



Georgia Government Transparency and Campaign Finance Commission

200 Piedmont Avenue SE | Suite 1402, West Tower | Atlanta, Georgia 30334

404-463-1980 | www.ethics.georgia.gov

Regular Meeting | Thursday, March 26, 2015 | 10:00 AM

Summary of Commission Meeting

Location: 200 Piedmont Ave. SE, Suite 512,
5th Floor, West Tower, Atlanta, GA 30334

PRESENT:

Commission Members:

Dennis Cathey, Commission Member (Presiding for Chair)
Heath Garrett, Commission Member
Mary Paige Adams, Commission Member

Commission Members via Phone:

Hillary Stringfellow, Chair

Commission Members Absent:

R. Lawton Jordan III, Vice-Chair (In court)

Commission Staff:

Robert Lane, Staff Attorney
Bethany Whetzel, Staff Attorney
Nancy Sandberg, Legal Administrative Assistant
Andrew Booth, IT Specialist/Videographer
Erwin Yap, Office Administrator

Office of the Attorney General:

Kelly Campanella, Assistant Attorney General

SUMMARY OF SUBJECTS ACTED UPON:

Subject	Summary
Meeting Called to Order	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting was called to order at 10:16 AM
Welcome and Opening Comments of the Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commissioner Dennis Cathey presided over the meeting as the Vice Chair R. Lawton Jordan III, was excused from the meeting for last minute court appearance and Chair, Hillary Stringfellow while attending via phone would need to leave after Executive Session for an appointment. Commissioner Cathey welcomed everyone and stated that there is a full agenda of items to cover and encouraged the public to provide comments and feedback at the appropriate times. Agenda amended to move Hattie Holmes-Sullivan 2012-049 from Preliminary Hearings to Consent Orders.
Approval of December 10, 2014 Commission Meeting Minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Motioned and approved the December 10, 2014 Commission meeting minutes as presented with no corrections. .

Subject	Summary
Advisory Opinion 2014-03	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jonathan Hawkins gave a brief explanation of his role as outside legal counsel for the Commission in drafting the Advisory Opinions informing the Commission as to the request for an Advisory Opinion. The Commission received a request from Judge Stephen Schuster posing the following question: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Whether campaign contributions deposited into a campaign account may be expended by an elected official (e.g. a Superior Court Judge) for the purpose of acquiring a home security system? • The Commissioners motioned and approved the Advisory Opinion with the provision that the advisory opinion as it is drafted now needs to be refined/revise in the interest of answering the Judge’s question and recirculated to the Commission for one final review and be republished again before the next quarterly meeting.
Presentation of Rules and Public Hearing on Proposed Amendments, New and Repealed Rules:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair Stringfellow stated that an in-house analysis was made of the rules and comments from the public were incorporated. • Attorneys Robert Lane and Bethany Whetzel gave a brief overview of the changes to the Rules. Afterward those rules that public comment was to be made were identified and set aside for comment and voting separately. • Commissioners motioned and approved to adopt the proposed, new and repealed rules with no comments as presented. • The following rules were heard for public comment: Proposed Rules: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 189-1-.07 Adjustment of Contribution Limits Based Upon Inflation Motioned and voted to table this rule for further refinement. ○ 189-1-.08 Retention Schedule Motioned and approved to table rule to rewrite and present at the next meeting. ○ 189-2-.07 Investigations and Hearings Motioned and approved to table rule to revise for consistency of wording and present at the next meeting. ○ 189-2-.08 Disposition of Cases Motion and voted to table this rule for further written public comment in redrafting of this rule. ○ 189-3-.06 Flight on Noncommercial Aircraft by Candidate, Public Officer, or Person Traveling on Behalf of Candidate or Committee for Campaign Purposes. Motioned and approved to table this rule for further research in finding a simplified way of figuring Fair Market Value.

Georgia Government Transparency and Campaign Finance Commission

200 Piedmont Avenue SE | Suite 1402, West Tower | Atlanta, Georgia 30334

404-463-1980 | www.ethics.georgia.gov



Subject	Summary
<p>Presentation of Rules and Public Hearing on Proposed Amendments, New and Repealed Rules <i>(continued):</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 189-5-.01 Disposition of Contributions Without Limitation. Motioned and approved to adopt rule, as there was no comments made. ○ 189-5-.02 Contributions Remaining Unspent After the Election for Which They Were Received Motioned and approved to table for further staff review. ○ 189-5-.03 Contributions Which Must Be Returned to Contributors. Motioned and approved to table for further staff review. <p>New Rules:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 189-3-.11 Lobbying Expenditures on Legislative Families Motioned and approved to table for further review and presentation at the next meeting. ○ 189-3-.12 Lobbying Expenditure Cap Motioned and approved to table until the next meeting. ○ 189-6-.10 Declaration of Intention to Accept Campaign Contributions Must Be Filed Before Accepting Campaign Contributions Motioned and approved to table this rule for future meeting. ○ 189-6-.11 When Campaign contributions Made via Check or Negotiable Instrument are Deemed Received Motioned and approved to table this rule for future meeting. <p>Repealed Rules:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 189-6-.03 Maximum Allowable Contribution by Corporation Motion and approved to adopt all rule repeals.
<p>Meeting Broke for a 10 Minute Break</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meeting took a break at 12:31 PM and reconvened at 12:45 PM

Subject	Summary
Hardship Waiver Request Appeals (<i>Heard before Lunch</i>):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Late Fee Hardship Waiver Request Appeals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lobbyist Gregory Michael Griffin – The commissioners consented to let him comeback once he has properly submitted his Late Fee Hardship Waiver Request.
Meeting Broke for Lunch and Closed Executive Session to Discuss Personnel Matters:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motioned and approved to break for thirty minute lunch and entered into closed Executive Session to discuss Personnel matters at 12:59 PM • Motion and approved to exit Executive Session and return from lunch and reconvene the meeting at 1:38 PM • Commissioner Cathey noted for the record that Chair Stringfellow has been excused for the remainder of today’s meeting to attend her appointment. • Commissioner Cathey requested to move the Staff Presentations to the end of the Agenda to allow for those persons here for cases to be heard not to have to wait.
Hardship Waiver Request Appeals (<i>Heard after Lunch</i>):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hardship Waiver Request Appeals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lobbyist Anna Bullard Motioned and approved to Deny hardship. ○ Lobbyist Kenneth Joe Commission decided not to hear the appeal until he has completed his filings. ○ Subrenna Weathers Motioned and approved to Deny hardship. ○ Lobbyist Robert P. Houghton Motioned and approved to table for next meeting.
Administrative Dismissal:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative Dismissal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 2012-0023 Mike Beaudreau: Commissioners moved and approved to accept.
Preliminary Hearings:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preliminary Hearings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 2012-0055 Melynee Leftridge: Commissioners moved to continue based on Continuance letter by Counsel of Record – A. Lee Parks. ○ 2014-0037 Carolyn Cosby (Georgians for Healthcare Freedom): Counsel of Record has not responded to any correspondence and is said to be out of the country at present. Commissioners moved to entertain continuance at this time. ○ 2013-0036 Vera L. Jones: Commissioners moved and approved to continue based on Conflict Letter by Counsel of Record – Steve Scheer.

Georgia Government Transparency and Campaign Finance Commission

200 Piedmont Avenue SE | Suite 1402, West Tower | Atlanta, Georgia 30334

404-463-1980 | www.ethics.georgia.gov



Subject	Summary
Preliminary Hearings (<i>continued</i>):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 2013-0023 –Kimberly James: The commissioners motioned and approved to enter into a Consent Order to accept the \$500 Late Fees and Civil Penalty, but waive the monetary Civil Penalty fee because of her diligence and working with the staff. They also commended her on running for office for three different elections and for bringing her children to observe and gain an education of the process.
Consent Orders voted on by the Commission:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consent Orders: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 2015-0049 Hattie Holmes-Sullivan: Motioned and approved to assess \$250 Late Fees and \$500 Civil Penalty. ○ 2015-0004 Ralph Amos: Motioned and approved to assess \$125 Late Fees and \$100 Civil Penalty. ○ 2012-0029 Dale Rutledge, Represented by Robert Highsmith: Motioned and approved to assess \$975 Civil Penalty and require filing updates of the three 2 Day Business Reports in question within thirty days. ○ 2014-0058 Vernon Thomas: Motioned and approved to assess \$250 Late Fee and \$100 Civil Penalty. ○ 2012-0075 William Hendrix: Motioned and approved to assess \$375 Late Fee and \$500 Civil Penalty. ○ 2014-0052 Jalaludin K. Douglas: Motioned and approved to assess \$625 Late Fee and \$1,200 Civil Penalty in accordance with the terms of payment plan as outlined in the Consent Order. ○ 2012-0045 Cindy Jones Mills: Motioned and approved to assess \$350 Civil Penalty. ○ 2014-0017 David Pennington III Motioned and approved to assess \$400 Civil Penalty. ○ 2012-0064 & 2014-0001 Robert L. Henderson: Motioned and approved to assess \$250 Late Fee and \$1,400 Civil Penalty (deviation from Matrix due to financial hardship) paid in monthly installments as outlined in the Consent Order.

Subject	Summary
Consent Orders voted on by the Commission (<i>continued</i>):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 2013-0041 Ari Durham: Motioned and approved to assess \$100 Civil Penalty. ○ 2012-0041 Willie Mendel Saunders: Motioned and approved to assess \$250 Late Fee and \$1,000 Civil Penalty. ○ 2014-0056 Lee Chase Benedict, Jr.: Motioned and approved to assess \$125 Late Fee and \$100 Civil Penalty.
Comments by Presiding Officer Commissioner Cathey:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Commissioner Cathey requested that it be noted for the record with Commissioner Garret excusing himself that there is no quorum, leaving just himself and Commissioner Adams in attendance.
Staff Presentations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Erwin Yap, Office Administrator gave a presentation as to the state of the Budget. ● Andrew Booth, IT Specialist gave a presentation as to the state of the IT systems and projects that are being worked on. ● Attorney Robert Lane gave a presentation on Case Counts, Cases with the Attorney General’s Office, progress on active cases and future case management and audits ● Attorney Bethany Whetzel gave a presentation on Late Fee Hardship Waiver Requests and 2015 Lobbyist Registration.
Public Comment:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There were no public comment.
Meeting Adjourned:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meeting Adjourned at 3:39 PM. (No Quorum.)