

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

FOR COMMISSION USE ONLY:
CASE NUMBER
C 2023-002

COMPLAINT FORM

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

RESPONDENT: Terry V. Fowler
ADDRESS: [REDACTED]
TELEPHONE NUMBER: [REDACTED]
TITLE: Former Council Member – Town of
Cameron

Section 8-13-1120, SC Code Ann., 1976, as amended, requires certain officials to file a Statement of Economic Interests prior to assuming the duties of the office. Respondent was required to file the 2021 Statement of Economic Interests prior to April 12, 2021.

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 March 10, 2021 and March 15, 2021 and a Pre-Election Campaign Disclosure was due between October 13, 2021 and October 18, 2021.

Respondent was reminded of the filing requirements by a certified letter dated June 6, 2022 as described in the attached. To date, properly completed Pre-Election Campaign Disclosures and a 2021 Statement of Economic Interests have not been received. All in violation of Section 8-13-1120, 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 13th day of January, 2023

[REDACTED]
Meghan L. Walker, Executive Director

[REDACTED]
Notary Public for South Carolina
My Commission expires 01/22/26

SEC-7 (Revised 3/2022)

REPLY TO: 201 Executive Center Drive, Suite 150, Columbia, South Carolina 29210 (803)253-4192
ELECTRONIC COPIES WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA)
COUNTY OF RICHLAND)
IN THE MATTER OF:)
Complaint C2023-002)
Terry V. Fowler)
Respondent.)
State Ethics Commission)
Complainant.)

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, to support the allegations made 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 17, 2023 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 STATEMENT OF ECONOMIC INTERESTS
SECTION 8-13-1110, S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED

That Terry V. Fowler, Town of Cameron Council Member, did in Richland County, fail to file a Statement of Economic Interests prior to taking oath of office, in violation of Section 8-13-1110.

COUNT TWO
FAILURE TO FILE A PRE-ELECTION CAMPAIGN DISCLOSURE REPORT
SECTION 8-13-1308(D)(1), S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED

That Terry V. Fowler, Town of Cameron Council Member, did in Richland County, fail to

file a Pre-Election Campaign Disclosure Report (CDR) for the 2021 special election to report contributions of more than \$100.00, in violation of Section 8-13-1308(D)(1).

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

That Terry V. Fowler, Town of Cameron Council Member, did in Richland County, fail to file a Pre-Election CDR for the 2021 general election, in violation of Section 8-13-1308(A).

COUNT FOUR
FAILURE TO REPORT CONTRIBUTIONS
SECTION 8-13-1308(F)(2), S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED

That Terry V. Fowler, Town of Cameron Council Member, did in Richland County, fail to disclose a contribution above \$100.00 for the 2021 special election, in violation of Section 8-13-1308(F)(2).

COUNT FIVE
FAILURE TO REPORT EXPENDITURE
SECTION 8-13-1308(F)(4), S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED

That Terry V. Fowler, Town of Cameron Council Member, did in Richland County, fail to disclose a \$382.00 expenditure to purchase campaign signs, in violation of Section 8-13-1308(F)(4).

COUNT SIX
FAILURE TO OPEN CAMPAIGN BANK ACCOUNT
SECTION 8-13-1312, S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED

That Terry V. Fowler, Town of Cameron Council Member, did in Richland County, fail to open a campaign bank account to pay for campaign expenditures in the 2021 special election, in violation of Section 8-13-1312.

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 20th day,
of March 2023.

Certificate of Service by Certified Mail

I hereby certify that a copy of this **NOTICE OF HEARING** was duly served on the RESPONDENT Terry V. Fowler, 8029 Old State Road, Cameron, SC 29030 by depositing said **NOTICE OF HEARING** in the United States mail, Columbia, South Carolina on this 20th day of March 2023, by **CERTIFIED MAIL, E-RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED**, appropriate postage affixed, and a return address clearly indicated on said envelope.



Columbia, South Carolina

Rachael O'Bryan, Administrative Assistant
State Ethics Commission (803) 253-4192

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA)	
COUNTY OF RICHLAND)	BEFORE THE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION
)	
IN THE MATTER OF:)	
)	
Complaint C2023-002)	
)	
Terry V. Fowler)	AMENDED
Respondent.)	NOTICE OF HEARING
)	
State Ethics Commission)	
Complainant.)	
)	

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The following allegations will be heard:

COUNT ONE
FAILURE TO FILE A STATEMENT OF ECONOMIC INTERESTS
SECTION 8-13-1110, S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED

That Terry V. Fowler, Town of Cameron Council Member, did in Richland County, fail to file a Statement of Economic Interests prior to taking oath of office, in violation of Section 8-13-1110.

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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

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Meghan Walker Dayson, Executive Director
State Ethics Commission

Dated this 19th day,
of October 2023.

Certificate of Service by Certified Mail

I hereby certify that a copy of this **AMENDED NOTICE OF HEARING** was duly served on the RESPONDENT Terry V. Fowler, 8029 Old State Road, Cameron, SC 29030 by depositing said **AMENDED NOTICE OF HEARING** in the United States mail, Columbia, South Carolina on this 2nd day of October 2023, by CERTIFIED MAIL, E-RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED, appropriate postage affixed, and a return address clearly indicated on said envelope.



Rachael O'Bryan, Administrative Assistant
State Ethics Commission

(803) 253-4192

Columbia, South Carolina

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA)	
COUNTY OF RICHLAND)	BEFORE THE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION
)	
IN THE MATTER OF:)	
COMPLAINT C2023-002)	
)	
State Ethics Commission,)	CONSENT ORDER
Complainant,)	
)	
Terry V. Fowler,)	
Respondent.)	
_____)	

This matter comes before the State Ethics Commission (Commission) by way of a Complaint filed on January 13, 2023. Pursuant to Section 8-13-320(10)(i) of the South Carolina Ethics, Government Accountability, and Campaign Reform Act (Ethics Act), the Complaint against Terry V. Fowler (Respondent) was considered by the Commission and probable cause was found to warrant an evidentiary hearing. Prior to the hearing, Respondent agreed to the following:

STATEMENTS OF FACT

1. Respondent was a successful candidate in a March 30, 2021 special election for Cameron Town Council. Respondent’s term ended in December 2021.
2. Prior to the special election, Respondent spent \$382 in personal funds on campaign signs.
3. Respondent did not file a Pre-Election Campaign Disclosure Report (CDR) prior to the special election.
4. Respondent did not file a Statement of Economic Interests (SEI) prior to taking the oath of office.
5. Respondent was subsequently an unsuccessful candidate in a November 2, 2021 general election for Cameron Town Council.
6. Respondent did not file a Pre-Election CDR prior to the general election.
7. In a June 6, 2022 certified letter, the Commission notified Respondent of his failure to timely file a 2021 SEI, a 2021 Special Pre-Election CDR, and a 2021 General Pre-Election CDR.
8. According to the United States Postal Service, the certified letter was delivered to Respondent’s

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address of record on June 8, 2022 at 7:42 p.m. However, Respondent has provided the Commission with a signed writing wherein he swears and affirms that he did not receive the Commission's correspondence. Respondent further affirms that the postal service in his area does not run that late.

9. On January 24, 2023, following his receipt of the Complaint, Respondent contacted Commission staff for assistance filing.
10. On February 3, 2023, Respondent came into compliance by filing a 2021 SEI, a 2021 Special Pre-Election CDR, and a 2021 General Pre-Election CDR. Respondent disclosed a \$382 contribution and a \$382 expenditure on his 2021 Special Pre-Election CDR.
11. At the time Respondent came into compliance, he had accrued \$15,000 in late-filing penalties (\$5,000 per report).

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

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

1. At all times relevant, Respondent was a "public official" pursuant to Section 8-13-100(27) and a "candidate" pursuant to Section 8-13-1300(4). Therefore, the Commission has personal and subject matter jurisdiction.

2. Section 8-13-1110(A) provides, in relevant part:

No public official, regardless of compensation, and no public member or public employee as designated in subsection (B) may take the oath of office or enter upon his official responsibilities unless he has filed a statement of economic interests in accordance with this chapter with the appropriate supervisory office. If a public official, public member, or public employee referred to in this section has no economic interests to disclose, he shall nevertheless file a statement of inactivity to that effect with the appropriate supervisory office. All disclosure statements are matters of public record open to inspection upon request.

3. Section 8-13-1308 provides, in relevant part:

(A) Upon the receipt or expenditure of campaign contributions or the making of independent expenditures totaling an accumulated aggregate of five hundred dollars or more, a candidate or committee required to file a statement of organization pursuant to Section 8-

13-1304(A) must file an initial certified campaign report within ten days of these initial receipts or expenditures. However, a candidate who does not receive or expend campaign contributions totaling an accumulated aggregate of five hundred dollars or more must file an initial certified campaign report fifteen days before an election.

...

- (D) (1) At least fifteen days before an election, a certified campaign report must be filed showing contributions of more than one hundred dollars and expenditures to or by the candidate or committee for the period ending twenty days before the election . . .

...

- (F) Certified campaign reports detailing campaign contributions and expenditures must contain: (1) the total of contributions accepted by the candidate or committee; (2) the name and address of each person making a contribution of more than one hundred dollars and the amount and date of receipt of each contribution; (3) the total expenditures made by or on behalf of the candidate or committee; (4) the name and address of each person to whom an expenditure is made from campaign funds, including the date, amount, purpose, and beneficiary of the expenditure.

4. Section 8-13-1312 provides, in relevant part:

. . . expenses paid on behalf of a candidate or committee must be drawn from the campaign account and issued on a check signed by the candidate or duly authorized committee. All contributions received by the candidate or committee, directly or indirectly, must be deposited in the campaign account by the candidate or committee within ten days after receipt . . .

5. Section 8-13-1510 provides, in relevant part:

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.

6. Section 8-13-320(10)(1) allows the Commission to assess a \$2,000 civil penalty for each violation of the Ethics Act.

7. 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.

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DISCUSSION

The Commission found probable cause to charge Respondent with one (1) count of violating Section 8-13-1110 for failing to timely file a SEI prior to taking the oath of office, one (1) count of violating Section 8-13-1308 for failing to timely file a 2021 Special Pre-Election CDR; one (1) count of violating Section 8-13-1308 for failing to file a 2021 General Pre-Election CDR; one (1) count of violating Section 8-13-1308 for failing to timely disclose a \$382 contribution in a Special Pre-Election CDR; one (1) count of violating Section 8-13-1308 for failing to timely disclose a \$382 expenditure in a 2021 Special Pre-Election CDR; and one (1) count of violating Section 8-13-1312 for failing to use a campaign bank account.

Through this Consent Order, Respondent acknowledges he violated the Ethics Act when he failed to timely file the required reports and failed to disclose the required information. Respondent further acknowledges he violated the Ethics Act when he failed to open a campaign bank account. In exchange for Respondent's admission, the Commission declines to proceed on the two (2) counts related to Respondent's failure to disclose campaign activity within his CDRs.

In mitigation for the remaining counts, Respondent states that 2021 was his first run for public office and that he was unfamiliar with the Commission's filing requirements. Respondent further states that the only contribution to his campaign was from his personal funds. Respondent contends he did not receive the Commission's June 6, 2022 correspondence, as indicated by a signed statement provided to the Commission. Respondent also states that he came into compliance shortly following his receipt of the Complaint.

DISPOSITION

1. The Commission hereby finds Respondent in violation of one (1) count of Section 8-13-1110 for failing to file a SEI prior to taking the oath of office; one (1) count of 8-13-1308 for failing to

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timely file a 2021 Special Pre-Election CDR; one (1) count of 8-13-1308 for failing to timely file a 2021 General Pre-Election CDR; and one (1) count of 8-13-1312 for failing to open a campaign bank account.

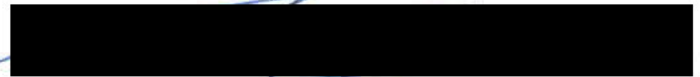
2. The Commission hereby adopts the Statements of Fact, Conclusions of Law, Discussion, and Disposition as agreed upon by the Respondent.

THEREFORE, the Commission hereby issues a written warning and orders the Respondent to pay the Commission, within ninety (90) days from receipt of this Order, a late-filing penalty of \$300 (\$100 per report) and an administrative fee of \$350, for a total of \$650. The Commission declines to assess the remaining accrued late-filing penalties and further declines to assess a civil penalty for Respondent's failure to open a campaign bank account.

By executing this Consent Order, Respondent understands that he is not only admitting to violations of the Ethics Act, but also confessing to a judgment of \$650 (less any money paid to the Commission) in the event he does not make full and timely payment as provided for in this Order. In that event, the Commission shall file a Judgment against Respondent in the Clerk of Court's Office in the County of Respondent's last known residence. Upon said filing, the Clerk of Court shall enter this Order in the amount of \$650 (less any money paid to the Commission) in its Judgment Rolls, without cost to the Commission.

AND IT IS SO ORDERED THIS 26 DAY OF AUGUST 2025.

STATE ETHICS COMMISSION



DocuSigned by:

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TERRY V. FOWLER
RESPONDENT