

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

FOR COMMISSION USE ONLY:

CASE NUMBER

c 2025-006

COMPLAINT FORM

COMPLAINANT: Andrew Litten

RESPONDENT: Allison Love

ADDRESS: [REDACTED]

ADDRESS: [REDACTED]

TELEPHONE NUMBER: [REDACTED]

TELEPHONE NUMBER: [REDACTED]

TITLE:

TITLE:

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).

It is my belief that Allison Love has violated Section 8-13-700(B) of the South Carolina Code of Laws by failing to properly disclose a conflict of interest by preparing a written statement and providing it to the presiding officer.

1. Allison Love is a member of the York County Council.
2. Allison Love is a member of the Nation Ford Land Trust (NFLT) Board of Directors. She became a member of the board in September 2019 according to the *about us* section of the Nation Ford Land Trust website. www.nationfordlandtrust.org
3. On 11/04/2024 - Ms. Love failed to follow the prescribed requirements of Section 8-13-700 when recusing from the vote to provide funding to NFLT. See item 1 under New Business of the November 04, 2024 York County Council Meeting Minutes.

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 Chester

Personally appeared before me Andy Litten 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
8 day of January, 2025

[REDACTED SIGNATURE]

Complainant Signature

Notary Public for South Carolina
My Commission expires 2-11-29

SEC-7 (Revised 3/2022)

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STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA)
COUNTY OF RICHLAND) BEFORE THE STATE ETHICS COMMISSION
))
IN THE MATTER OF:)
COMPLAINT C2025-006)
))
Andrew Litten,) **DECISION AND ORDER**
Complainant.))
))
Allison Love,)
Respondent.)
_____)

This matter came before the South Carolina Ethics Commission (Commission) by way of a Complaint filed on January 13, 2025. The Commission’s Executive Director reviewed the Complaint, determined it contained facts sufficient to warrant an investigation, and ordered an investigation. On May 15, 2025, the Commission reviewed the Complaint and investigative findings to determine whether probable cause existed to charge Allison Love (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.

STATEMENTS OF FACT

1. At all times relevant, Respondent served on York County Council (Council).
2. At all times relevant, Respondent served in a volunteer capacity on the Board of Directors of the Nation Ford Land Trust (NFLT), a non-profit organization primarily dedicated to the preservation of land in York County.
3. During a November 4, 2024 Council meeting, Respondent verbally recused herself from a vote to award NFLT funds related to a conservation easement, but did not file a written recusal statement.
4. Following the filing of the Complaint, Respondent completed a written recusal statement and submitted it to Karen Brogdan, Council’s Clerk.

LAW

Pursuant to Section 8-13-320, the Commission is empowered to receive complaints and

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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. Section 8-13-320(10)(i). The decision to waive further proceedings lies within the sound discretion of the Commission.

Section 8-13-700(B) prohibits a public official from participating in any matter in which a business with which she is associated has an economic interest. Pursuant to Section 8-13-700(B)(4), a public official is required to recuse themselves from any matter in which a business with which she is associated has an economic interest, and provide a written recusal.

DECISION

Based on evidence presented, the Commission finds that there is probable cause to support that Respondent violated Section 8-13-700(B)(4) for failing to submit a written recusal statement from Council's vote to award NFLT funds for a conservation easement on November 4, 2024. However, Respondent has since reduced her recusal to writing and the written recusal statement has been provided to the Clerk to Council. In addition, there was no evidence to suggest Respondent actually participated in the aforementioned matter. The Commission therefore finds probable cause to believe that Respondent violated Section 8-13-700(B)(4) of the Ethics Act, but waives further proceedings.

AND IT IS SO ORDERED THIS 27th DAY OF May, 2025.

SOUTH CAROLINA ETHICS COMMISSION



F. XAVIER STARKES, CHAIR

Columbia, South Carolina