

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA)
COUNTY OF RICHLAND)
IN THE MATTER OF:)
Complaint 2012-~~075~~ 109)
Joyce Meeks,)
Respondent.)
State Ethics Commission,)
Complainant.)

BEFORE THE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

CONSENT ORDER

STATE ETHICS
COMMISSION

2012 SEP 19 PM 12: 19

RECEIVED

This matter comes before the State Ethics Commission by virtue of a complaint filed by the Commission on March 26, 2012. The complaint against the Respondent, Joyce Meeks, was considered by the Commission on July 18, 2012 and probable cause found to warrant an evidentiary hearing.

Prior to the call of the case Respondent agreed to entry of the following statement of facts, conclusions of law, discussion, admission, and disposition in this matter as follows:

STATEMENT OF FACTS

1. The Respondent, Joyce Meeks, is currently the Chairperson for the Hardeeville Municipal Election Commission (MEC) and as such is a public member.
2. A review of the Hardeeville MEC special meeting minutes dated March 15, 2012 revealed that Respondent was present. The special meeting was called to decide if Hardeeville Town Council candidate Scott Ready's name should be allowed on the ballot in the forthcoming election. Respondent's son-in-law, Roy Powell, is an incumbent councilperson up for re-election. Powell would be running against Ready if Ready's name was on the ballot. The MEC voted to remove Ready's name from the ballot which

allowed Powell to run for election unopposed. The decision to remove Ready name from the ballot was based upon Ready's error in filing his SEI report.

3. Scott Ready maintained that he made an error in filling out his SEI report. As soon as he realized the error he made a correction. Ready also asserted that Respondent should have recused herself from the MEC vote due to the fact that her son-in-law would have been running against Ready for a position on Hardeeville Town Council.

4. Respondent maintained that she did not violate the Ethics laws as she understands them. She did not seek the advice and counsel of the Ethics Commission staff or the Hardeeville Town Attorney.

5. According to a Statement of Economic Interests filed by Respondent's son-in-law, Powell receives a salary of \$8,000 per year for service on Hardeeville City Council.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

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

1. During all times relevant, the Respondent, Joyce Meeks, was a public member, as defined by S.C. Code Ann., § 8-13-100(26)(Supp. 2010).
2. The State Ethics Commission has personal and subject matter jurisdiction.
3. Section 8-13-700(B) prohibits participation by a public member in actions involving the economic interest of a family member.
4. Section 8-13-100(15) defines 'family member' as an individual who is a son-in-law.

DISCUSSION

(Available to you to discuss any mitigating information.)

ADMISSIONS

The Respondent, Joyce Meeks, admits she unintentionally and inadvertently violated Section 8-13-700(B).

DISPOSITION

The State Ethics Commission hereby finds Joyce Meeks unintentionally and inadvertently violated Section 8-13-700 (B), and hereby adopts the Statement of Facts, Conclusions of Law, Discussion, Admissions, and Disposition as agreed upon by Respondent.

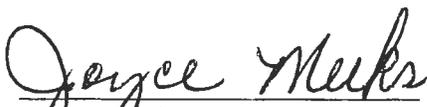
THEREFORE, the State Ethics Commission hereby issues this written warning to Joyce Meeks for her inadvertent and unintentional violation Section 8-13-700 (B),

AND, orders Respondent to pay an administrative fee of \$250.00 within 30 days of receipt of the signed order,

AND IT IS SO ORDERED THIS 19th DAY OF September 2012.

STATE ETHICS COMMISSION


PHILLIP FLORENCE, JR.
CHAIRMAN


Joyce Meeks
Respondent