

State of South Carolina

State Ethics Commission

SCOTT E. FRICK, CHAIRMAN
F. XAVIER STARKES, VICE
CHAIRMAN
BRYANT S. CALDWELL
AJ HOLLOWAY



BRANDOLYN THOMAS PINKSTON
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

January 18, 2024

The January 18, 2024, meeting was called to order at 9:33 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 E. Frick, Vice Chairman F. Xavier Starkes, Commissioner Neal D. Truslow, Commissioner Bryant Caldwell, and Commissioner Matthew N. Tyler were in attendance. Commissioner AJ Holloway, Commissioner Brandolyn T. Pinkston, and Commissioner Mary Hunter B. Tomlinson appeared via Zoom call.

Staff present: Meghan Walker Dayson, Ami Franklin, Courtney Laster, Renquie Brabham, Ryanne Caldwell, Kevin Hinson, Reggie Gaymon, James Bagnall, W.B. White, Jr., Thomas Yeager, Rachael O'Bryan, and Erin Caughman were in attendance.

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

MINUTES

Chairman Frick called for the approval of the November 16, 2023 minutes. Chairman Frick asked for any discussion. A motion was made by Commissioner Tyler, seconded by Commissioner Truslow, to accept the minutes from the November 16, 2023 Commission meeting. The motion carried with an 8 – 0 vote.

MOTIONS TO DISMISS

C2021-030 State Ethics Commission vs. Ronald L. Charlton

A Motion to Dismiss the complaint against Ronald Charlton was made by Attorney Laster. Attorney Laster provided that following the filing of the Complaint, the Commission found probable cause to believe Respondent violated the Ethics Act and a hearing notice was issued. After the issuance of the Notice, the Respondent's attorney filed a Motion to have the Complaint matter dismissed due to the fact that the Respondent would be unable to assist in his defense. The vote to dismiss further action on the Complaint was 8 – 0.

C2021-106 Thomas Varnadoe vs. Larry Carter

A Motion to Dismiss the complaint against Larry Carter was made by Attorney Laster. Attorney Laster provided that following the filing of the Complaint, the Commission found probable cause to believe Respondent violated the Ethics Act and a hearing notice was issued. After the issuance of the Notice, the Complainant notified Commission staff that he believed the Respondent was having health difficulty. Staff received documentation from Respondent's medical provider that he would be unable to assist in his defense. The vote to dismiss further action on the Complaint was 8 – 0.

OFFICE OPERATIONS

Director Dayson presented the Budget, Compliance Report, and Pending and Paid Orders Report for information.

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 Truslow, seconded by Commissioner Tyler to go into executive session to hear probable cause matters. The motion carried with an 8 – 0 vote.

RETURN FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Commissioners returned from Executive Session at 12:38 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 Tyler, seconded by Commissioner Truslow, to adjourn at 12:39 p.m. The motion carried with a 7 – 0 vote, with Commissioner Pinkston absent from the vote.

Respectfully Submitted,



Rachael O'Bryan