

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA)
 COUNTY OF RICHLAND)
)
 IN THE MATTER OF:)
 COMPLAINT C2014-139)
)
 Beverly J. Freeman-Friends of)
 Georgetown Cty. Beaches,)
 Respondent.)
)
 State Ethics Commission,)
 Complainant.)
 _____)

BEFORE THE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

DECISION AND ORDER

STATE ETHICS
 COMMISSION

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RECEIVED

Pursuant to S. C. Code Ann. § 8-13-320(10)(i)(Supp. 2013), the State Ethics Commission reviewed the above captioned complaint on June 17, 2014 charging the Respondents, Beverly J. Freeman-Friends of Georgetown County Beaches, with violations of Section 2-17-25, etal. Present at the meeting were Commission Members James H. Burns, Chair, Clisby P. Templeton, James I. Warren, III, Regina H. Lewis, Julie S. Jeffords-Moose, Thomas Miller Galardi and Sherri A. Lydon. The following allegation was considered:

ALLEGATION

On April 8, 2014 the State Ethics Commission filed a complaint against Beverly J. Freeman, lobbyist principal for Friends of Georgetown County Beaches. The complaint alleged that the Respondent registered as a lobbyist principal on March 3, 2014. However, the address and telephone number listed on the registration statement do not belong to the Respondent.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Having carefully reviewed the evidence presented, the Commission finds as fact:

1. The Respondent, Beverly J. Freeman, did register as the contact person for lobbyist's principal, Friends of Georgetown County Beaches. The contact information

she reported on the lobbyist's principal profile showed an address and telephone for the administrative offices of Debordieu Colony Community Association.

2. Wayne Beam is the registered lobbyist for Friends of Georgetown County Beaches. Beam advised that Respondent had a verbal agreement with Blanche Brown, General Manager of Debordieu Colony, to allow Respondent to use the Debordieu address and telephone number as contact information for the lobbyist's principal registration.

3. Blanche Brown, General Manager of Debordieu Colony, confirmed that Respondent requested to use the address and telephone number of the offices of Debordieu Colony Association on the lobbyist's principal registration form because Respondent and her husband travel extensively.

4. Respondent confirmed that she had an agreement with Blanche Brown to allow the use of the Debordieu Association address and phone number as her contact information on the lobbyist's principal registration form. She stated she did not do this with any fraudulent intent. She advised that she and her husband travel on a regular basis and using Debordieu's address was an expedient way to stay in contact.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. The Respondent, Friends of Georgetown County Beaches, is a registered lobbyist's principal, as defined by Section 2-17-10(14) and the Respondent, Beverly J. Freeman, is its contact person.

2. The State Ethics Commission has personal and subject matter jurisdiction.

3. Section 2-17-25 provides in part that a lobbyist's principal must register and the registration must include the full name, address and telephone number of the lobbyist's principal.

DECISION

THEREFORE, based upon evidence presented, the State Ethics Commission has determined that there is not probable cause to indicate that the Respondent, Beverly J. Freeman, violated Section 2-17-25 as there does not appear to be any intent on the part of Respondent or the lobbyist's principal to mislead or to prevent anyone from contacting her. The Commission has therefore dismissed the charges in accordance with Section 8-13-320(10)(i), and the rules and regulations promulgated thereunder.

IT IS SO ORDERED THIS 20th DAY OF June, 2014.

STATE ETHICS COMMISSION



JAMES H. BURNS
CHAIRMAN

COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA