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STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA)
COUNTY OF RICHLAND)

IN THE MATTER OF:)
COMPLAINT C2014-142)

Sarah B. Mathis,)
Respondent.)

Manley C. Dubose, Jr.,)
Complainant.)

BEFORE THE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

CONSENT ORDER

This matter comes before the State Ethics Commission by virtue of a complaint filed by the Complainant, Manley C. Dubose, Jr., on March 12, 2014. The complaint against the Respondent, Sarah B. Mathis, was considered by the Commission on September 17, 2014, and probable cause was found to warrant an evidentiary hearing. Prior to the call of the case, Respondent agreed to entry of the following statements of fact, conclusions of law, admission, and disposition in this matter.

STATEMENTS OF FACT

1. The Respondent, Sarah B. Mathis, was a candidate for Pinewood Town Council and she was required to file a Statement of Economic Interests form (SEI) by fifteen days after filing her petitions to become a candidate.

2. Respondent said that she she designed and produced the campaign flier mentioned in the complaint on her home computer. She said that she only made one flier and placed it on a window at her place of business. Respondent said she spent 50 cents on paper, and ink for the flier and she did not think she needed to document such a small amount on a campaign disclosure report. Staff advised Respondent that a campaign expenditure of any value must be disclosed and she stated that she would amend her pre-election report to document the expenditure, which she did.

3. Respondent stated that she was a petition candidate for the Pinewood mayoral election held on March 11, 2014. Respondent said that on January 11, 2014 she filed her petition of candidacy with the election commission. Respondent said that within 15 days from the date she filed her petition for candidacy, she amended the SEI report to document that she was a candidate for mayor. Respondent said that on February 5, 2014 she attempted to amend her SEI report in regard to her salary and noted that she had “saved, not filed” her SEI report for mayor, and at that time she filed the report. Respondent stated that she made an inadvertent error in regard to filing her SEI report for mayor because she mistakenly selected the save option instead of file.

4. On July 2, 2014 staff reviewed the Respondent’s SEI and CD. Respondent amended her SEI to document the income noted on her original report. Respondent also amended her 2014 pre-election CD to document the expenditure in the amount of \$1.00 for the flier that she placed on the window of her business in Pinewood.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Based upon the Statement of Facts, the Commission concludes, as a matter of law:

1. During all times relevant, the Respondent, Sarah B. Mathis, was a candidate, as defined by S.C. Code Ann. § 8-13-1300(4)(Supp. 2013).
2. The State Ethics Commission has personal and subject matter jurisdiction.
3. Section 8-13-1356 provides that a petition candidate must file a Statement of Economic Interests within 15 days of submitting her petitions.
4. Section 8-13-1308(F) provides that candidates must itemize all campaign expenditures.

DISCUSSION



I am sorry for what has happened. My situation at the time was not easy. I know that it is no excuse, but I am human and I have made some mistakes.

ADMISSIONS

The Respondent, Sarah B. Mathis, admits that she unintentionally violated Section 8-13-1308(F) and Section 8-13-1356.

DISPOSITION

The State Ethics Commission hereby finds Respondent Sarah B. Mathis in violation of Section 8-13-1308(F) and Section 8-13-1356 of the Ethics Reform Act and hereby adopts the Statements of Fact, Conclusions of Law, Admissions, and Disposition as agreed upon by the Respondent.

THEREFORE, the State Ethics Commission hereby issues this written warning to Sarah B. Mathis for violation of Section 8-13-1308(F) and Section 8-13-1356 of the Ethics Reform Act,

AND, orders Respondent to pay a late filing penalty of \$100.00 and an administrative fee of \$100.00 within 30 days of receipt of the signed order,

AND IT IS SO ORDERED THIS 19th DAY OF November 2014.

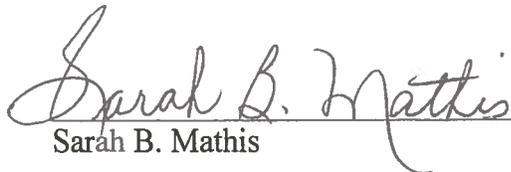
STATE ETHICS COMMISSION



~~JAMES H. BURNS~~, CHAIR



James Warren



Sarah B. Mathis