

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA  
STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

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FOR COMMISSION USE ONLY:  
CASE NUMBER  
C 2022-141

COMPLAINT FORM

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

RESPONDENT: Larry E. Turner  
ADDRESS: [REDACTED]  
TELEPHONE NUMBER: [REDACTED]  
TITLE: Candidate – City of Westminster 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 \$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 October 16, 2019 and October 21, 2019.

Respondent was reminded of the filing requirement by letters dated October 6, 2021, January 12, 2022, and March 24, 2022 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 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 21<sup>st</sup> day of November, 2022

[REDACTED]  
Meghan L. Walker, Executive Director

[REDACTED]  
Notary Public for South Carolina  
My Commission expires 01/27/26

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 C2022-141	)	
	)	
State Ethics Commission,	)	<b>DECISION AND ORDER</b>
Complainant.	)	
	)	
Larry E. Turner,	)	
Respondent.	)	
_____	)	

This matter came before the South Carolina Ethics Commission (Commission) by way of a Complaint filed on November 21, 2022. The Commission’s Executive Director reviewed the Complaint, determined it contained facts sufficient to warrant an investigation, and ordered an investigation. On September 21, 2023, the Commission reviewed the Complaint and investigative findings to determine whether probable cause existed to charge Larry E. Turner (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. Respondent was an unsuccessful candidate for Westminster Town Council in a November 5, 2019 general election.
2. Respondent failed to file a Pre-Election Campaign Disclosure Report (CDR) prior to the November 5, 2019 election.
3. In an October 6, 2021 certified letter, the Commission assessed a \$100 late-filing penalty against Respondent for his failure to timely file a 2019 Pre-Election CDR. According to the letter, additional late-filing penalties would accrue if Respondent failed to file the report.
4. According to the United States Postal Service, the certified letter was delivered on October 9,

2021 at 12:42 p.m.

5. On October 14, 2021, Respondent submitted \$100 to the Commission and appealed the late filing penalty, but still did not file the Pre-Election CDR.
6. On October 19, 2021, penalties begin accruing at \$10 per day.
7. On October 29, 2021, penalties begin accruing at \$100 per day.
8. On January 12, 2022, Respondent's appeal was denied because the Pre-Election CDR had not been filed. Respondent was advised that his late-filing penalties totaled \$4,900.
9. On February 17, 2022, Respondent submitted \$4,900 to the Commission, but still did not file the Pre-Election CDR. In addition, Respondent requested a paper form on which to submit the Pre-Election CDR.
10. On March 24, 2022, the Commission advised Respondent that it does not utilize paper forms and instructed Respondent to file his Pre-Election CDR via the Commission's electronic filing system.
11. On August 29, 2023, following the filing of the Complaint, Respondent came into compliance with the assistance of Commission staff.

### 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. 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 to file a Pre-Election CDR fifteen (15) to twenty (20) days prior to each election, regardless of money raised or spent.

**DISCUSSION AND DECISION**

Based on evidence presented, the Commission hereby determines there is probable cause to believe that Respondent violated Section 8-13-1308(A) when he failed to file a Pre-Election CDR prior to his November 5, 2019 election. However, Respondent has paid the statutory maximum late-filing penalty of \$5,000 and is now in compliance. Based on the totality of the circumstances, the Commission hereby waives further proceedings pursuant to Section 8-13-320(10)(i) of the Ethics Act.

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 21<sup>st</sup> DAY OF October, 2023.

SOUTH CAROLINA ETHICS COMMISSION



SCOTT E. FRICK, CHAIR

Columbia, South Carolina