

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA  
STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

STATE ETHICS COMMISSION  
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FOR COMMISSION USE ONLY:  
CASE NUMBER  
C 2023-008

COMPLAINT FORM

COMPLAINANT: State Ethics Commission  
ADDRESS: 201 Executive Center Drive  
Suite 150  
Columbia, SC 29210  
TELEPHONE NUMBER: (803) 253-4192

RESPONDENT: Rodger C. Griggs  
ADDRESS: [REDACTED]  
TELEPHONE NUMBER: [REDACTED]  
TITLE: Former Council Member – Town of Patrick

Section 8-13-1308, S.C. Code Ann., 1976, as amended, requires candidates to file Campaign Disclosures within ten (10) days of receiving or expending \$500; fifteen (15) days prior to each election; within ten (10) days of the end of each quarter; and a final report when the campaign account is closed. In addition, certified campaign reports detailing campaign contributions and expenditures must contain the total of contributions accepted, the name and address of each person making a contribution, the total expenditures made by or on behalf of the candidate or committee, and the name and address of each person to whom an expenditure is made from campaign funds. Pursuant to Section 8-13-1362 and Regulation 52-504 (C), the Pre-Election and quarterly report are required even when there have been no contributions or expenditures.

Records of the State Ethics Commission indicate that a Pre-Election Campaign Disclosure was due between October 13, 2021 and October 18, 2021.

Respondent was reminded of the filing requirement by letters dated June 24, 2022 as described in the attached. To date, a properly completed Pre-Election Campaign Disclosure has not been received. All in violation of Section 8-13-1308(A), Section 8-13-1308(D)(1), and Section 8-13-1308 (F), S.C. Code Ann., 1976, as amended.

If there is a finding of probable cause, the following documents become public record: the complaint, the response (if any) by respondent, and the notice of hearing. If a hearing is to be held, the final order and all exhibits become public record. If no hearing is held following a finding of probable cause, the final disposition of the matter becomes public record.

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA  
COUNTY OF Richland

Personally appeared before me Meghan L. Walker who, first being duly sworn, says that she has read and knows the contents of the above complaint and that the allegations contained therein, are true and correct to the best of her own knowledge, except for those matters therein based upon information and belief, and as to those she believes them to be true.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 8th day of February, 2023

[REDACTED]  
Meghan L. Walker, Executive Director

[REDACTED]  
Notary Public for South Carolina  
My Commission expires 01/22/24

SEC-7 (Revised 3/2022)

REPLY TO: 201 Executive Center Drive, Suite 150, Columbia, South Carolina 29210 (803)253-4192  
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STATE ETHICS COMMISSION  
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**Rodger Griggs**



SC State Ethics Commission  
201 Executive Center Drive, Suite 150  
Columbia, SC 29210  
(803) 253-4192

March 23, 2023

Greetings,

I am writing regarding the recent letter that I recently received. I was not aware that the last time I ran for office as a council member for the Town of Patrick, I didn't file a Pre-Election Campaign Disclosure Report. I have filed the report and submitted a check for \$100 dollars; however, I received another letter stating that I have a balance of \$4,900. In the last phone conversation that I had with Ms. Cardwell, I made her aware that I was sick and had been in and out of the hospital. During my last term on the town council and my status currently has been back and forth to the hospital and the doctor's office. I am still under the doctor's care and just found out I will be having surgical procedures done on my eyes. I hope that we can get this matter settled and forgiven.

Warm Regards,

**Rodger Griggs**

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA	)	
COUNTY OF RICHLAND	)	BEFORE THE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION
	)	
IN THE MATTER OF:	)	
COMPLAINT C2023-008	)	
	)	
State Ethics Commission,	)	<b>DECISION AND ORDER</b>
Complainant.	)	
	)	
Rodger C. Griggs,	)	
Respondent.	)	
_____	)	

This matter came before the South Carolina Ethics Commission (Commission) by way of a Complaint filed on February 8, 2023. The Commission’s Executive Director reviewed the Complaint, determined it contained facts sufficient to warrant an investigation, and ordered an investigation. On May 18, 2023, the Commission reviewed the Complaint and investigative findings to determine whether probable cause existed to charge Rodger C. Griggs (Respondent) with violating the South Carolina Ethics, Government Accountability, and Campaign Reform Act (Ethics Act). For the reasons stated herein, the Commission finds probable cause exists, but waives further proceedings on the matter.

**STATEMENT OF FACTS**

1. Respondent was an unsuccessful candidate for Patrick Town Council in a November 2, 2021 election.
2. Respondent failed to file a Pre-Election Campaign Disclosure Report (CDR) prior to the November 2, 2021 election.
3. In a June 24, 2022 certified letter, the Commission notified Respondent of his failure to timely file a 2021 Pre-Election CDR. According to the United States Postal Service, the certified letter was delivered to Respondent’s address of record on July 1, 2022 at 8:42 a.m.
4. Receiving no response to its certified letter, the Commission filed a Complaint against Respondent on February 8, 2023.

5. Respondent received the Complaint on February 14, 2023 and filed his 2021 Pre-Election CDR the same day.
6. On February 27, 2023, Respondent submitted a letter to the Commission along with a check for \$100.00. In his letter, Respondent advised the Commission that he had filed the 2021 Pre-Election CDR.
7. During the investigation, Commission Investigator Ryanne Caldwell interviewed Respondent, Town Councilmember Cynthia McCormick, and Respondent's daughter-in-law Melissa Griggs. Based on these interviews, Investigator Caldwell concluded that Respondent had suffered from health issues for a number of years, including during 2021. According to Respondent, he is 74 years old with declining eyesight and that he has been hospitalized multiple times in recent months. Respondent stated, and McCormick and Griggs confirmed, that Respondent was ill in June 2022. Respondent stated he did not recall receiving the Commission's certified letter.

### LAW

Pursuant to Section 8-13-320, the Commission is empowered to receive complaints and conduct investigations related to violations of the Ethics Act. Following the receipt of a Complaint and completion of a corresponding investigation, the Commission must determine whether there is probable cause to believe a violation of the Ethics Act occurred. Section 8-13-320(10)(i). If the Commission determines probable cause exists, it may order a hearing on the merits or, if the Respondent has taken action to remedy or correct the alleged violation, it may waive further proceedings. Section 8-13-320(10)(i). The decision to waive further proceedings lies within the sound discretion of the Commission.

Section 8-13-1308 requires all candidates, regardless of money raised or spent, to file a CDR fifteen (15) days prior to each election. Pursuant to Section 8-13-1510, a \$100 late-filing fee must be levied against any individual who files a late report or filing required by the Ethics Act. "[A]fter notice

has been given by certified or registered mail that a required statement or report has not been filed, a fine of ten dollars per calendar day for the first ten days after notice has been given, and one hundred dollars for each additional calendar day in which the required statement or report is not filed, not exceeding five thousand dollars.” Section 8-13-1510.

**DECISION**

Based on evidence presented, the Commission hereby determines there is probable cause to believe that Respondent violated Section 8-13-1308 of the Ethics Act when he failed to file his 2021 Pre-Election CDR fifteen (15) days prior to his November 2, 2021 election. However, Respondent has provided mitigating evidence to the Commission showing that he suffers from serious health issues and that these health issues most likely prevented him from responding to the Commission’s June 2022 correspondence. In addition, the Commission notes that Respondent is currently in compliance and has paid the \$100 late-filing penalty associated with his failure to timely file a 2021 Pre-Election CDR. Therefore, based on the totality of the circumstances, the Commission hereby waives further proceedings pursuant to Section 8-13-320(10)(i) of the Ethics Act.

THEREFORE, pursuant to Section 8-13-320(10)(i), and the rules and regulations promulgated thereunder, the Commission hereby waives further proceedings.

AND IT IS SO ORDERED THIS 24<sup>th</sup> DAY OF June, 2023.

SOUTH CAROLINA ETHICS COMMISSION

  
SCOTT E. FRICK, CHAIR

Columbia, South Carolina