

# State of South Carolina

## State Ethics Commission

SCOTT E. FRICK, CHAIRMAN  
AJ HOLLOWAY, VICE CHAIRMAN  
BRANDOLYN THOMAS PINKSTON  
BRYANT S. CALDWELL



F. XAVIER STARKES  
MARY HUNTER B. TOMLINSON  
NEAL D. TRUSLOW  
MATTHEW N. TYLER

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

MEGHAN WALKER DAYSON  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

### MINUTES

#### COMMISSION MEETING

#### OPEN SESSION

#### March 16, 2023

The March 16, 2023, meeting was called to order at 9:31 a.m. by Chairman Scott Frick at the State Ethics Commission's Hearing Room located at 201 Executive Center Drive, Suite 150, Columbia, South Carolina. Chairman Scott Frick, Vice Chairman F. Xavier Starkes, Commissioner Neal D. Truslow, and Commissioner Mary Hunter B. Tomlinson were in attendance. Commissioner AJ Holloway, Commissioner Brandolyn T. Pinkston, Commission Matthew N. Tyler, and Commissioner Bryant S. Caldwell appeared via Zoom call.

Staff present: Meghan Walker Dayson, Ami Franklin, Courtney Laster, Ryanne Caldwell, Kevin Hinson, Reggie Gaymon, and Rachael O'Bryan were in attendance. Karen A. Wiggins joined via Zoom call.

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

### MINUTES

Chairman Frick called for the approval of the January 19, 2023 minutes. Chairman Frick asked for any discussion. A motion was made by Commissioner Truslow, seconded by Commissioner Starkes, to accept the minutes from the January 19, 2023 Commission meeting. The motion carried with an 8 - 0 vote.

### APPEALS

#### COMMISSIONER SCOTT E. FRICK PRESIDING

C2021-023 – State Ethics Commission vs. Shaterica L. Neal

Shaterica L. Neal appeared *pro se* appealing the Decision and Order rendered in Commission Complaint C2021-023. The Commission was represented by Commission General Counsel, Courtney Laster. Ms. Neal stated that she was taking responsibility for not timely and correctly

filing her required reports but was asking for leniency, as she had experienced life events that had taken her attention away from timely filing and resolving the Complaint matter and that it was her first time running for public office and that it had been a learning experience. The panel took the matter under advisement and will issue an Order.

Commissioner Brandolyn T. Pinkston, Commissioner Matthew N. Tyler, and Commissioner A.J. Holloway recused from this matter, having served on the original Hearing Panel.

#### **COMMISSIONER F. XAVIER STARKES PRESIDING**

**C2016-141 - Anthony Cooper vs. James Brown, III; C2016-142 - Taurus Lewis vs. James Brown, III; C2016-143 - Andrea Fripp James vs. James Brown, III; C2016-144 - Kenya Bryant vs. James Brown, III**

The Commission was represented by Commission General Counsel, Courtney Laster. The Respondent's attorney was duly notified of the Appellate Hearing but was not present. Attorney Laster made a Motion to have the appeal dismissed. The panel took the matter under advisement and will issue an Order.

Commissioner Scott E. Frick and Commissioner A.J. Holloway recused from this matter, having served on the original Hearing Panel.

#### **OFFICE OPERATIONS**

Director Dayson presented the Budget, Compliance Report, and Pending and Paid Orders Report for information. Commissioner Frick had a question about change in the number of reports filed. Director Walker informed him that since last year was an election year that was likely the reason for increased filings during that year. Commissioner Truslow had a question about if there were open positions and if there was a timeline to get the positions filled. Director Walker informed the Commission there are positions open and that staff is actively working on filling the positions. Commissioner Pinkston commented on liking the new filing portal. Director Dayson gave an explanation on how the portal works.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

Director Dayson presented two expenditure requests for additional furniture for the Commission hearing room. The Commissioners took a vote on the request. The motion passed 8 – 0.

A vote was taken to adopt the Commission policies as presented in the January Commission meeting. The motion passed 8 – 0.

#### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Chairman Frick asked for further discussion or a motion to go into Executive Session to hear probable cause matters. A motion was made by Commissioner Tyler, seconded by Commissioner Starkes. The motion carried with an 8 – 0 vote.

**RETURN FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION**

The Commissioners returned from Executive Session at 12:43 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Chairman Frick asked for further discussion or a motion to adjourn. There being no further discussion, a motion was made by Commissioner Truslow, seconded by Commissioner Starkes and Commissioner Tomlinson, to adjourn at 12:43 a.m. The motion carried with an 8 – 0 vote.

Respectfully Submitted,



Rachael O'Bryan