



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION

MINUTES
STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
5th Floor Conference Room
July 18, 2018
9:30 A.M.

I. Call to Order

Commissioner Castagno was present and called the meeting to order at 9:30 A.M. Commissioners Bramante, Cascudo and Penny were present. Commissioner Ajello was also present via teleconference. Agency staff was also present.

Commissioner Castagno moved Section IV. Consideration of Application for Public Grants from the Citizens' Election Fund to the end of the agenda.

II. Approval of the Minutes

Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of June 20, 2018

The matter has been tabled.

Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of June 27, 2018

It was moved by Commissioner Penny and seconded by Commissioner Bramante to approve the June 27, 2018 minutes by a 4-0-1-vote. Commissioner Cascudo abstained. So voted.

Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of July 5, 2018

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Penny to approve the July 5, 2018 minutes by a 5-0-0-vote. So voted.

Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of July 12, 2018

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Penny to approve the July 12, 2018 minutes by a 4-0-1-vote. Commissioner Cascudo abstained. So voted.

III. Administrative Reports

SEEC has been working with its' IT unit on purchases for cybersecurity and beefing up hardware in order to keep our systems running.

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SEEC will have a small surplus by the end of the year and will have final numbers for you in the next couple of weeks. The fiscal staff has been busy with the grant process and doing double duty with those requirements. We will have further figures in August. So far successfully we have completed fiscal year 2018 without running into a deficit

Director Brandi advised that personnel wise there are still 2 vacancies that we have to maintain in order to continue to have any operating money for this year. Of course we added a new legal investigator a few months ago. Our staff is doing a great job in training Al and getting him up to speed on election processes.

The Commission has been very pleased and happy with the cooperation of all of the staff in terms of this intense grant season. We have been giving out overtime and comp time where necessary in order to get the work done. Staff has definitely been taxed and has been doing very well with our requests for them to stay for overtime and for comp time purposes. Recognition and kudos to all SEEC staff. Everybody has pulled together as a team to make sure that the work is getting done during grant season. Much of the criticism from the outside is the slow nature of our getting grants out. At this point 120 grants have been approved and approximately 67 are in process.

Director Brandi advised that the SEEC is heading into our primary blackout weeks so the total focus will be on the primaries for the next two weeks. The final date by which the commission can give out grant money for primary campaigns is the 27th of July, so that's why our focus is on the primary candidate. Staff is all on board and again very cooperative with management and working hard to get the work done.

SEEC is going to be looking at where the work flow is over the next two months with regard to the grant cycle as well as the complexity of some of our investigations and enforcement matters.

Commissioner Castagno, on behalf of the Commissioners, acknowledged the hard work of the staff and echoes the kudos of their efforts.

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

A. New Applications

1. "Cassano 4 Senate," Stephen Cassano

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Cascudo to continue without prejudice the grant application for "Cassano 4 Senate," Stephen Cassano. So voted by a vote of 5-0-0.

2. "Ferguson 138," Michael Ferguson

It was moved by Commissioner Penny and seconded by Commissioner Cascudo to continue without prejudice the grant application for "Ferguson 138," Michael Ferguson. So voted by a vote of 5-0-0.

3. "D'Amelio for Senate," Marc D'Amelio

It was moved by Commissioner Cascudo and seconded by Commissioner Bramante to continue without prejudice the grant application for "D'Amelio for Senate," Marc D'Amelio. So voted by a vote of 5-0-0.

4. "Orange 2018," Linda Orange

It was moved by Commissioner Penny and seconded by Commissioner Bramante to continue without prejudice the grant application for "Orange 2018," Linda Orange. So voted by a vote of 5-0-0.

5. "Beth Bye 2018," Beth Bye

It was moved by Commissioner Cascudo and seconded by Commissioner Bramante to continue without prejudice the grant application for "Beth Bye 2018," Beth Bye. So voted by a vote of 5-0-0.

6. "Sean Grace for Senate," Sean Grace

It was moved by Commissioner Penny and seconded by Commissioner Cascudo to continue without prejudice the grant application for "Sean Grace for Senate," Sean Grace. So voted by a vote of 5-0-0.

7. "Merrill 2018," Denise Merrill

It was moved by Commissioner Penny and seconded by Commissioner Bramante to continue without prejudice the grant application for "Merrill 2018," Denise Merrill. So voted by a vote of 5-0-0.

8. "Lembo for CT," Kevin Lembo

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Penny to continue without prejudice the grant application for "Lembo for CT," Kevin Lembo. So voted by a vote of 4-0-1. Commissioner Cascudo abstained.

9. "Linares for Treasurer," Art Linares

It was moved by Commissioner Cascudo and seconded by Commissioner Penny to continue without prejudice the grant application for “Linares for Treasurer,” Art Linares. So voted by a vote of 5-0-0.

10. “Alex for CT,” Jon Tiktinsky

It was moved by Commissioner Penny and seconded by Commissioner Cascudo to continue without prejudice the grant application for “Alex for CT,” Jon Tiktinsky. So voted by a vote of 5-0-0.

11. “Marx for CT,” Martha Marx

It was moved by Commissioner Cascudo and seconded by Commissioner Penny to continue without prejudice the grant application for “Marx for CT,” Martha Marx. So voted by a vote of 5-0-0.

12. “Petit 4 CT,” William Petit

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Cascudo to continue without prejudice the grant application for “Petit 4 CT,” William Petit. So voted by a vote of 5-0-0.

13. “Bosak for Senate,” Gerald Bosak

It was moved by Commissioner Penny and seconded by Commissioner Cascudo to continue without prejudice the grant application for “Bosak for Senate,” Gerald Bosak. So voted by a vote of 5-0-0.

B. Continuation of prior applications awaiting additional information to qualify for a grant

1. “Kate Rotella 2018,” Kate Rotella

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Cascudo to approve the grant application for “Kate Rotella 2018,” Kate Rotella. So voted by a vote of 5-0-0.

2. “Rojas 2018,” Jason Rojas

No action taken.

3. “Slap for State Rep.,” Derek Slap

No action taken.

4. “Steve Obsitnik for Governor,” Steve Obsitnik

It was moved by Commissioner Penny and seconded by Commissioner Bramante to approve the grant application for “Steve Obsitnik for Governor,” Steve Obsitnik. So voted by a vote of 5-0-0.

5. “Lopes for 24th,” Rick Lopes

No action taken.

6. “Welander for CT,” Mary Welander

It was moved by Commissioner Cascudo and seconded by Commissioner Penny to approve the grant application for “Welander for CT,” Mary Welander. So voted by a vote of 5-0-0.

7. “NKD18,” Nicole Klarides Ditria

No action taken.

8. “Amanda Webster New for 62,” Amanda Webster

No action taken.

9. “Re-Elect B. McGee,” Brandon McGee

No action taken.

10. “Larry Groh Jr. for 51st District,” Larry Groh

No action taken.

11. “Team Eleni for CT,” Eleni Kavros DeGraw

No action taken.

12. “Belsito for State Rep.,” Samuel Belsito

No action taken.

13. “Elect Dauphinais,” Anne Dauphinais

No action taken.

14. “Wooden for Treasurer,” Shawn Wooden

No action taken.

15. “Dita for CT Treasurer,” Dita Bhargava

No action taken.

16. "Statchen 2018," Robert Statchen

No action taken.

17. "Barry 4 CT," Jill Barry

It was moved by Commissioner Penny and seconded by Commissioner Cascudo to approve the grant application for "Barry 4 CT," Jill Barry. So voted by a vote of 5-0-0.

18. "Reyes 75 for Re-election," Geraldo Reyes

It was moved by Commissioner Cascudo and seconded by Commissioner Bramante to approve the grant application for "Reyes 75 for Re-election," Geraldo Reyes. So voted by a vote of 5-0-0.

19. "STEVE MESKERS 4 GREENWICH," Stephen Meskers

No action taken.

20. "Will Haskell for CT," William Haskell

No action taken.

21. "Hampton 2018," John Hampton

It was moved by Commissioner Penny and seconded by Commissioner Bramante to approve the grant application for "Hampton 2018," John Hampton. So voted by a vote of 5-0-0.

22. "People for Mikutel 2018," Steven Mikutel

No action taken.

23. "Szynkowicz 2018," Linda Szynkowicz

It was moved by Commissioner Cascudo and seconded by Commissioner Bramante to approve the grant application for "Szynkowicz 2018," Linda Szynkowicz. So voted by a vote of 5-0-0.

24. "Hall 2018," Joshua Hall

No action taken.

25. "McLachlan 2018," Michael McLachlan
No action taken.
26. "Lucy2018," Lucia "Lucy" Dathan
No action taken.
27. "Simanski 2018," William Simanski
No action taken.
28. "Aaron for Senate," Aaron R. Turner

It was moved by Commissioner Penny and seconded by Commissioner Cascudo to approve the grant application for "Aaron for Senate," Aaron R. Turner. So voted by a vote of 5-0-0.
29. "Caroline Simmons for State Representative," Caroline B. Simmons
No action taken.
30. "Colin Hosten Election Committee," Colin Hosten

It was moved by Commissioner Cascudo and seconded by Commissioner Penny to approve the grant application for "Colin Hosten Election Committee," Colin Hosten. So voted by a vote of 5-0-0.
31. "Nick Gauthier for Connecticut," Nicholas Gauthier
No action taken.
32. "Cabrera for State Senate," Jorge Cabrera
No action taken.
33. "Imperato for Branford," Robert Imperato
No action taken.
34. "Friends of CAZ," Cazmir Mizera

It was moved by Commissioner Penny and seconded by Commissioner Cascudo to approve the grant application for "Friends of CAZ," Cazmir Mizera. So voted by a vote of 5-0-0.
35. "Kim Rose 2018," Kim Rose

No action taken.

36. “Re-Elect Stallworth 2018, Charlie Stallworth

It was moved by Commissioner Cascudo and seconded by Commissioner Penny to approve the grant application for “Re-Elect Stallworth 2018, Charlie Stallworth. So voted by a vote of 5-0-0.

37. “Aimee4Ridgefield,” Aimee Berger-Girvalo

No action taken.

38. “Matt for State Senate,” Matt Lesser

No action taken.

39. “Turco for Newington” Gary Turco

It was moved by Commissioner Penny and seconded by Commissioner Cascudo to approve the grant application for “Turco for Newington” Gary Turco. So voted by a vote of 5-0-0.

V. Pending Complaints and Investigations

A. Public Session

1. In the Matter of a Complaint by Shirley Mosby, Norwalk
File No. 2017-046
Proposed Consent Order & Agreement
Attorney: Ryan M. Burns
Legal Investigator: Scott Branfuhr

Attorney Ryan M. Burns summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2017-046. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement.

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Cascudo to adopt the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2017-046 upon receipt in ten days. So voted by a vote 5-0-0. The Consent Order & Agreement will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

2. In the Matter of a Complaint by Pattie C. DeHuff, Terryville
File No. 2017-078
Proposed Consent Order & Agreement

Attorney: Ryan M. Burns
Legal Investigator: Scott Branfuhr

Attorney Ryan M. Burns summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2017-078. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement.

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Cascudo to adopt the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2017-078. So voted by a vote 5-0-0. The Consent Order & Agreement will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

3. In the Matter of a Complaint of Michael A. Neal, Self Report
File No. 2018-028
Proposed Consent Order & Agreement

Attorney: Ryan M. Burns
Legal Investigator: Scott Branfuhr

Attorney Ryan M. Burns summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2017-028. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement.

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Penny to adopt the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2017-028. So voted by a vote 5-0-0. The Consent Order & Agreement will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

4. In the Matter of a Complaint by Shawn P. Murphy, N. Stonington
File No. 2017-088
Proposed Consent Order & Agreement

Attorney: William B. Smith
Lead Legal Investigator: Gilberto Oyola

Attorney William B. Smith summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2017-088. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement.

It was moved by Commissioner Penny and seconded by Commissioner Cascudo to adopt the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2017-088. So voted by a vote 4-0-1. Commissioner Castagno abstained. The Consent Order & Agreement will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

5. In the Matter of a Complaint by Ethan Book, Bridgeport
File No. 2018-007
Proposed Findings & Conclusions

Attorney:
Lead Legal Investigator:

William B. Smith
Gilberto Oyola

Attorney William B. Smith summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Findings & Conclusions in File No. 2018-007. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Cascudo and seconded by Commissioner Bramante to adopt the Proposed Findings & Conclusions in File No. 2018-007. So voted by a vote 5-0-0. The Findings & Conclusions will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

VI. *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 Penny and seconded by Commissioner Cascudo at 9:55 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, Bramante, Cascudo and Penny were present. Commissioner Ajello was present via teleconference. Staff members present were Evelyn Gratacos, Gilberto Oyola, Alfonso Vazquez, Scott Branfuhr, Lindsey Leung, Kevin Ahern, Joshua Foley, Ryan Burns, William Smith, James Talbert Slagle, Douglas Frost, Linda Waterman, Shannon Kief, Michael J. Brandi and Sheri-Lyn Lagueux.

The Commission returned to public session at 11:11 A.M.

The Commission took the following actions in public session:

1. Recommendation of Counsel Regarding Petition for Declaratory Ruling on the Political Activity of Organized Groups as requested by Arnold F. Skretta (on behalf of Connecticut Compliance and Law Services LLC)

Attorney Shannon Kief summarized the recommendation of counsel regarding the petition for declaratory ruling.

Attorney Kief read the following order into the record: the Commission resolves to call a Special Meeting on Tuesday, July 31, 2018 at 1:00 P.M. at 20 Trinity Street in the fifth floor hearing room in Hartford, CT to hear public comment regarding proposed Declaratory Ruling on the political activity of

groups other than committees entitled SEEC Proposed Declaratory Ruling 2018-01 Political Activity of Organized Groups and available on our website.

The Commission will also hear testimony on additional issues raised through submitted comments. The Commission further orders that notice of the special meeting be posted on the SEEC website and notice be sent to all persons who were sent notice of the receipt of the petition and that notice be sent to persons who submitted comments.

It was moved by Commissioner Penny and seconded by Commissioner Bramante to approve the recommendation of counsel. So approved by the Commission, 5-0-0. So voted.

2. 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 July 12, 2018 and requested that five (5) matters be moved to investigate.

It was moved by Commissioner Cascudo and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to make a determination that it is necessary to investigate violations relating to five (5) complaints File Nos.: 2018-047, 2018-048, 2018-049, 2018-052 and 2018-053. So approved by the Commission, 4-0-0. So voted.

3. In the Matter of a Complaint by Thomas J. Daly, Jr., North Haven
File No. 2017-040
Proposed Reason to Believe Finding
Attorney: William B. Smith
Legal Investigator: Scott Branfuhr

Attorney William B. Smith summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Findings & Conclusions in File No. 2017-040. He recommended the Commission find a Reason to Believe.

It was moved by Commissioner Cascudo and seconded by Commissioner Bramante to adopt the Reason to Believe in File No. 2017-040. So voted by a vote 5-0-0. Commissioner Penny is appointed hearing officer.

4. In the Matter of a Complaint of Shawn Wooden Self-Report
File No. 2018-024
Proposed Recommendation of Counsel
Attorney: William B. Smith
Lead Legal Investigator: Gilberto Oyola

The matter is continued.

5. In the Matter of a Complaint by Benjamin A. Wiles, Storrs Mansfield
File No. 2016-092
Proposed Recommendation of Counsel
Attorney: James Talbert-Slagle
Lead Legal Investigator: Gilberto Oyola

The matter is continued.

6. In re: SEEC Initiated: Cassano for Senate
File No. 2018-035
Proposed Recommendation of Counsel
Attorney: James Talbert-Slagle
Legal Investigator: Scott Branfuhr

The matter is continued.

7. In re: SEEC Initiated: Mihaly for State Rep
File No. 2018-037
Proposed Recommendation of Counsel
Attorney: James Talbert-Slagle
Legal Investigator: Scott Branfuhr


The matter is continued.

VII. Consideration of Matters Discussed in Executive Session


VIII. Adjournment

It was moved by Commissioner Penny and seconded by Commissioner Cascudo at 11:36 A.M. to adjourn the meeting. So voted. Unless otherwise indicated, all votes of the Commission were unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,


Sheri-Lyn Lagueux
Clerk of the Commission

Adopted this 15th day of August, 2018 at Hartford, Connecticut.


Anthony Castagno
By Order of the Commission

The next regular scheduled meeting is July 19, 2018 at 3:30 P.M. in the 5th Floor Conference room.