

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION

In the Matter of a Complaint by Daphne Slopak
Taftville

File No. 2021-204

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Complainant Daphne Slopak of Taftville filed this complaint pursuant to General Statutes § 9-7b, alleging that the Norwich registrars of voters had violated statutory provisions related to the operation of the 2021 election. After its investigation, the Commission makes the following findings and conclusions:

1. Complainant Slopak alleged that the registrars of voters in Norwich had failed to hire the minimum number of assistant registrars required for each polling place in the town; had employed an election official who was not a elector in Connecticut; had failed to ensure that all moderators in the town had the necessary training prior to the election; and had allowed a polling place at in town to remain closed for two hours on election day.
2. Complainant named Dianne M. Daniels, Democratic registrar, and Cheryl A. Stove, Republican registrar, as respondents in this matter.
3. Complainant stated in her complaint that Daniels had informed her that the registrars' office was unable to find enough individuals to serve as assistant registrars on election day in 2021 and that "several" polling places lacked assistant registrars on election day.
4. Daniels denied that she had told Complainant this and provided a list of individuals that served as assistant registrars on election day in 2021. The list included both Republicans and independent voters who were appointed to serve as assistant registrars. The list, however, did not included Stanton School, where complainant served as the moderator and which purportedly did not have an assistant Republican registrar.
5. Respondent Stover stated in her response to the complaint that the assistant registrar positions at two locations were not filled by Republicans. One was filled by an Independent and the second, at Stanton School, did not have a Republican assistant registrar, because Complainant was an experienced moderator and seemed "the logical choice to leave with the vacancy."
6. General Statutes § 9-258 (a) states:

For municipalities with more than one voting district, the election officials of each polling place shall be electors of the state and shall consist of (1) one moderator, (2)

at least one but not more than two official checkers, (3) two assistant registrars of voters of opposite political parties, each of whom shall be residents of the town, (4) not more than two challengers if the registrars of voters have appointed challengers pursuant to section 9-232, (5) at least one but not more than two ballot clerks, and (6) at least one but not more than two voting tabulator tenders for each voting tabulator in use at the polling place.

7. By not having two assistant registrars in each polling place in Norwich, respondents likely violated the requirements for minimum staffing for election workers in 2021.
8. In addition, one of the polling place officials who worked in the polls did not appear to be an elector in Connecticut as required by General Statutes § 9-258 (a).
9. Ariana Woody, who served as an election worker at AHEPA (Precinct 6) in Norwich, was removed at a Connecticut elector on March 5, 2021, because she moved out of state, according to the Connecticut Voter Registration System.
10. Respondent Daniels noted that Woody, who is her daughter, had moved to Maryland and was no longer an elector in Connecticut.
11. Finally, the Complainant Daphne Slopak acknowledged in her complaint that because of illness she did not complete the requisite training in order to be a moderator in the 2021 election. Her training had expired in July of that year.
12. General Statutes § 9-229 (c) requires moderators to complete a biennial training session in order to be qualified to serve in that position.
13. As to the final allegation, that the registrars had allowed a polling place to be closed for two hours because of a gas leak, the Commission's investigation did not find evidence to corroborate that allegation.
14. According to the moderator's diary, St. Mark's Luther Church, the polling place for precinct 5 in Norwich, was evacuated for a gas leak by the Norwich Fire Department at approximately 12:15 p.m. on Nov. 2, 2021. At approximately 12:28 p.m., the building was reopened, and voting resumed.
15. Because of time limits on resolving this matter, the Commission will take no further action here and will direct respondents to follow all statutory provisions regarding the proper administration of polling places that are laid out in in Chapter 146 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

ORDER

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

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

Adopted this 16th day of April, 2022, at Hartford, Connecticut.



Stephen Penny, Chairman
By Order of the Commission