

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

STATE ETHICS COMMISSION
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FOR COMMISSION USE ONLY:
CASE NUMBER
C 2023-089

COMPLAINT FORM

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

RESPONDENT: Casey G. Hancock
ADDRESS: [REDACTED]
TELEPHONE NUMBER: [REDACTED]
TITLE: Mayor – City of Hartsville

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 2023 Statement of Economic Interests.

Section 8-13-1302 of the South Carolina Code Ann., requires that all candidates maintain a record of campaign contributions, expenditures, all receipted bills, canceled checks, or other proof of payment for each expenditure and the occupation of each person making a contribution for a period of four years. South Carolina Code of Regulations, Reg. 52-501.D requires that campaign records must be made available to the State Ethics Commission upon request. The Respondent failed to provide the occupation of thirty-one contributors.

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 than October 10, 2022, January 10, 2023, April 10, 2023, and July 10, 2023. Respondent was sent an email reminder thirty days before and ten days before each Campaign Disclosure deadline.

Section 8-13-1348 of the South Carolina Code of laws, 1976, as amended, prohibits a candidate from using campaign funds to defray personal expenses which are unrelated to the campaign. According to the Quarter 4 2021 Campaign Disclosure, the Respondent made an expenditure to Spider BP in the amount of \$309.03. The Respondent was instructed to provide a mileage log in connection with campaign travel, reimburse the campaign account from personal funds, or donate to the Children’s Trust Fund or a 501 (C)(3) if the campaign account is closed.


Respondent was reminded of the filing requirements by certified letters dated November 8, 2022 as described in the attached. To date, a properly completed 2023 Statement of Economic Interests, Quarter 3 2022, Quarter 4 2022, Quarter 1 2023, or Quarter 2 2023 Campaign Disclosure have not been received. In addition, the Respondent has not provided a mileage log, reimbursed the campaign account, or provided proof of a donation. All in violation of Section 8-13-1140, Section 8-13-1302, Section 8-13-1308(B), Section 8-13-1308 (F), and Section 8-13-1348, 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 Walker Dayson 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
12th day of July, 2023


Meghan Walker Dayson, Executive Director


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

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STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA)
COUNTY OF RICHLAND)
IN THE MATTER OF:)
Complaint C2023-089)
State Ethics Commission)
Complainant.)
Casey G. Hancock)
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, June 19, 2025 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 TIMELY DEPOSIT CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS
SECTION 8-13-1312, S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED

That Casey G. Hancock, City of Hartsville Mayor, did in Richland County, fail to deposit four (4) campaign contributions into his campaign bank account within ten (10) days of receipt, in violation of Section 8-13-1312.

COUNT TWO
FAILURE TO DEPOSIT CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS
SECTION 8-13-1312, S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED

That Casey G. Hancock, City of Hartsville Mayor, did in Richland County, fail to deposit

three (3) campaign contributions totaling \$141.12 into his campaign bank account, in violation of Section 8-13-1312.

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

That Casey G. Hancock, City of Hartsville Mayor, did in Richland County, fail to file a 2021 Pre-Election Campaign Disclosure Report (CDR), in violation of Section 8-13-1308(D)(1).

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

That Casey G. Hancock, City of Hartsville Mayor, did in Richland County, fail to file 2021 Quarter 4 CDR, in violation of Section 8-13-1308(B).

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

That Casey G. Hancock, City of Hartsville Mayor, did in Richland County, fail to file 2022 Quarter 1 CDR, in violation of Section 8-13-1308(B).

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

That Casey G. Hancock, City of Hartsville Mayor, did in Richland County, fail to file 2022 Quarter 2 CDR, in violation of Section 8-13-1308(B).

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

That Casey G. Hancock, City of Hartsville Mayor, did in Richland County, fail to file 2022 Quarter 3 CDR, in violation of Section 8-13-1308(B).

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

That Casey G. Hancock, City of Hartsville Mayor, did in Richland County, fail to file 2022 Quarter 4 CDR, in violation of Section 8-13-1308(B).

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

That Casey G. Hancock, City of Hartsville Mayor, did in Richland County, fail to file 2023 Quarter 1 CDR, in violation of Section 8-13-1308(B).

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

That Casey G. Hancock, City of Hartsville Mayor, did in Richland County, fail to file 2023 Quarter 2 CDR, in violation of Section 8-13-1308(B).

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

That Casey G. Hancock, City of Hartsville Mayor, did in Richland County, fail to file 2023 Quarter 3 CDR, in violation of Section 8-13-1308(B).

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

That Casey G. Hancock, City of Hartsville Mayor, did in Richland County, fail to file 2023 Quarter 4 CDR, in violation of Section 8-13-1308(B).

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

That Casey G. Hancock, City of Hartsville Mayor, did in Richland County, fail to file 2024

Quarter 1 CDR, in violation of Section 8-13-1308(B).

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

That Casey G. Hancock, City of Hartsville Mayor, did in Richland County, fail to file 2024 Quarter 2 CDR, in violation of Section 8-13-1308(B).

COUNT FIFTEEN
USE OF CAMPAIGN FUNDS FOR PERSONAL EXPENSES
SECTION 8-13-1348(A), S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED

That Casey G. Hancock, City of Hartsville Mayor, did in Richland County, use campaign funds to pay a personal expense of \$309.03 to Spider BP, in violation of Section 8-13-1348(A).

COUNT SIXTEEN
ACCEPTANCE OF CASH EXCEEDING CASH CONTRIBUTION LIMIT
SECTION 8-13-1314(A)(2), S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED

That Casey G. Hancock, City of Hartsville Mayor, did in Richland County, accept two (2) cash contributions over \$25.00, in violation of Section 8-13-1314(A)(2).

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 25th day,
of November 2024.

Certificate of Service by Certified Mail

I hereby certify that a copy of this **NOTICE OF HEARING** was duly served on the RESPONDENT Casey G. Hancock, 819 W. Home Avenue, Hartsville, SC 29550 by depositing said **NOTICE OF HEARING** in the United States mail, Columbia, South Carolina on this 4th day of December 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

State Ethics Commission

(803) 253-4192

Columbia, South Carolina

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA)
 COUNTY OF RICHLAND)
)
 IN THE MATTER OF:)
 COMPLAINT C2023-089)
)
 State Ethics Commission,)
 Complainant,)
)
 Casey G. Hancock,)
 Respondent.)
 _____)

BEFORE THE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

CONSENT ORDER

This matter comes before the State Ethics Commission (Commission) by way of a Complaint filed on July 12, 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 Casey G. Hancock (Respondent) was considered by the Commission and probable cause was found to warrant an evidentiary hearing. Prior to the call of the case, Respondent agreed to entry of the following:

STATEMENTS OF FACT

1. Respondent was a successful candidate for Hartsville City Mayor in a November 2, 2021 election.
2. Prior to the filing of the Complaint, Respondent’s most recently filed Campaign Disclosure Report (CDR) was a 2022 Quarter 2 CDR filed on October 14, 2022 showing a balance of \$22,612.32 in contributions. Respondent thereafter failed to file any additional quarterly CDRs prior to the filing of the Complaint.
3. In a November 8, 2022 certified letter, the Commission notified Respondent of his failure to timely file a 2022 Quarter 3 CDR.
4. According to the United States Postal Service, the certified letter was “Delivered, Individual Picked Up at Post Office” on December 1, 2022 at 2:55 p.m.
5. On December 2, 2022 and December 7, 2022, Respondent and Commission staff spoke via telephone and unsuccessfully attempted to reconcile Respondent’s filings.
6. On December 11, 2022, penalties began to accrue at \$10.00 per day.

7. On December 21, 2022, penalties began to accrue at \$100.00 per day.
8. On July 12, 2023, after further unsuccessful attempts to assist Respondent, the Commission filed its Complaint.
9. Following the filing of the Complaint, a Commission's investigator subpoenaed Respondent's campaign bank account which revealed: 1) Respondent failed to deposit four (4) contributions within ten (10) days of receipt; 2) Respondent failed to deposit three (3) contributions into his campaign accounts, specifically, an October 16, 2021 contribution from April Grigg-Woods in the amount of \$26.27, a November 5, 2021 contribution from Craig Lutz in the amount of \$10.70, and a November 8, 2021 contribution from Leroy F. Robinson in the amount of \$104.15; 3) Respondent accepted two (2) cash contributions exceeding \$25.00, one from Lauren Wint in the amount of \$200.00 and the other from Wanda Dawson in the amount of \$100.00.
10. On August 6, 2024, Respondent filed all required CDRs and is now in compliance.

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 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 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 8-13-1312 provides, in relevant part:

...except as otherwise provided under Section 8-13-1348(C), 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 a duly authorized officer of a 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...

4. Section 8-13-1314 provides, in relevant part:

(A) Within an election cycle, a candidate or anyone acting on his behalf shall not solicit or accept, and a person shall not give or offer to give to a candidate or person acting on the candidate's behalf:

...

(2) a cash contribution from an individual unless the cash contribution does not exceed twenty-five dollars and is accompanied by a record of the amount of the contribution and the name and address of the contributor;

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

... a person required to file a report or statement under this chapter who files a late 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. . .

6. Section 8-13-320 allows the Commission to require a civil penalty of up to \$2,000.00 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.

DISCUSSION

The Commission found probable cause to charge Respondent, in part, with eight (8) counts of violating Section 8-13-1308(B) for failing to file CDRs for 2022 Quarter 3, 2022 Quarter 4, 2023 Quarter 1, 2023 Quarter 2, 2023 Quarter 3, 2023 Quarter 4, 2024 Quarter 1, and 2024 Quarter 2;¹ one (1) count of violating Section 8-13-1312 for failing to deposit four (4) campaign contributions into his campaign bank account within ten (10) days of receipt; one (1) count of violating Section 8-13-1312 for failing to deposit three (3) campaign contributions totaling \$141.12 into his campaign bank

¹ The Commission also found probable cause to believe Respondent failed to timely file the following CDRs: 2021 Pre-Election; 2021 Quarter 4; 2022 Quarter 1; and 2022 Quarter 2. However, given that the late-filing penalty with regard to these CDRs has been handled through the Commission's typical noncompliance process, the Commission declines to proceed on these charges.

account;² and two (2) counts of violating Section 8-13-1314(A)(2) for accepting two (2) cash contributions exceeding \$25.00.³

Through this Consent Order, Respondent admits he violated the Ethics Act as outlined herein.

In mitigation, the Respondent states the following:

I want to apologize for this mess. Due to a series of mistakes when filing my financial disclosures, I found myself unable to reconcile my initial campaign finance reports after my election to office. The problem cascaded from one quarter to the next as, with the initial report unreconciled, I was also unable to reconcile and submit subsequent reports.

While I won't bore you with a litany of excuses, I will admit that the problems were due to my ignorance of policy and procedure when I first began reporting, errors in my transaction spreadsheets, and my own time mismanagement. During my campaign, my mother was ill and later passed away. I also moved homes twice since my election. I did poorly manage my time and responsibilities during that time.

I am very thankful to the staff of the State Ethics Commission for their help and patience during this process. While many people have helped me, Mr. Gaymon has been exceptionally kind and helpful in guiding me and keeping me informed. In the last month, Ms. Caughman's expertise was instrumental in tracking down the last few dollars of line items that kept my reports from reconciling. Again, I apologize for creating this mess that has taken up so much of the Commission's time, but I am grateful to have had the help I did in sorting it out. I am much better prepared to file my reports correctly in the future.

The Commission also acknowledges that Respondent's last contribution to his campaign was a \$1,050.00 personal contribution and that his only expenditure thereafter was a recurring website hosting fee until final disbursement.

DISPOSITION

1. The Commission hereby finds Respondent in violation as stated herein.

² The Commission found probable cause to believe Respondent violated Section 8-13-1312 in seven (7) total instances for his failure to properly deposit his contributions. Commission staff later combined the counts as reflected herein.

³ The Commission also found probable cause to believe Respondent violated Section 8-13-1308(F) for failing to properly disclose campaign contributions and expenditures. However, given that Respondent has since disclosed these contributions and expenditures, the Commission declines to proceed on these charges.

Further, the Commission found probable cause to believe Respondent violated Section 8-13-1348(A) for using campaign funds to pay for \$309.03 of fuel to Spider BP. However, Respondent has since remitted \$309.03 to a 501(c)(3) as instructed to remedy the violation. Therefore, the Commission declines to proceed as to this count.

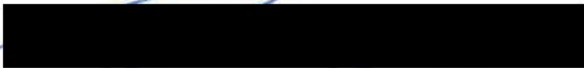
- 2. The Commission adopts the Statements of Fact, Conclusions of Law, Discussion, and Disposition as agreed upon by the Respondent.

THEREFORE, the Commission hereby issues this Public Reprimand to Respondent and orders Respondent to pay the Commission, within ninety (90) days from receipt of this Order, a reduced late-filing penalty of \$450.00 (\$100.00 for the 2022 Quarter 3 CDR and \$50.00 each for the remaining CDRs), a reduced civil penalty of \$650.00 (\$250.00 for the cash contributions in excess of \$25.00, \$200.00 for each violation of Section 8-13-1312), and an administrative fee of \$600.00, for a total of \$1,700.00.

By executing this Consent Order, Respondent understands that he is not only admitting to a violation of the Ethics Act, but also confessing to a judgment of \$1,700.00 in the event he does not make payment as provided for in this Order, in which case the Commission shall file a Judgment against Respondent with the County Clerk of Court in Respondent's last known County of residence, who shall enter this Order in the amount of \$1,700.00 (less any money paid) in its Judgment Rolls, without cost to the Commission.

AND IT IS SO ORDERED THIS 17th DAY OF APRIL 2025.

STATE ETHICS COMMISSION



Neal D. Truslow, Vice-Chair

DocuSigned by

CASEY G. HANCOCK
RESPONDENT