

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA  
STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

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FOR COMMISSION USE ONLY:  
CASE NUMBER  
C 2022-008

COMPLAINT FORM

STATE ETHICS  
COMMISSION

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

**RESPONDENT:** Sam Davis  
**ADDRESS:** [REDACTED]  
**TELEPHONE NUMBER:** [REDACTED]  
**TITLE:** Council – City of Columbia

Section 8-13-1120, SC Code Ann., 1976, as amended, requires disclosure of the source, type, and amount of income from a governmental entity and a listing of the private source and type of any income received by the filer or a member of the filer's immediate family during the reporting period. Respondent has failed to report private income from BEKOTU and Associates, Inc. LLC on his 2018, 2019, and 2020 Statement of Economic Interests. He was notified by a certified letter dated February 8, 2021 that he failed to report government and private sources of income on his 2018 Statement of Economic Interests. On March 15, 2021, he amended his 2018 Statement of Economic Interests to disclose government income but did not report private income.

Section 8-13-1140, SC Code Ann., 1976, as amended, requires the filing of an updated Statement of Economic Interests for the previous calendar year annually thereafter prior to March 30. Records in the State Ethics Commission indicate that the Respondent was required to file the 2021 Statement of Economic Interests.

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 Campaign Disclosure was due no later January 10, 2018, April 10, 2018, July 10, 2018, October 10, 2018, January 10, 2019, April 10, 2019, July 10, 2019, October 10, 2019, January 10, 2020, April 10, 2020, July 10, 2020, October 10, 2020, January 10, 2021, April 10, 2021, July 10, 2021, and October 10, 2021. Respondent was sent an email reminder thirty days before each Campaign Disclosure deadline.


Respondent was reminded of the Campaign Disclosure filing requirements by a certified letter dated February 8, 2021 as described in the attached. To date, no properly completed January 10, 2018, April 10, 2018, July 10, 2018, October 10, 2018, January 10, 2019, April 10, 2019, July 10, 2019, October 10, 2019, January 10, 2020, April 10, 2020, July 10, 2020, October 10, 2020, January 10, 2021, April 10, 2021, July 10, 2021, or October 10, 2021 Campaign Disclosure have been received. In addition, the properly completed 2018, 2019, or 2020 Statement of Economic Interests have not been received. All in violation of Section 8-13-1120, Section 8-13-1140, Section 8-13-1308(B), and Section 8-13-1308 (F), S.C. Code Ann., 1976, as amended.


All investigations, inquiries, hearings, and accompanying documents must remain confidential unless respondent waives the right to confidentiality. 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. The willful release of confidential information is a misdemeanor, and any person releasing such confidential information, upon conviction, must be fined not more than one thousand dollars (\$1,000) or imprisoned not more than one year. Section 8-13-320(10)(g).

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  
12<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2022

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Meghan L. Walker, Executive Director

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Notary Public for South Carolina  
My Commission expires 01/22/26

SEC-7 (Revised 8/2019)

REPLY TO: 201 Executive Center Drive, Suite 150, Columbia, South Carolina 29210 (803)253-4192  
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STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA )  
COUNTY OF RICHLAND )  
IN THE MATTER OF: )  
Complaint C2022-008 )  
State Ethics Commission )  
Complainant. )  
Samuel Davis )  
Respondent. )  
\_\_\_\_\_ )

BEFORE THE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

**NOTICE OF HEARING**

The State Ethics Commission has determined that there is probable cause pursuant to Section 8-13-320(10)(i), Code of Laws, South Carolina, 1976, as amended, in the above-captioned complaint. The Commission will convene a formal hearing into the matter in accordance with Section 8-13-320(10)(i) & (j), Code of Laws, South Carolina, 1976, as amended, and State Ethics Commission Regulations, S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 52-707 (1997 Cum. Supp.) on Thursday, August 15, 2024 at 9:30 a.m. at the Commission Hearing Room located at: 201 Executive Center Drive, Suite 150, Columbia, South Carolina 29210.

The following allegations will be heard:

**COUNT ONE**

**FAILURE TO FILE A QUARTERLY CAMPAIGN DISCLOSURE REPORT  
SECTION 8-13-1308(B), S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED**

That Samuel Davis, former City of Columbia Councilmember, did in Richland County, fail to file a 2018 Quarter 1 Campaign Disclosure Report (CDR), in violation of Section 8-13-1308(B).

**COUNT TWO**

**FAILURE TO FILE A QUARTERLY CAMPAIGN DISCLOSURE REPORT  
SECTION 8-13-1308(B), S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED**

That Samuel Davis, former City of Columbia Councilmember, did in Richland County, fail to file a 2018 Quarter 2 CDR, in violation of Section 8-13-1308(B).

**COUNT THREE**  
**FAILURE TO FILE A QUARTERLY CAMPAIGN DISCLOSURE REPORT**  
**SECTION 8-13-1308(B), S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED**

That Samuel Davis, former City of Columbia Councilmember, did in Richland County, fail to file a 2018 Quarter 3 CDR, in violation of Section 8-13-1308(B).

**COUNT FOUR**  
**FAILURE TO FILE A QUARTERLY CAMPAIGN DISCLOSURE REPORT**  
**SECTION 8-13-1308(B), S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED**

That Samuel Davis, former City of Columbia Councilmember, did in Richland County, fail to file a 2018 Quarter 4 CDR, in violation of Section 8-13-1308(B).

**COUNT FIVE**  
**FAILURE TO FILE A QUARTERLY CAMPAIGN DISCLOSURE REPORT**  
**SECTION 8-13-1308(B), S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED**

That Samuel Davis, former City of Columbia Councilmember, did in Richland County, fail to file a 2019 Quarter 1 CDR, in violation of Section 8-13-1308(B).

**COUNT SIX**  
**FAILURE TO FILE A QUARTERLY CAMPAIGN DISCLOSURE REPORT**  
**SECTION 8-13-1308(B), S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED**

That Samuel Davis, former City of Columbia Councilmember, did in Richland County, fail to file a 2019 Quarter 2 CDR, in violation of Section 8-13-1308(B).

**COUNT SEVEN**  
**FAILURE TO FILE A QUARTERLY CAMPAIGN DISCLOSURE REPORT**  
**SECTION 8-13-1308(B), S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED**

That Samuel Davis, former City of Columbia Councilmember, did in Richland County, fail to file a 2019 Quarter 3/Final CDR, in violation of Section 8-13-1308(B).

**COUNT EIGHT**  
**FAILURE TO REPORT CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTION**  
**SECTION 8-13-1308(F)(1), S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED**

That Samuel Davis, former City of Columbia Councilmember, did in Richland County, fail

to report two (2) contributions of \$100.00 or less, in violation of Section 8-13-1308(F)(1).

**COUNT NINE**  
**FAILURE TO REPORT CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTION**  
**SECTION 8-13-1308(F)(1), S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED**

That Samuel Davis, former City of Columbia Councilmember, did in Richland County, fail to report a \$500.00 contribution from Louis Lynn, in violation of Section 8-13-1308(F)(1).

**COUNT TEN**  
**FAILURE TO REPORT CAMPAIGN EXPENDITURE**  
**SECTION 8-13-1308(F)(3), S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED**

That Samuel Davis, former City of Columbia Councilmember, did in Richland County, fail to report a January 16, 2018 \$500.00 expenditure to Mike Wukela, in violation of Section 8-13-1308(F)(3).

**COUNT ELEVEN**  
**FAILURE TO REPORT CAMPAIGN EXPENDITURE**  
**SECTION 8-13-1308(F)(3), S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED**

That Samuel Davis, former City of Columbia Councilmember, did in Richland County, fail to report a February 26, 2018 \$500.00 expenditure to Mike Wukela, in violation of Section 8-13-1308(F)(3).

You have the right to be represented by counsel, the right to call and examine witnesses, the right to introduce exhibits, and the right to cross-examine opposing witnesses. This hearing will be open to the public as required by Section 8-13-320(10)(j), Code of Laws, South Carolina, 1976, as amended. The procedures to be followed are set forth in the Administrative Procedures Act, Section 1-23-10, et seq., Code of Laws, South Carolina, 1976 as amended the State Ethics Act, Section 8-13-100, et seq., Code of Laws, South Carolina, 1976, as amended, and State Ethics Commission Regulations, S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 52-707 (1997 Cum. Supp.).

A pre-hearing conference may be scheduled prior to the hearing to allow exchange of

witness lists and evidence, marking of exhibits, and disposition of motions or pleadings. In the event you fail to appear, judgment by default will be rendered against you. If there are any questions concerning the above notice or hearing times, please contact the State Ethics Commission.



Meghan Walker Dayson, Executive Director  
State Ethics Commission

Dated this 24<sup>th</sup> day,  
of January 2024.

*Certificate of Service by Certified Mail*

I hereby certify that a copy of this **NOTICE OF HEARING** was duly served on the RESPONDENT Samuel Davis, 950 Rosedale Arch, Columbia, SC 29203 by depositing said **NOTICE OF HEARING** in the United States mail, Columbia, South Carolina on this 20<sup>th</sup> day of January 2024, by **CERTIFIED MAIL, E-RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED**, appropriate postage affixed, and a return address clearly indicated on said envelope.



**Rachael O'Bryan, Administrative Assistant**

Columbia, South Carolina

State Ethics Commission

(803) 253-4192

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA )  
COUNTY OF RICHLAND )  
IN THE MATTER OF: )  
COMPLAINT C2022-008 )  
State Ethics Commission, )  
Complainant. )  
Sam Davis, )  
Respondent. )

BEFORE THE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

**DECISION AND ORDER**

Pursuant to Section 8-13-320(10)(i) of the South Carolina Ethics, Government Accountability, and Campaign Reform Act of 1991 (Ethics Act), the Commission reviewed the above-captioned Complaint against Sam Davis (Respondent) and probable cause was found to warrant an evidentiary hearing. Present at the hearing on August 15, 2024, were Commissioners Matthew N. Tyler, Mary Hunter B. Tomlinson, and Scott E. Frick, Hearing Chair. Respondent appeared *pro se*. The Commission was represented by Renique K. Brabham, Esq. The following charges were considered: seven (7) counts of violating Section 8-13-1308(B) for failing to timely file Campaign Disclosure Reports (CDR) from Quarter 1 2018 through Quarter 3 2019/Final.<sup>1</sup>

**FINDINGS OF FACT**

Having carefully reviewed the evidence presented, the Panel finds as fact:

1. Respondent served on the City of Columbia Council from 1998 to 2021. Respondent's most recent election was November 7, 2017. Pursuant to that election, Respondent filed an amended Quarter 3 2017/Pre-Election CDR on October 23, 2017, disclosing \$3,929.63 in on-hand contributions. Respondent thereafter failed to file any additional CDRs.
2. In a February 8, 2021 certified letter, the Commission notified Respondent, in relevant part, of

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<sup>1</sup> The Commission also found probable cause to charge Respondent with four (4) counts of violating Section 8-13-1308(F) for failing to disclose campaign contributions and expenditures. Respondent has since disclosed the contributions and expenditures, and the Commission therefore declines to proceed as to these counts.

his failure to file CDRs for Quarter 1 2018 through Quarter 3 2019.<sup>2</sup>

3. According to the United States Postal Service, the certified letter was delivered to Respondent's address of record on February 10, 2021 at 10:04 a.m.
4. On February 20, 2021, late-filing penalties began to accrue at \$10.00 per day per CDR.
5. On March 2, 2021, late-filing penalties began to accrue at \$100.00 per day per CDR.
6. Following the filing of the Complaint, the Commission's investigation revealed that Respondent's campaign bank account reached a zero-dollar balance on July 17, 2019, making the Quarter 3 2019 CDR his last required CDR.
7. On February 5, 2024, Respondent's campaign manager worked with Commission staff to file Respondent's missing CDRs. Respondent is now in compliance.
8. During the hearing, Respondent testified that he had never filed a CDR with the Commission and that he relied on his campaign manager Dalton Tresvant to file on his behalf. Respondent further testified that Tresvant had been his campaign manager since 1998 and that he was aware Tresvant had previously failed to file Respondent's CDRs on multiple occasions but continued to utilize him for these services.
9. Respondent called Tresvant as a witness during the hearing. Tresvant testified that, as Respondent's campaign manager, he was tasked with filing Respondent's CDRs, to include the CDRs contained in the current Complaint. Tresvant stated that, to his knowledge, Respondent has never personally filed a CDR with the Commission.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> The Commission's letter and subsequent Complaint also included Respondent's failure to file a Quarter 4 2017 CDR, due January 10, 2018. The Commission did not proceed as to this allegation because the Complaint was filed on January 12, 2022, outside of the Commission's four-year statute of limitations as it pertains to the Quarter 4 2017 CDR.

<sup>3</sup> The Commission acknowledges that Respondent's campaign manager has worked with Commission staff to file reports subject to Respondent's prior instances of noncompliance. Specifically, the Respondent has had four (4) prior

### CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Based upon the Findings of Fact, the Commission concludes, as a matter of law:

1. At all times relevant, Respondent was a “candidate” pursuant to Section 8-13-1300(4).

Therefore, the Commission has personal and subject matter jurisdiction.

2. Section 8-13-1308(B) provides, in relevant part:

Following the filing of an initial certified campaign report, additional certified campaign reports must be filed within ten days following the end of each calendar quarter in which contributions are received or expenditures are made, whether before or after an election until the campaign account undergoes final disbursement pursuant to the provisions of Section 8-13-1370.

3. Section 8-13-1510(A) provides:

Except as otherwise specifically provided in this chapter, a person required to file a report or statement under this chapter who files a late statement or report or fails to file a required statement or report must be assessed a civil penalty as follows: (1) a fine of one hundred dollars if the statement or report is not filed within five days after the established deadline provided by law in this chapter; and (2) after 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.

4. Section 8-13-130 allows the Commission to “levy an enforcement or administrative fee on a person who is in violation” of the Ethics Act.

### DECISION

NOW, THEREFORE, based on the foregoing Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, the Panel has determined, based on a preponderance of evidence, that Respondent Sam Davis is in violation of seven (7) counts of violating Section 8-13-1308(B) for failing to timely file CDRs from Quarter 1 2018 through Quarter 3 2019/Final.

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complaints and twenty-one (21) other instances of prior noncompliance, resulting in Respondent paying thousands of dollars in penalties.

THEREFORE, Respondent is hereby Publicly Reprimanded and assessed a reduced late-filing penalty of \$3,500.00 (\$500.00 per CDR) and an administrative fee of \$1,000.00, for a total of \$4,500.00.

AND, pursuant to Section 8-13-320 of the Ethics Act, if the \$4,500.00 is not paid within one (1) year from Respondent's receipt of this Order, a judgment shall be entered against Respondent. In the event of a failure to pay, upon the Commission's filing of said Judgment with the Clerk of Court's Office in the County of Respondent's last known residence, the Clerk of Court shall enter this Order in the amount of \$4,500.00, less any money paid, in its Judgment Rolls, without cost to the Commission.

FINALLY, Respondent Sam Davis has ten (10) days from receipt of this Order to appeal this Decision and Order to the full Commission.

AND IT IS SO ORDERED THIS 8<sup>th</sup> DAY OF September 2024.

STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

  
SCOTT E. FRICK, HEARING CHAIR

Columbia, South Carolina