

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

FOR COMMISSION USE ONLY:
CASE NUMBER
c 2024-005

COMPLAINT FORM

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

RESPONDENT: Frank T. Jones
ADDRESS: [REDACTED]
TELEPHONE NUMBER: [REDACTED]
TITLE: Candidate – Town of St. Stephen Council

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 an accumulated aggregate of \$500.00 or more; 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 19, 2022 and October 24, 2022.

Respondent was reminded of the filing requirement by a certified letter dated April 4, 2023 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 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
30th day of AUGUST, 2024

[REDACTED]
Meghan Walker Dayson, 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
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STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA)	
COUNTY OF RICHLAND)	BEFORE THE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION
)	
IN THE MATTER OF:)	
COMPLAINT C2024-065)	
)	
State Ethics Commission,)	DECISION AND ORDER
Complainant.)	
)	
Frank T. Jones,)	
Respondent.)	
_____)	

This matter came before the South Carolina Ethics Commission (Commission) by way of a Complaint filed on August 30, 2024. The Commission’s Executive Director reviewed the Complaint, determined it contained facts sufficient to warrant an investigation, and ordered an investigation. On November 21, 2024, the Commission reviewed the Complaint and investigative findings to determine whether probable cause existed to charge Frank T. Jones (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. On August 15, 2022, Respondent filed a Statement of Intention of Candidacy to run in a November 8, 2022 election for St. Stephen Town Council.
2. Following the filing of his SIC, Respondent unsuccessfully attempted to withdraw from the election. Accordingly, and unbeknownst to Respondent, his name still appeared on the November 8, 2022 ballot.
3. Respondent failed to file a 2022 Pre-Election Campaign Disclosure Report (CDR) prior to the November 8, 2022 election.
4. Following the filing of the Complaint, Respondent filed his 2022 Pre-Election CDR disclosing no contributions or expenditures other than the \$100.00 filing fee.

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 on the complaint. Section 8-13-320(10)(i). The decision to waive further proceedings lies within the sound discretion of the Commission. Section 8-13-1308(A) of the Ethics Act requires candidates for public office to file a Pre-Election CDR 15-20 days prior to each election, regardless of money raised or spent. Pursuant to Section 8-13-1510, an automatic \$100.00 late-filing penalty must be assessed when a candidate fails to timely file a Pre-Election CDR.

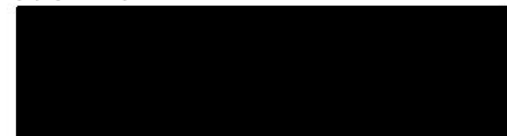
DECISION

Based on evidence presented, the Commission hereby determines there is probable cause to believe that Respondent violated Section 8-13-1308(A) of the Ethics Act by failing to file a 2022 Pre-Election CDR. However, given that Respondent thought that he had withdrawn from the election, the Commission hereby waives further proceedings with regard to this Complaint. The Commission notes that the \$100.00 late-filing penalty required by Section 8-13-1510 will still be assessed through the Commission's Non-Compliance Division.

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 11th DAY OF January, ²⁰²⁵ ~~2024~~ DEF

SOUTH CAROLINA ETHICS COMMISSION



SCOTT E. FRICK, CHAIR

Columbia, South Carolina