

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

FOR COMMISSION USE ONLY:
CASE NUMBER
c 2023-128

COMPLAINT FORM

COMPLAINANT: Kevin Cook
ADDRESS: [REDACTED]
TELEPHONE NUMBER: [REDACTED]
TITLE: CITIZEN

RESPONDENT: ROBERT RENNEN
ADDRESS: [REDACTED]
TELEPHONE NUMBER: NOT PUBLISHED
TITLE: COUNCILMAN

Set forth in detail specific facts upon which you based your complaint against above-named respondent (only detailed, clear factual allegations will be considered. If additional space is needed, attach supplemental sheets).

- 1) ROBERT RENNEN IS A CURRENT COUNCILMAN ON EDISTO BEACH TOWN COUNCIL.
- 2) PER THE ETHICS REFORM ACT CODE OF LAWS "ALL PUBLIC OFFICIALS" ARE REQUIRED TO FILE ANNUAL STATEMENTS OF ECONOMIC INTERESTS.
- 3) PER THE SC ETHICS COMMISSION WEBSITE, MR. RENNEN FAILED TO FILE HIS 2023 STATEMENT OF ECONOMIC INTERESTS. (SEE ATTACHED)

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 COLLETON

Personally appeared before me Kevin Cook who, first being duly sworn, says that he/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 his/her own knowledge, except for those matters therein based upon information and belief, and as to those he/she believes them to be true.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 17 day of October, 2023

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Complainant Signature

Notary Public for South Carolina
My Commission expires 7/9/2030

SHERRI E. EDSALL
Notary Public, State of South Carolina
My Commission expires 7/9/2030

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

Robert N. Renner
 510 Hurdle Rd, Folsom Island, SC 29438

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SEI Reports

Report Year	Disclosing for Year	Submitted	Last Amendment
SEI 2022 Report	2021	January 01, 2022	
SEI 2021 Report	2020	February 21, 2021	
SEI 2020 Report	2019	October 11, 2020	February 12, 2021

Ethics Reform Act
 Title 8 Statute
 Title 2 Statute

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STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA)
COUNTY OF RICHLAND)
IN THE MATTER OF:)
Complaint C2023-128)
Kevin Cook)
Complainant.)
Robert Renner)
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, April 18, 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 allegation will be heard:

COUNT ONE
FAILURE TO FILE A STATEMENT OF ECONOMIC INTERESTS
SECTION 8-13-1140, S.C. CODE ANN., 1976, AS AMENDED

That Robert Renner, Councilmember for Town of Edisto Beach, did in Richland County, fail to file a 2023 SEI, in violation of Section 8-13-1140.

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 22nd 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 Robert Renner, 510 Jungle Road, Edisto Island, SC 29438 by depositing said **NOTICE OF HEARING** in the United States mail, Columbia, South Carolina on this 21st 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
State Ethics Commission

Columbia, South Carolina

(803) 253-4192

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA)
 COUNTY OF RICHLAND)
)
 IN THE MATTER OF:)
 COMPLAINT C2023-128)
)
 Kevin Cook,)
 Complainant,)
)
 Robert Renner,)
 Respondent.)
 _____)

BEFORE THE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

CONSENT ORDER

This matter comes before the State Ethics Commission (Commission) by way of a Complaint filed on October 19, 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 Robert Renner (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 the following:

STATEMENTS OF FACT

1. Respondent is a councilmember for the Town of Edisto Beach and has served in this position since 2020.
2. Respondent failed to file a 2023 Statement of Economic Interests (SEI) on or before March 30th.
3. Respondent received the Complaint on October 28, 2023 and, prior to any contact from a Commission Investigator, came into compliance by filing his 2023 SEI on October 30, 2023.

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). Therefore, the Commission has personal and subject matter jurisdiction.
2. Section 8-13-1140 provides, in relevant part:

A person required to file a [SEI] under this chapter annually shall file, pursuant to Section 8-13-365, an updated statement for the previous calendar year, no later than noon on March thirtieth of each calendar year . . .

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.

DISCUSSION

The Commission found probable cause to charge Respondent with one (1) count of violating Section 8-13-1140 for failing to file a 2023 SEI. Respondent acknowledges he failed to timely file his 2023. In mitigation, Respondent states he began his 2023 prior to the filing deadline, but forgot to actually file the report. Respondent promptly came into compliance after receiving the Complaint.

DISPOSITION

1. The Commission hereby finds Respondent in violation of one (1) count of Section 8-13-1140.
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 this written warning to Respondent and orders Respondent to pay the Commission, within sixty (60) days from receipt of this Order, a late-filing penalty of \$100 and an administrative fee of \$250, for a total of \$350. The Commission notes there are no accrued late-filing penalties in this matter because Respondent did not receive certified notice of his failure to file pursuant to Section 8-13-1510(A).

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 \$350 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 \$350 (less any money paid) in its Judgment Rolls, without cost to the Commission

AND IT IS SO ORDERED THIS 1st DAY OF March 2024.

STATE ETHICS COMMISSION


SCOTT E. FRICK, CHAIR


ROBERT RENNER
RESPONDENT