



STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION

---

MINUTES  
STATE ELECTIONS ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING  
5<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room  
January 13, 2016  
9:30 A.M.

**I. Call to Order**

Commissioner Castagno was present and called the meeting to order at 9:32 A.M. Commissioners Salvatore Bramante, Stephen Penny and Michael Ajello were present. Commissioner Patricia Stankevicius was present via teleconference. Agency staff was also present.

Commissioner Castagno added the Citizens' Election Program approvals to the Public Session and two audit reports to Executive Session.

**II. Approval of the Minutes**

*Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of December 15, 2015*

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Stankevicius to approve the Minutes of the December 15, 2015 regular meeting, as amended by a 5-0-0 vote.

**III. Administrative Reports**

Executive Director Brandi informed the commission that following the latest special session the agency budget for the current fiscal year has been reduced by a total of \$181,000. Because the majority of our annual budget covers personnel costs, this amounts to a 40% cut to our operating budget.

For a personnel update, Executive Director Brandi highlighted the recent retirement of a Lead Legal Investigator and the departure of the Clerk Typist. The agency now waits for action from the Department of Administrative Services to fill these open positions.

Today the commission will be looking at two grant applications for the February 2, 2016 special election in the 121<sup>st</sup> House district. There is \$14 million currently in the Citizen's Election Fund which will allow the agency to fully fund the grant program for the 2016 election cycle. 50 candidate committees have already filed their paperwork with the staff for the 2016 General Election.

Mr. Brandi provided the Commission with a general operations update. The agency is focused on training for newer staff and building backups within the agency staff

structure. Also, staff has prepared a legislative agenda for the Commissioners to review before we present it during the 2016 Legislative Session.

**IV. Pending Complaints and Investigations**

**A. Public Session**

1. In the Matter of a Complaint by John Mazurek, Wolcott  
File No. 2014-099  
Proposed Findings & Conclusions

Respondent:

Attorney:

James M. Talbert-Slagle

Lead Legal Investigator:

Charlie Urso

Attorney Talbert-Slagle summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Findings & Conclusions in File No. 2014-099. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Penny and seconded by Commissioner Bramante to adopt the Proposed Findings & Conclusions in File No. 2014-099 and dismiss the matter. So voted by a vote 5-0-0. The Findings & Conclusions will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

2. In the Matter of a Complaint by Craig M. Minor, Bristol  
File No. 2015-114  
Proposed Findings & Conclusions

Respondent:

Kenneth Cockayne

Attorney:

James M. Talbert-Slagle

Legal Investigator:

Scott Branfuhr

Attorney Talbert-Slagle summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Findings & Conclusions in File No. 2015-114. 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. 2015-114 and dismiss the matter. So voted by a vote 5-0-0. The Findings & Conclusions will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

3. In the Matter of a Complaint by Laura Bernaschina, Fairfield  
File No. 2015-126  
Proposed Findings & Conclusions

Respondents:

Mike Tetreau, and Stanton Lesser

Attorney:

James M. Talbert-Slagle

Legal Investigator:

Scott Branfuhr

Attorney Talbert-Slagle summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Findings & Conclusions in File No. 2015-126. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Findings & Conclusions.

It was moved by Commissioner Penny and seconded by Commissioner Bramante to adopt the Proposed Findings & Conclusions in File No. 2015-126 and dismiss the matter. So voted by a vote 5-0-0. The Findings & Conclusions will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

4. In the Matter of a Complaint by Charles Coviello, Bridgeport  
File No. 2014-073  
Proposed Consent Order & Agreement

Respondents: Andre Baker and Robyn Melvin-Walker  
Attorney: William B. Smith  
Lead Legal Investigator: Charlie Urso

Attorney Smith summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2014-073. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement.

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to adopt the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2014-073. So voted by a vote 5-0-0. The Consent Order & Agreement will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

5. In the Matter of a Complaint by Ryan A. Mulcahy and Frank A. Burgio, Sr.,  
Waterbury  
File No. 2015-093  
Proposed Consent Order & Agreement

Respondents: Francis Vitarelli and Christopher Ursini  
Attorney: William B. Smith  
Lead Legal Investigator: Gilberto Oyola

Attorney Smith summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2015-093. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement.

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to adopt the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2015-093. So voted by a vote 5-0-0. The Consent Order & Agreement will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

6. In re: Referral of the Secretary of the State, Hartford  
File No. 2013-152  
Proposed Consent Order & Agreement

Respondents: Dr. W. Derek Buckley, Town Clerk; Joan Kirk, Assistant Town Clerk; Deborah Szegedi, Assistant Town Clerk  
Attorney: Kevin M. Ahern  
Lead Legal Investigator: Gilberto Oyola

Attorney Ahern summarized the above referenced complaint and Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2013-152. He recommended adoption of the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement.

It was moved by Commissioner Bramante and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to adopt the Proposed Consent Order & Agreement in File No. 2013-152 with revisions. So voted by a vote 5-0-0. The Consent Order & Agreement will be available on our website under Commission Decisions.

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

7. "Gresko 2016," Joseph Gresko

It was moved by Commissioner Penny and seconded by Commissioner Bramante to approve the grant application for "Gresko 2016," Joseph Gresko. So voted by a vote of 5-0-0.

8. "Barksdale for State Representative," Susan Barksdale.

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

***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 Penny and seconded by Commissioner Ajello at 10:35 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, Ajello 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, Evelyn Gratacos, Shannon Kief, Sheri-Lyn Lagueur, Gilberto Oyola, James Talbert-Slagle, William Smith and Linda Waterman.

The Commission returned to public session at 12:06 P.M.

Following a short recess the Commission took the following actions in public session:

1. In the Matter of a Complaint by Jerry Labriola, Wallingford  
File No. 2014-126  
Recommendation of Counsel  
Attorney: Kevin M. Ahern  
Lead Legal Investigator: Charlie Urso

Commissioner Penny recused himself for the discussion of this matter. The matter is continued.

2. In the Matter of a Complaint by Kathleen Schurman, et al, Bethany  
File No. 2015-027  
Recommendation of Counsel  
Attorney: Kevin M. Ahern  
Lead Legal Investigator: Gilberto Oyola

The matter is continued.

3. In the Matter of a Complaint by Harry Lew, Southington  
File No. 2015-155  
Recommendation of Counsel  
Attorney: Kevin M. Ahern  
Legal Investigator: Scott Branfuhr

The matter is continued.

4. In the Matter of a Complaint by Edward Rosenblatt, Southington  
File No. 2015-178  
Recommendation of Counsel  
Attorney: Kevin M. Ahern  
Legal Investigator: Scott Branfuhr

The matter is continued.

5. In the Matter of a Complaint by Gilberto Hernandez, Bridgeport  
File No. 2015-105  
Recommendation of Counsel  
Attorney: Kevin M. Ahern  
Legal Investigator: Scott Branfuhr

Attorney Ahern informed the commission that the complainant has asked to withdraw this complaint.

It was moved by Commissioner Penny and seconded by Commissioner Ajello to accept the request to withdraw of File No. 2015-105 with revisions. So voted by a vote 5-0-0.

6. In the Matter of a Complaint by Attorney Brendan M. Fox on behalf of Joseph DaSilva, Jr., (Dasilva Realty) Danbury  
File No. 2015-179  
Recommendation of Counsel  
Attorney: William B. Smith

The matter is continued due to mitigating circumstances.

7. In the Matter of a Complaint by Lisa M. Labella, Trumbull  
File No. 2014-046  
Recommendation of Counsel  
Attorney: William B. Smith  
Legal Investigator: Scott Branfuhr

The matter is continued.

8. In re: SEEC Initiated: Investigation Regarding Possible Straw Contributions to “Thompson-Daniel 2014”  
File No. 2014-166  
Recommendation of Counsel  
Attorney: William B. Smith  
Legal Investigator: Scott Branfuhr

The matter is continued.

9. 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 December 4, 2015 and requested that 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 Nos.: 2015-191, 2015-192, 2015-193. So approved by the Commission, 5-0-0.

10. Consideration of Draft Audit Reports

1. “Keith Rodgerson,” Keith Rodgerson - Exploratory  
Examiner: Ergys Guni
2. “Keith 2014,” Keith Rodgerson  
Examiner: Ergys Guni

3. "Merrill 2014," Denise Merrill  
Examiner: Krysta Holmes
4. "Morris is for Us," Bruce Morris  
Examiner: Amit Shah
5. "Pena 2014," Warren Pena  
Examiner: Dinorah Collado
6. "Brandi Briggs for Westport," Brandi Briggs  
Examiner: Krysta Holmes
7. "Betsy Ritter for Senate," Elizabeth Ritter  
Examiner: Krysta Holmes
8. "Friends of Altobello," Emil Altobello  
Examiner: Amit Shah
9. "Eva 2014," Eva Maldonado  
Examiner: Dinorah Collado
10. "Caroline Simmons for State Representative," Caroline Simmons  
Examiner: Matt Lombardi
11. "Re-Elect Art Linares," Art Linares  
Examiner: Dinorah Collado
12. "Joe Markley for State Senate 2014," Joe Markley  
Examiner: Dinorah Collado
13. "Sampson for CT," Robert Sampson  
Examiner: Matt Lombardi

Linda Waterman provided an overview of the audits and recommended that the Commission make audits numbered 1-13 final, so moved by Commissioner Penny and seconded by Commissioner Stankevicius. So approved by the Commission, 5-0-0.

11. Recommendation of Counsel Regarding petition for Declaratory Ruling as Requested by David Godbout.

Shannon Kief provided an overview of the Recommendation of Counsel and requested that the Commission adopt the recommendation and deny the request, so moved by Commissioner Penny and seconded by Commissioner Ajello. So approved by the Commission, 5-0-0.


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

All action as noted in Section V. above.


**VII. Adjournment**

It was moved by Commissioner Ajello and seconded by Commissioner Stankevicius at 12:15 P.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 10<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2016 at Hartford, Connecticut.

  
Anthony J. Castagno  
By Order of the Commission