

# State of South Carolina

## State Ethics Commission

CHILDS C. THRASHER, CHAIR  
DONALD GIST, VICE CHAIR  
BRIAN M. BARNWELL  
SAMUEL L. ERWIN



DON JACKSON  
VICTOR K. LI  
BRANDOLYN THOMAS PINKSTON

201 EXECUTIVE CENTER DRIVE, SUITE 150  
COLUMBIA, S.C. 29210

MEGHAN L. WALKER  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

### MINUTES COMMISSION MEETING OPEN SESSION

January 16, 2020

The meeting was called to order at 9:38 a.m. by Chair Thrasher at the State Ethics Commission's Hearing Room located at 201 Executive Center Drive, Suite 150, Columbia, South Carolina. Other Commission members present were Brian M. Barnwell, Vice Chair Donald Gist, Donald H. Jackson, Victor K. Li, and Brandolyn T. Pinkston. Commissioner Samuel L. Erwin joined by phone. Commissioner Ashleigh R. Wilson had an excused absence for this meeting.

Staff present: Meghan Walker, Ami Franklin, Jimmy Bagnall, Ryanne Caldwell, Kevin Hinson, Courtney Laster, Reggie Gaymon, Richard Provencher, Kristin Nabors, Susan Bickley, Bridgette Goff, Deaven Linen, and Karen A. Wiggins.

Others present: Linda Blackmon-Brace, Mitch Norrell, Flip Hutfles, Gregory A. Summers, Dalhi N. Myers, and Joe Cranney.

Chair Thrasher declared a quorum present. Director Walker noted for the record that the news media was duly notified.

### MINUTES

Chair Thrasher called for an approval of the Minutes. A motion was made by Vice Chair Gist, seconded by Commissioner Pinkston, to accept the Minutes. Chair Thrasher asked for any discussion or opposition. There being none, the motion carried with no opposition to approve the Open Session Minutes and the Executive Session Minutes from the November 21, 2019 Commission meeting. The motion carried unanimously with a 7 - 0 vote.

### APPEAL

#### **C2018-019 Francis L. Bell vs. Linda Blackmon-Brace**

Director Walker called this matter. Chair Thrasher, Vice Chair Gist, and Commissioner Pinkston recused themselves. Acting Chair Barnwell presented this matter. General Counsel Laster gave

a history of events. Respondent Blackmon-Brace gave an opening statement. Questions from the Commission rendered a lengthy discussion. Acting Chair Barnwell thanked everyone for coming and noted the Commission would contact Respondent with their decision.

Chair Thrasher, Vice Chair Gist, and Commissioner Pinkston returned to the meeting.

### **OFFICE OPERATIONS**

Director Walker directed everyone to the budget information in their yellow folders and presented Office Operations. Director Walker then asked for any questions. There being none, the information was approved as presented.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

At 10:20 a.m., Chair Thrasher asked for a motion to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing legal matters and probable cause matters. A motion was made by Commissioner Barnwell, seconded by Commissioner Li, to go into Executive Session. There being no discussion or opposition, the motion carried with a 7 – 0 vote.

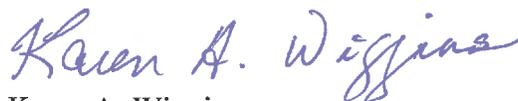
### **RETURN FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Upon return from Executive Session at 11:39 a.m., Commissioner Li made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Pinkston, to adopt and ratify actions taken on probable cause matters in Executive Session. There being no discussion or opposition, the motion carried with a 7 – 0 vote. Commissioner Erwin disconnected from the meeting.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Thrasher asked for further discussion or a motion. There being none, the meeting adjourned with unanimous consent at 11:41 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Karen A. Wiggins