

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA)
COUNTY OF RICHLAND)

BEFORE THE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION)

IN THE MATTER OF:)

COMPLAINT C2013-135)

Gonza L. Bryant,)
Respondent.)

CONSENT ORDER

State Ethics Commission,)
Complainant.)

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This matter comes before the State Ethics Commission by virtue of a complaint filed by the Commission on June 10, 2013. The complaint against the Respondent, Gonza L. Bryant, was considered by the Commission on September 18, 2013, 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, discussion, admission, and disposition in this matter as follows:

STATEMENTS OF FACT

1. The Respondent, Gonza L. Bryant, is a member of Greenwood County Council.
2. Respondent reported that he did not file his 2009 Statement of Economic Interests (SEI) report until April 11, 2013, and he received a \$100.00 late filing penalty letter from the Commission. Respondent advised that he paid the late filing penalty.
4. A review of Respondent's 2009 wage and tax filing statement revealed that Respondent received gross pay in the amount of \$11,095.01 from Greenwood County.

On June 27, 2013 staff reviewed Respondent's original 2010 SEI report filed on April 15,

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2010. The SEI documented income from Greenwood County in the amount of \$11,000.00.

5. A review of Respondent's 2010 wage and tax filing statement revealed that Respondent received gross pay in the amount of \$11,830.89 from Greenwood County. On June 27, 2013 staff reviewed Respondent's original 2011 SEI report filed on April 14, 2011. The report documented income from Greenwood County in the amount of \$11,000.00.

6. Respondent advised that as soon as he was made aware of the Complaint he immediately amended his SEI reports to document the exact amount of income he received from Greenwood County. On July 11, 2013 Staff reviewed Respondent's 2010 and 2011 SEI reports, and Respondent amended the SEIs to document the exact amount of income he received from Greenwood County.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

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

1. During all times relevant, the Respondent, Gonza L. Bryant, was a public official, as defined by S.C. Code Ann. § 8-13-100(27)(Supp. 2012).
2. The State Ethics Commission has personal and subject matter jurisdiction.
3. Sections 8-13-1110 and 8-13-1140 provide that certain public officials shall file a Statement of Economic Interests prior to taking the oath of office and annually thereafter prior to April 15.
4. Section 8-13-1120(A)(2) provides that a public official must disclose the source, type and amount of income received from a governmental entity.

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DISCUSSION

The Respondent first learned on or about April 9, 2013, that his 2009 Statement of Economic Interest Report was not received by the State Ethics Commission. It was Respondent's understanding and belief that his 2009 Statement of Economic Interest Report had been filed with the State Ethics Commission in 2009. The Respondent received no correspondence or indication from the State Ethics Commission advising that the 2009 Report was not received or that it needed to be filed until the April 9, 2013, Report issued by the State Ethics Commission and received from Investigator James T. Bagnall. Until that time, the Respondent operated on the belief that the 2009 Statement of Economic Interest Report had been filed and that there was no issue with the State Ethics Commission. The Respondent did report to the State Ethics Commission that his 2009 Statement of Economic Interest Report would have been filed sooner if he had been notified that it was missing. In fact, the Respondent discovered the computer file document of the original 2009 Statement of Economic Interest Report still remaining in draft form, saved format on the electronic filing system when he was making the filing earlier this year. The Respondent further notes to the State Ethics Commission that when a similar issue arose in a subsequent year (i.e., 2010) the State Ethics Commission did provide notice of the deficiency and the Respondent did promptly produce the 2010 report.

The Respondent further indicated to the State Ethics Commission that he was unaware of any discrepancy between the compensation that he had provided on the above-referenced Statement of Economic Interest Reports filed with the State Ethics

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Commission until the April 9, 2013, Report issued by the State Ethics Commission. Following receipt of the Report, the Respondent proceeded to immediately file Amended Statements of Economic Interest for the years 2010, 2011 and 2012. The Respondent further states that these issues were not intentional on his part, but were merely accidental and inadvertent errors and that upon his first realization that this had occurred, he immediately proceeded to file amended reports for the years of 2010, 2011 and 2012, as well as to file the 2009 Statement of Economic Interest Report. It is further understood that the Respondent paid any and all related late fees associated with the 2009 Statement of Economic Interest Report.

ADMISSIONS

The Respondent, Gonza L. Bryant, admits that he inadvertently violated Section 8-13-1120 and unintentionally violated Section 8-13-1140.

DISPOSITION

The State Ethics Commission hereby finds Gonza L. Bryant in violation of Section 8-13-1120 and Section 8-13-1140, albeit inadvertent and unintentional, of the Ethics Reform Act and hereby adopts the Statements of Fact, Conclusions of Law, Admissions, Discussion and Disposition as agreed upon by the Respondent.

THEREFORE, the State Ethics Commission hereby issues this written warning to Gonza L. Bryant for violations of Section 8-13-1120 and Section 8-13-1140 of the Ethics Reform Act,

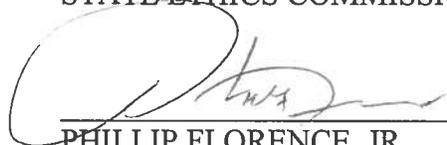
AND, orders Respondent to pay an administrative fee of \$200.00 within 30 days of receipt of the signed order,

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AND IT IS SO ORDERED THIS 9th DAY OF Dec. 2013.

STATE ETHICS COMMISSION


Gonzal L. Bryant


PHILLIP FLORENCE, JR.
CHAIR