

Seattle Ethics and Elections Commission Regular Meeting

September 2, 2015

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Seattle Ethics and Elections Commission convened on September 2, 2015 in Room 4080 of the Seattle Municipal Tower, 700 Fifth Avenue. Commission Vice-Chair Brad Axel called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

Commissioners Brendan Donckers, Eileen Norton and Bill Sherman were in attendance, as was Commissioner-elect Charlene Angeles. Commission Chair Bruce Carter and Commissioner Rich Cohan were not present. Executive Director Wayne Barnett and staff members Anthony Adams, Kate Flack and Steve Townsend were present.

1) **Public Comment**

Alex Tsimerman told the Commission that his complaint to staff regarding City decisions to trespass him from City property had not been investigated. The Chair encouraged Mr. Tsimerman to file an appeal.

Queen Pearl spoke to the Commission about the plight of African American citizens in the City of Seattle, the Black Lives Matter movement and how African-Americans aren't having their rights protected. She wanted to make sure these issues are heard.

The Honorable Michael Fuller spoke about organized corruption within City government, and Federal immigration laws that are being broken.

Action Item

2) **Meeting minutes for June 3, 2015**

Commissioner Sherman moved to adopt the minutes from the June 3, 2015 regular meeting. Commissioner Norton seconded. The minutes from the June 3, 2015 regular meeting were unanimously approved.

3) Meeting minutes for July 1, 2015

Commissioner Norton moved to adopt the minutes from the July 1, 2015 regular meeting. Commissioner Sherman seconded. The minutes from the July 1, 2015 regular meeting were unanimously approved.

4) Settlement with Friends of Bruce Harrell committee for failing to timely refund over-the-limit cash contributions (\$150)

The Executive Director explained that this was a case in which Councilmember Harrell's campaign accepted four cash contributions in excess of the \$60 cash contribution limit during their campaign kickoff. Under the Elections Code Rules, cash contributions in excess of the limit have to be returned, and that did not take place. The Director said that the law and rules on this provision are not as clear as they should be, which he said justified the low penalty.

Commissioner Sherman moved to approve the recommendation. Commissioner Donckers seconded. The settlement agreement with Friends of Bruce Harrell committee for failing to timely refund over-the-limit cash contributions was unanimously approved.

5) Authorization for staff to attend December COGEL conference

The Executive Director asked for the Commission's authorization to attend the COGEL conference in Boston this December. The Vice Chair said it was a great idea and a legitimate expense. The Commission authorized the Director to attend the COGEL conference.

Discussion Items

6) Late-filing penalty for People for Jon Grant committee (\$150)

The Director explained to the Commission that this late-filing penalty was a result of finding an expenditure of more than a thousand dollars that was not timely reported in the weeks before the August Primary.

7) Late-filing penalty for Debora for District 5 committee (\$150)

The Director explained to the Commission that this late-filing penalty was a result of finding an expenditure of more than a thousand dollars that was not timely reported in the weeks before the August Primary.

8) Late-filing penalty for Friends of Kris Lethin committee (\$250)

The Director explained that the reason the late-filing penalty was higher for the Lethin campaign was that they had not failed to report an expenditure but actually reported an inaccurate date for the expenditure.

Commissioner Sherman asked the Director to briefly explain what happens next in a case such as this for the benefit of the Commissioner-elect.

The Director said that he has discretion to impose late-filing penalties, which committees can appeal to the Commission if they believe them to be unfair. These are in contrast to settlements like the one with the Harrell campaign which must be approved by the Commission.

9) Case No. 15-2-0425-1 (Councilmember alleged to have misused City facilities for campaign purposes in violation of the Ethics Code)

The Director recapped this dismissal, which was widely reported on earlier in the summer. Commissioners had no questions.

10) Executive Director's report

The Executive Director told the Commission that the Mayor's office was working hard to identify a replacement for Commissioner Sherman. With the appointment of Charlene Angeles, though, the Commission is once again at full strength.

The Regular Commission meeting for September 2, 2015 adjourned at 4:38 p.m.