gartner of Danbury filed this complaint on June 9, 2021 alleging that Sedeaka Lawrence, a candidate for mayor in Danbury, had failed to file periodic campaign finance disclosure reports as required under Connecticut's campaign finance regime. After investigating the allegations raised in the complaint the Commission makes the following findings and conclusions:

1. Respondent Lawrence created a candidate committee to run for the office of mayor in the 2021 municipal election cycle. Lawrence filed that paperwork with the Danbury Town Clerk's office on February 16, 2021. In the filing, he named Diana Campbell as the committee's treasurer.
2. Since that registration, the candidate committee has filed no other campaign finance reports with the Danbury Town Clerk's office.¹
3. General Statutes § 9-608 lays out filings that a candidate committee must file over the life of the committee. Quarterly reports are due on January 10, April 10, July 10, and October 10 of each year. In addition, candidate committees running in the 2021 municipal election, which occurred on November 2, 2021, were required to file a 7th Day Preceding Election Filing on October 26, 2021 and were required to terminate their committee by April 7, 2022.
4. The Lawrence candidate committee missed six reports: four quarterly reports (April 10, 2021, July 10, 2021, October 10, 2021, and January 10, 2022); the 7th Day Preceding Election Filing (due on October 26, 2021); and the termination report (due before April 7, 2022).
5. The liability for failing to file these periodic reports falls to the treasurer of the candidate committee.²
6. Respondent Campbell served as the treasurer of the committee. She said that in her role as treasurer for the committee, she did not handle any contributions to the committee and did

¹ Danbury Town Clerk Janice Giegler has notified Lawrence that he has an obligation under Connecticut's campaign finance statutes to report expenditures and contributions and to close the committee.

² See General Statutes § 9-606 (a).

not make any expenditures on behalf of the committee. Early in 2022, however, Campbell relocated to Spring, Texas, and has no current plans to return to Connecticut.

7. Over the course of the 2021 election cycle, Lawrence stated that he spent as much as \$6,000 of his personal funds on mailers that he sent to individuals in Danbury as well as other advertising. Lawrence said that he did not receive any contributions from individuals to promote his candidacy and used only his own money.
8. General Statutes § 9-607 (k) allows a candidate to pay for expenditures that promote his candidacy, but the candidate must report any expenditures that exceed \$50 to the treasurer, who in turn must include those expenses paid by the candidate on the committee's relevant campaign finance disclosure statement.
9. When registering to run for office, a candidate has several options. One, which Lawrence selected, is to create a candidate committee. Another option, which may have been the better one for Lawrence, is to register as a candidate exempt from forming a candidate committee because the candidate is going to pay for the campaign expenses using solely his own money.
10. Although Respondent Lawrence created the candidate committee and that committee failed to report any expenditures related to the campaign, the responsibility for the committee's failure to report activity of the committee lies with Respondent Campbell, the named treasurer, who has moved to Texas and is no longer available within the Commission's jurisdiction.
11. Given the treasurer's absence from the jurisdiction, the Commission will take no further action on this matter.

ORDER

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

That the Commission will take no further action on this matter given the responsible party's absence from the jurisdiction of the Commission.

Adopted this 28th day of May, 2022 at Hartford, Connecticut.



Stephen Penny, Chairperson
By Order of the Commission