

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

*In re.* Commission Initiated Investigation: *Roeun 2018*

File No. 2021-157

**AGREEMENT CONTAINING CONSENT ORDER**

This agreement by and between Robert Zarbock of the City of Danbury, County of Fairfield, 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. The Commission initiated this investigation into the 2018 candidate committee of Veasna Roeun based on findings in the audit of the *Roeun 2018* candidate committee performed as part of the post-election review. Upon initiation of this investigation, the candidate provided contracts that his candidate committee had executed with the treasurer, Robert Zarbock, as well as the campaign manager, Sean Massi. The candidate committee, however, had failed to provide that documentation prior to the initiation of the instant investigation. Once provided, those contracts also showed that the candidate committee had made payment of the payments negotiated in both contracts contingent upon receipt of a grant from the Citizens' Election Fund, a practice which is prohibited.
2. The Commission performed an in-depth review of the expenditures of the *Roeun 2018* candidate committee after the committee's selection in the random audit lottery conducted following the 2018 election cycle. The candidate Veasna Roeun formed a candidate committee on May 29, 2018 to finance his candidacy for election to the 109th General Assembly seat in the November 6, 2018 election. Roeun named Robert Zarbock as his committee treasurer. The candidate committee applied for a grant from the Citizens' Election Fund and received \$21,112.50 in grant funds. The candidate committee returned a surplus of \$19.92 to the Citizens' Election Fund after the election.
3. This matter was initiated on the basis that the candidate committee had failed to obtain pre-performance agreements from several individuals that it hired to work for the campaign. According to its campaign finance disclosure statements, the candidate committee paid the treasurer, Zarbock, wages of \$1,900 on November 19, 2018 and paid Massi, the campaign

manager, a total of \$1,700, also on November 19, 2018. During the audit of the candidate committee, the campaign never provided copies of either of those agreements to the Commission.

4. After the initiation of this enforcement action, the candidate provided contracts that he had executed with the treasurer and the campaign manager. Those contracts were both executed on May 28, 2018. While the contracts documented the services that would be provided by the treasurer and the campaign manager in exchange for the funds they were paid, they also indicated that the “payment is conditional upon receipt of Grant Funds.”
5. In addition to requiring written contracts for all service providers, the regulations governing the Citizens' Election Program prohibit candidate committees from executing contracts that make payment of the amount due under the contract subject to receipt of a grant from the Citizens' Election Fund. The regulation states, in relevant part:

Participating candidates and the treasurers of such participating candidates shall not spend funds in the participating candidate's depository account for the following:

...

16. Expenditures incurred but not paid for which payment of any portion of the outstanding liability is made contingent on the participating candidate committee's receipt of a grant from the Citizens' Election Funds . . .<sup>1</sup>

6. In prior cases, the Commission has imposed a \$200 civil penalty on treasurers who enter into such agreements on behalf of the committee.<sup>2</sup>
7. 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;

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<sup>1</sup> Regulations, Conn. State Agencies, § 9-706-2 (b) (16) (State Elections Enforcement Comm'n) (prohibiting contracts that make payment contingent upon grant receipt).

<sup>2</sup> See, e.g., *In re* Audit Report of *People for Ortiz*, File No. 2015-141 (State Elections Enforcement Comm'n., June 21, 2017) (imposing \$200 civil penalty on treasurer for candidate committee that entered into contingent agreement).

- (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.

8. 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.
9. 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.
10. 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.
11. The Commission imposes a civil penalty on Respondent Zarbock for \$200 for allowing the candidate committee to enter into a contingent agreement, which made payment of obligations of the committee conditioned upon the committee receiving a grant from the Citizens' Election Fund.

JUN 27 2022

STATE ELECTIONS  
ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION

**ORDER**

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT the Respondent shall pay a civil penalty of \$200 and shall henceforth strictly comply with the requirements of Regulations of State Agencies § 9-706-2 (b) (16).

The Respondent:

BY:



Robert Zarbock  
59 Belmont Cir # 2  
Danbury, Connecticut

Dated: 6-23-22

For the State of Connecticut:

BY:



Michael J. Brandi, Esq.  
Executive Director and General Counsel  
And Authorized Representative of the  
State Elections Enforcement Commission  
55 Farmington Ave., 8<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Hartford, Connecticut

Dated: 6/23/22

Adopted this 6<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2022, at Hartford, Connecticut



Commissioner  
By Order of the Commission