

CITY OF AUSTIN ETHICS REVIEW COMMISSION

Doug Keenan
Complainant

v.

Paige Ellis
Respondent

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Complaint No. 20221109

ORDER ON PRELIMINARY HEARING

I. PROCEDURAL HISTORY

On November 9, 2022, Doug Keenan (“Complainant”) submitted to the Austin City Clerk (“City Clerk”) a Sworn Complaint (“the Complaint”) against Paige Ellis (“Respondent”). On November 9, 2022, the City Clerk sent a copy of the Complaint and a notice of filing to the City Attorney, the Chair of the Ethics Review Commission (“the Commission”), Complainant, and Respondent. The Complaint alleged that Respondent violated Section 2-2-21 (Additional Information Required on All Campaign Finance Reports Filed with the City) and Austin City Charter Article III, Section 8 (Limits on Campaign Contributions and Expenditures).

On December 14, 2022, the Commission conducted a Preliminary Hearing. During the hearing, Respondent agreed that she had violated Austin City Charter Article III, Section 8 and that refunds for most of the excessive contributions in question had been issued.

Based on respondent’s admission of a violation of Austin City Charter Article III, Section 8, the Commission determined by vote that a violation within its jurisdiction had occurred. The Commission further determined that a letter of notification be issued to the Respondent.

The agenda for the December 14, 2022 meeting of the Commission and Preliminary Hearing in this matter was timely posted on December 9, 2022. The Preliminary Hearing was

properly noticed in accordance with Chapter 2-7 of the City Code and the Texas Open Meetings Act. The Commission has jurisdiction over Chapter 2-2 of the City Code (Campaign Finance).

II. FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Complainant and Respondent appeared at the hearing and made statements under oath.
2. Complainant provided documentary evidence attached to his complaint. Respondent submitted documentary evidence for purposes of the hearing.
3. During the hearing, Complainant reiterated the evidence attached to his complaint.
4. During the hearing, Respondent described corrective measures taken by Respondent regarding violations of Austin City Charter Article III, Section 8. Respondent also referenced documentary evidence submitted by respondent for purposes of the hearing.

III. CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. Respondent agreed that they violated the Austin City Charter Article III, Section 8.
2. Based on the evidence and Respondent's admission, the Commission determined that reasonable grounds exist to believe that a violation within the jurisdiction of the Commission had occurred regarding violations of Austin City Charter Article III, Section 8.
3. Based on the evidence, the Commission determined that reasonable grounds did not exist regarding alleged violations of Section 2-2-21 (Additional Information Required on All Campaign Finance Reports Filed with the City) by a unanimous vote.
4. The Commission also determined that the appropriate sanction is a letter of notification.

IV. DETERMINATION OF THE ETHICS REVIEW COMMISSION

At the conclusion of the parties' presentations at the Preliminary Hearing, a motion was made and seconded to find that, based on Respondent's admission of violations of provisions within the jurisdiction of the Commission, a violation did occur as a result of the actions or omissions admitted by respondent. The Commission further determined that the appropriate

sanction for Respondent's violation is a Letter of Notification under Section 2-7-48(C)(1) of the Austin City Code. The motion in support of a letter of notification passed by a unanimous vote of the eight members present.

Accordingly, the Commission orders that a letter of notification be issued to Respondent.

ORDERED as of the 14th day of December, 2022.



Mary Kahle, Ethics Review Commission Vice Chair