

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION

In the Matter of a Complaint by Victoria Carey, Plymouth,
and Julie A.G. Flammia, Terryville

File No. 2021-182

FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS

Complainants Victoria Carey of Plymouth and Julia A.G. Flammia of Terryville filed this complaint alleging that Brianna Brumaghim, the then-treasurer of the Plymouth Democratic Town Committee, had failed properly to report and pay for a sign that promoted her candidacy in the 2021 municipal election. After investigating the allegations raised in the complaint the Commission makes the following findings and conclusions:

1. Complainants filed this complaint on October 26, 2021, alleging that the treasurer had failed properly to be reimbursed by the town committee for a sign the treasurer purchased that promoted the treasurer and two other Board of Finance candidates running in the 2021 election.
2. The treasurer, Brianna Brumaghim, was one of the candidates promoted by the sign. Brumaghim had paid for the sign with her personal funds but did not seek reimbursement for that expenditure in a timely manner, according to the complaint.
3. Respondent Brumaghim cooperated in the investigation of this matter.
4. On or about April 9, 2020, Brumaghim was appointed treasurer of the Plymouth Democratic Town Committee.
5. In the November 2, 2021 municipal election, Brumaghim ran for the Board of Finance. On August 4, 2021, Brumaghim filed a Form 1B indicating that she was exempt from forming a candidate committee because she was going to be part of a slate of candidates fully funded by the town committee. On August 9, 2021, Brumaghim amended her registration form to reflect that although she remained exempt from forming a candidate committee, she was now exempt because she was funding her candidacy entirely from her personal funds.
6. General Statutes § 9-606 (d) prevents a candidate from acting as her own treasurer. The Commission has advised treasurers of town committees to refrain from acting as treasurer when they themselves are candidates running as part of a slate fully funded by the town committee. When that occurs, the town committee treasurer must resign – either

temporarily or permanently – or the treasurer’s candidacy must be funded through another mechanism.

7. Brumaghim said during the course of the investigation, that she was aware of this restriction and although she had initially attempted, unsuccessfully, to find another person to serve as the party committee treasurer while she was running for the Board of Finance, ultimately she simply registered as a self-funded candidate to avoid the conflict.
8. Complainants alleged that although the Plymouth Democratic Town Committee voted to spend money as a committee on signs to promote Democratic candidates, Respondent Brumaghin purchased a sign promoting the Board of Finance candidates using her personal funds and did not report the purchase as an in-kind contribution to the party committee.
9. General Statutes § 9-608 requires a treasurer to report all expenditures that are made by a committee as well as all contributions received by the committee within the reporting period when the expenditure occurs or when the contribution is received.
10. Brumaghim stated that when she attempted to purchase the sign in question the vendor would not accept two forms of payment – one from the party committee and one from Brumaghin’s personal account – so she had to use just one form of payment to buy the sign, and she used her personal account.
11. Brumaghim did not reflect the purchase of the Board of Finance sign in the Plymouth Democratic Town Committee’s campaign finance statements in the relevant committee filings.
12. On February 19, 2022, in her role as treasurer, Brumaghim amended the Plymouth Democratic Town Committee’s October 10, 2021 campaign finance disclosure statement to reflect a \$15.56 in-kind contribution from Briana J. Brumaghim to the party committee that represented two-thirds of the \$23.35 cost of the campaign sign at issue in this complaint.
13. A week later, on February 26, 2022, Brumaghim formally notified the Commission that her term as treasurer and as a member of the Plymouth Democratic Town Committee had ended.
14. On April 8, 2022, Julie A.G. Flammia, a complainant in this matter, was named as the treasurer of the Plymouth Democratic Town Committee.
15. General Statutes § 9-602 (c) requires the chairman of a committee to name a replacement treasurer within 10 days of the resignation of an incumbent treasurer. The new treasurer, Flammia, was named in this instance 41 days after Respondent’s resignation.


16. Given the small dollar figures related to the violations alleged in this matter as well as Brumaghim's amendment of the relevant filings and subsequent resignation as treasurer of the Plymouth Democratic Town Committee, the Commission will take no further action related to this complaint.
17. In addition, the Commission notes that the chairman of the Plymouth Democratic Town Committee, Patrick Perugino, failed to name a successor treasurer to replace Respondent within 10 days of her resignation, as mandated by statute. As that violation was not a topic of the complaint at hand, the Commission will take no further action on that potential violation but simply admonish the parties to observe statutory deadlines, especially as they relate to the naming of treasurers.

ORDER

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

That the Commission will take no further action on this matter.

Adopted this 21st day of September, 2022 at Hartford, Connecticut.



Stephen Penny, Chairperson
By Order of the Commission