



STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION

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**DRAFT MINUTES**  
**STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION**  
**REGULAR MEETING**  
**5<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room**  
**October 12, 2016**  
**9:30 A.M.**

**I. *Call to Order***

Commissioner Castagno was present and called the meeting to order at 9:33 A.M. Commissioners Ajello, Bramante and Penny were present. Commissioner Stankevicius was present via teleconference. Agency staff was also present.

Commissioner Castagno made the following changes to the agenda:

- Move #1 in Public Session, File No. 2014-170, to #21 in Executive Session
- Added to section VI #1 “Demicco 2016,” Michael V Demicco, #2 “Merritt for Senate,” Mark A Merritt, #3 “Linehan 2016,” Liz Linehan, #4 “Henowitz 2016,” Ryan Henowitz, #5 “Doyle for State Senate,” Paul R Doyle, #6 “Valentine for State Rep,” Nora Valentine, #7 “Lopes 2016”, Rick Lopes

**II. *Approval of the Minutes***

*Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of September 14, 2016*

It was moved by Commissioner Penny and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to approve the September 14, 2016 minutes by a 5-0-0 vote. So voted.

*Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of September 21, 2016*

It was moved by Commissioner Penny and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to approve the September 21, 2016 minutes by a 4-0-1 vote. So voted. Commissioner Stankevicius abstained.

*Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of September 28, 2016*

It was moved by Commissioner Penny and seconded by Commissioner Bramante to approve the September 28, 2016 minutes by a 5-0-0 vote. So voted.

*Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of August 31, 2016*

It was moved by Commissioner Penny and seconded by Commissioner Bramante to approve, with corrections, the August 31, 2016 minutes by a 5-0-0 vote. So voted.

*Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of October 5, 2016*

It was moved by Commissioner Stankevicius and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to approve the October 5, 2016 minutes by a 5-0-0 vote. So voted.

**III. *Administrative Reports***

Executive Director Michael Brandi notes how this is the last week of the grant cycle, which is the primary focus of the entire agency. The final deadline is this Friday, October 14, 2016.

So far for the 2016 election cycle, the SEEC has approved 227 grants, denied 2 application and there are 36 pending as of today's meeting. This has been a very successful year. 296 candidates are participating in the program (of the 379 total registered, which is 90% participation rate for candidates who have filed candidate committees.) Participation has increased from 2014, and beyond those who have declared that they are participating in the program, many of the others are still abiding by the rules of the program by raising low-dollar contributions from individuals (as opposed to businesses or other committees). So far this cycle 68,000 contribution cards have been reviewed by our audit unit.

Executive Director Brandi and staff have been out at public events spreading awareness of the State of Connecticut's election security and renewed efforts to protect itself against any election-day tampering. Brandi has been meeting with federal and state authorities to make sure the election process is protected. The SEEC will be hosting the Election Day hotline again and we will have staff manning the phone lines for every minute the polls are open.

As is typical for even year elections cycles, the number of complaints filed has increased and will continue at this higher rate through the Election Day.

The agency is still fighting to fill two open positions (Legal Investigator and the Clerk Typist). The 2018-19 budget has been submitted to OPM and staff is working to make sure that the Legislature receives the same version. SEEC has not asked for a major increase in funding, just enough to maintain our personnel/payroll obligations and maintain our software and licenses.

**IV. *Pending Complaints and Investigations***

**A. *Public Session***

1. In the Matter of a Complaint by John Mazurek, Wolcott  
File No. 2014-170  
Proposed Consent Order & Agreement  
Respondent: Scott Cleary, Treasurer  
Attorney: William B. Smith  
Legal Investigator: Scott Branfuhr

This matter was moved to #21 in Executive Session.

2. In re: Audit of Nicaastro for Senate 2012  
File No. 2014-012  
Proposed Consent Order & Agreement  
Respondent: Frank N. Nicaastro  
Attorney: James M. Talbert-Slagle  
Lead Legal Investigator: Charles Urso

Attorney James Talbert-Slagle summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2014-012. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement.

It was moved by Commissioner Penny and seconded by Commissioner Bramante to adopt the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2014-012. So voted by a vote 5-0-0. The Consent Order & Agreement will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

3. Request to refer matters to the Attorney General  
File Nos. 2014-198NF, 2015-018NF, 2015-079SF  
Attorney: Ryan M. Burns

Attorney Ryan Burns summarized the above referenced complaints and requested that they be referred to the Attorney General for collection.

It was moved by Commissioner Penny and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to refer File Nos. 2014-198NF, 2015-018NF, 2015-079SF to the Attorney General for collection. So voted by a vote 5-0-0. The Consent Order & Agreement will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

**V. *Executive Session per General Statutes §§ 1-200(6)(B) and (E), and 1-210(b)(1), (3),(4),(10) and General Statutes §9-7a, as amended by Public Act 11-48 §300***

*(Preliminary draft and agency consideration of enforcement action and exempt records relative thereto)*

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Ajello at 9:48 A.M. to proceed into Executive Session pursuant to General Statutes §§ 1-200(6)(B) and (E), and 1-210(b)(1),(3),(4),(10) to discuss strategy and negotiations with respect to pending claims and exempt records. So voted.

Commissioners Castagno, Ajello, Bramante and Penny were present. Commissioner Stankevicius was present via teleconference. Staff members present were Michael Brandi, Kevin Ahern, Scott Branfuhr, Ryan Burns, Sarah Clark, Joshua Foley, Douglas Frost, Shannon Kief, Sheri-Lyn Lagueux, Lindsey Leung, Gilberto Oyola, William Smith, James Talbert-Slagle and Linda Waterman.

The Commission returned to public session at 12:12 A.M.

The Commission took the following actions in public session:

4. In re: Audit of Berger 2012  
File No. 2014-050  
Recommendation of Counsel  
Attorney: James M. Talbert-Slagle  
Lead Legal Investigator: Charlie Urso

The matter is continued.

5. In re: Audit of Robbins for Representative  
File No. 2014-051  
Recommendation of Counsel  
Attorney: James M. Talbert-Slagle  
Lead Legal Investigator: Charlie Urso

The matter is continued.

6. In the Matter of a Complaint by Ethan Book, Bridgeport  
File No. 2014-018  
Recommendation of Counsel  
Attorney: Ryan M. Burns  
Legal Investigator: Scott Branfuhr

Attorney Ryan Burns summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Findings & Conclusions in File No. 2014-018. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions to dismiss the matter.

It was moved by Commissioner Penny and seconded by Commissioner Bramante to adopt the Proposed Findings & Conclusions in File No. 2014-018. So voted by a vote 5-0-0. The Findings & Conclusions will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

7. In the Matter of a Complaint by Jeffrey Hall, Somers  
File No. 2015-003  
Recommendation of Counsel  
Attorney: Ryan M. Burns  
Legal Investigator: Scott Branfuhr

Attorney Ryan Burns summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2015-003. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement.

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Penny to adopt the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2015-003. So voted by a vote 5-0-0. The Consent Order & Agreement will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

8. In the Matter of a Complaint by Ann Marie Logan, Somers  
File Nos. 2014-116 & 2015-023  
Recommendation of Counsel  
Attorney: Ryan M. Burns  
Legal Investigator: Scott Branfuhr

Attorney Ryan Burns summarized the above referenced complaints in File Nos. 2014-116 & 2015-023. He recommended that the Commission find that there is a reason to believe that Respondent McCaffrey violated General Statutes under the jurisdiction of the Commission and that the Chair of the Commission appoint a hearing officer for a hearing on the matter in File Nos. 2014-116 & 2015-023.

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to find that there is a reason to believe that Respondent McCaffrey violated General Statutes in File Nos. 2014-116 & 2015-023. Commissioner Penny has been appointed as hearing officer on the matter. So voted by a vote 4-0-1, with Commissioner Penny abstaining.

9. Recommendation of Counsel Concerning the Initiation of an Investigation  
Attorney: Ryan M. Burns

Attorney Ryan Burns summarized the Recommendation of Counsel and requested that one matter be moved to investigate.

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Bramante to make a determination that it is necessary to investigate violations relating to matter. So approved by the Commission, 5-0-0.

10. In the Matter of a Complaint of Beth Lazar, Bridgeport  
File No. 2013-120  
Recommendation of Counsel  
Attorney: Kevin M. Ahern  
Legal Investigator: Scott Branfuhr

The matter is continued.

11. In re: Referral by Lori Tollmann, Coventry Town Clerk  
File No. 2014-127  
Recommendation of Counsel  
Attorney: Kevin M. Ahern  
Lead Legal Investigator: Gilberto Oyola

Attorney Kevin Ahern summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2014-127. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement.

It was moved by Commissioner Penny and seconded by Commissioner Bramante to adopt the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2014-127. So voted by a vote 5-0-0. The Consent Order & Agreement will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

12. In re: Referral of Middletown Registrar of Voters Janice Gionfriddo  
File No. 2014-160  
Recommendation of Counsel  
Attorney: Kevin M. Ahern  
Legal Investigator: Scott Branfuhr

Attorney Kevin Ahern summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2014-160. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement.

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Bramante to adopt the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2014-160. So voted by a vote 5-0-0. The Consent Order & Agreement will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

13. In the Matter of a Complaint of Andre Grandbois, Plainville  
File No. 2015-156  
Recommendation of Counsel  
Attorney: Kevin M. Ahern  
Lead Legal Investigator: Gilberto Oyola

Attorney Kevin Ahern summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Findings & Conclusions in File No. 2015-156. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to adopt the Proposed Findings & Conclusions in File No. 2015-156. So voted by a vote 5-0-0. The Findings & Conclusions will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

14. In the Matter of a Complaint of Matthew Feshler, New Haven  
File No. 2016-025  
Recommendation of Counsel  
Attorney: Kevin M. Ahern  
Legal Investigator: Scott Branfuhr

Attorney Kevin Ahern summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Findings & Conclusions in File No. 2016-025. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions to dismiss the matter.

It was moved by Commissioner Penny and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to adopt the Proposed Findings & Conclusions in File No. 2016-025. So voted by a vote 5-0-0. The Findings & Conclusions will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

15. In the Matter of a Complaint by Danielle L. Palladino, Torrington  
File No. 2014-141  
Proposed Recommendation of Counsel  
Attorney: William B. Smith  
Legal Investigator: Scott Branfuhr

Attorney William Smith summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2014-141. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement.

It was moved by Commissioner Penny and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to adopt the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2014-141. So voted by a vote 5-0-0. The Consent Order & Agreement will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

16. In the Matter of a Complaint by Michael Bland  
File No. 2015-119  
Proposed Recommendation of Counsel  
Attorney: William B. Smith

Attorney William Smith summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2015-119. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement.

It was moved by Commissioner Penny and seconded by Commissioner Bramante to adopt the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2015-119. So voted by a vote 5-0-0. The Consent Order & Agreement will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

17. In the Matter of a Complaint by Carlos Mathew Soto, et al  
File No. 2015-098

Proposed Recommendation of Counsel

Attorney: William B. Smith

Legal Investigator: Scott Branfuhr

Attorney William Smith summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Findings & Conclusions in File No. 2015-098. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions to dismiss the matter.

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Penny to adopt the Proposed Findings & Conclusions in File No. 2015-098. So voted by a vote 5-0-0. The Findings & Conclusions will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

18. In the Matter of a Complaint by Timothy E. O'Brien, Jr., New Britain  
File No. 2015-120

Proposed Recommendation of Counsel

Attorney: William B. Smith

Lead Legal Investigator: Gilberto Oyola

The matter is continued.

19. In the Matter of a Complaint by Edward Schwing, Haddam  
File No. 2015-177

Proposed Recommendation of Counsel

Attorney: William B. Smith

Lead Legal Investigator: Gilberto Oyola

The matter is continued.

20. Recommendation of Counsel: Necessary to Investigate Determination pursuant to General Statutes §9-7a, as amended by Public Act 11-48 §300

Attorney Smith summarized the Recommendation of Counsel dated September 30, 2016 and requested that four (4) matters be moved to investigate.

It was moved by Commissioner Penny and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to make a determination that it is necessary to investigate violations relating to

four (4) complaints File No.: 2016-073, 2016-074, 2016-076, and 2016-077. .  
So approved by the Commission, 5-0-0.

Attorney Smith summarized the Recommendation of Counsel dated October 6, 2016 and requested that an additional three (3) matters be moved to investigate.

It was moved by Commissioner Penny and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to make a determination that it is necessary to investigate violations relating to three (3) complaints File No.: 2016-079, 2016-080, and 2016-081. So approved by the Commission, 5-0-0.

21. Matter of a Complaint by John Mazurek, Wolcott

File No. 2014-170

Proposed Consent Order & Agreement

Respondent: Scott Cleary, Treasurer

Attorney: William B. Smith

Legal Investigator: Scott Branfuhr

Attorney William Smith summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2014-170. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement.

It was moved by Commissioner Penny and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to adopt the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2014-170. So voted by a vote 5-0-0. The Consent Order & Agreement will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

**VI. *Consideration of Application for Public Grants from the Citizens' Election Fund***

1. "Albis 2016," James Albis

It was moved by Commissioner Stankevicius and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to approve the grant application for "Albis 2016," James Albis. So voted by a vote of 5-0-0.

2. "Fleischmann for State Representative," Andrew Fleischmann

It was moved by Commissioner Stankevicius and seconded by Commissioner Bramante to approve the grant application for "Fleischmann for State Representative," Andrew Fleischmann. So voted by a vote of 5-0-0.

3. "Topping for the 12<sup>th</sup>," John Topping

It was moved by Commissioner Stankevicius and seconded by Commissioner Bramante to approve the grant application for “Topping for the 12<sup>th</sup>,” John Topping. So voted by a vote of 5-0-0.

4. “Vote Mike Malloy,” Michael Malloy

It was moved by Commissioner Stankevicius and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to approve the grant application for “Vote Mike Malloy,” Michael Malloy. So voted by a vote of 5-0-0.

5. “Mitch for Newtown 2016,” Mitch Bolinsky

It was moved by Commissioner Stankevicius and seconded by Commissioner Bramante to approve the grant application for “Mitch for Newtown 2016,” Mitch Bolinsky. So voted by a vote of 5-0-0.

6. “Heller for State Rep.,” Adam Heller

It was moved by Commissioner Stankevicius and seconded by Commissioner Bramante to approve the grant application for “Heller for State Rep.,” Adam Heller. So voted by a vote of 5-0-0.

7. “Tercyak 2016,” Peter Tercyak

It was moved by Commissioner Stankevicius and seconded by Commissioner Bramante to approve the grant application for “Tercyak 2016,” Peter Tercyak. So voted by a vote of 5-0-0.

**VII. *Continuation of all prior applications awaiting additional information to qualify for a grant***

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Bramante to continue without prejudice all prior applications awaiting additional information to qualify for a grant. So voted by a vote of 5-0-0.

**VIII. *Consideration of Matters Discussed in Executive Session***

All action as noted in Section V. above.

**IX. *Adjournment***

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Penny at 12:46 P.M. to adjourn the meeting. So voted. Unless otherwise indicated, all votes of the Commission were unanimous.

*The next scheduled meeting is a special meeting on October 13, 2016 at 1:00 P.M. in the 5th Floor Conference room.*