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**BEFORE THE PUBLIC DISCLOSURE COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON**

In re the Matter of Enforcement Action
Against:

PDC CASE NO. 2603

FINAL ORDER

Benton County Democratic Central
Committee,
Respondent.

I. INTRODUCTION

This matter was heard by the Washington State Public Disclosure Commission (Commission) on February 23, 2017 at the Public Disclosure Commission Office, 711 Capitol Way, Room 206, Olympia, Washington 98504. The hearing was held pursuant to RCW 34.05, RCW 42.17A, and WAC 390-37. The proceeding was open to the public and recorded.

Commissioners Anne Levinson, Chair, John Bridges, Vice Chair, and David Ammons were present. Phil Stutzman, Senior Compliance Officer, presented the matter on behalf of Public Disclosure Commission Staff (Staff). Chad Standifer, Assistant Attorney General, was also present on behalf of Staff. Also present by phone was David Rose, Chair of the Benton County Democratic Central Committee.

The parties submitted to the Commission a proposed Stipulation as to Jurisdiction, Facts, and Violation (Stipulation). The Commission determined that the Stipulation would be accepted without modification.

1 The parties did not stipulate to a proposed penalty. Both Staff and the Respondent
2 made presentations regarding penalty. The Commission did not consider information outside
3 the evidence presented by the parties.

4 After reviewing the record, including the Stipulation, listening to the parties'
5 presentations, the Commission HEREBY ORDERS that the following Findings of Fact,
6 Conclusions of Law, and Final Order of the Commission be entered:

7 **II. FINDINGS OF FACT**

8 1. On August 24, 2015, Marilyn Moore filed a complaint with the Public
9 Disclosure Commission (PDC) alleging that the Benton County Democratic Central
10 Committee (BCDCC) had not filed any reports with the PDC since October 13, 2014. PDC
11 Staff confirmed that as of the date of the complaint, the last C-4 report of contributions and
12 expenditures on file was received October 15, 2014, covering the period of October 1, 2014
13 through October 14, 2014.

14 2. On September 16, 2015, PDC Staff sent a copy of the complaint to the BCDCC,
15 and on September 30, 2015, Jhoanna Jones, newly appointed BCDCC Treasurer, sent an email
16 to PDC Staff stating she had completed the missing reports for 2015, and would forward the
17 reports to the PDC as soon as they were signed.

18 3. The reports were not received from Ms. Jones as promised, and on February 8,
19 2016, PDC Staff sent another request for a response to the complaint to the Chair, Vice Chair,
20 and Secretary of the BCDCC.

21 4. On February 12, 2016, staff received an email from Regina Speer, stating she
22 became Chair of the BCDCC on January 20, 2016. She said she asked Ms. Jones to resign as
23 Treasurer, which she did. Ms. Speer said the only documentation she received from Ms. Jones
24 was three months of bank statements. Ms. Speer also said there was a Treasurer before Ms.
25 Jones' short tenure, who did not forward any documentation of her work to Ms. Jones. As of
26

1 February 21, 2016, the most recent C-1pc committee registration listed Jay Clough Chair,
2 Rebecca Voll, Vice Chair, and Fatema Karim, Treasurer.

3 5. On February 22, 2016 Michele Levenite submitted a C-1pc listing the following
4 new committee officers: Regina Speer, Chair and Michele Levenite, Treasurer.

5 6. Ms. Levenite identified two fundraisers for which adequate records were not
6 kept: (1) A May 2015 Norm Miller Leadership Dinner fundraiser, a \$75 per person fundraiser;
7 and (2) a December 4, 2015, All Democrats Holiday Party Celebration Winter Fests Around
8 the World fundraiser, a \$40.00 per person fundraiser. Ms. Levenite worked with the bank and
9 reconstructed a list of contributors for both fundraisers.

10 7. On behalf of the BCDCC, Ms. Levenite filed multiple missing reports between
11 July 27, 2016 and December 13, 2016. These reports included 18 late-filed C-4 reports
12 totaling \$34,707.41 in expenditures. The C-4 reports were filed between 1 and 638 days late,
13 and included expenditures made between September 1, 2014 and November 30, 2016. Ms.
14 Levenite also submitted 45 late-filed C-3 reports totaling \$18,503.10. The C-3 reports were
15 filed between 8 and 632 days late, and included deposits made between October 17, 2013 and
16 October 31, 2016.

17 **Statement of Intention Concerning Future Reporting**

18 8. Benton County Democratic Central Committee, through its Chair, David Rose,
19 affirms the Committee's intention to implement a system of internal control that will ensure
20 consistent, timely, accurate reports in the future. This system will include having at least one
21 current officer of the Committee verify on a monthly basis that all required reports have been
22 filed with the PDC by the Treasurer.

23 **III. CONCLUSIONS OF LAW**

24 1. The Commission has jurisdiction over this proceeding pursuant to
25 RCW 42.17A, the State campaign finance and disclosure law; RCW 34.05, the Administrative
26 Procedure Act; and WAC 390.

1 2. RCW 42.17A.205 states in part: “Every political committee shall file a
2 statement of organization with the commission. The statement must be filed within two weeks
3 after organization or within two weeks after the date the committee first has the expectation of
4 receiving contributions or making expenditures in any election campaign, whichever is
5 earlier.” Subsection 4 also states that “any material change in information previously
6 submitted in a statement of organization shall be reported to the commission within ten days
7 following the change.”

8 3. RCW 42.17A.210 states in part: “In the event of death, resignation, removal or
9 change of a treasurer or deputy treasurer, the candidate or political committee shall designate
10 and file with the commission the name and address of any successor.”

11 4. RCW 42.17A.235 and RCW 42.17A.240 requires candidates and continuing
12 political committees to file timely, accurate reports of contributions and expenditures. Under
13 the full reporting option, until five months before the general election, C-4 reports are required
14 monthly when contributions or expenditures exceed \$200 since the last report. C-4 reports are
15 also required 21 and 7 days before each election in which the committee makes expenditures,
16 and in the month following the election. Contributions are reported weekly during this same
17 time period, and must be disclosed on Monday for contributions deposited during the previous
18 seven days. Subsection 6 of RCW 42.17A.235 states the treasurer or candidate shall preserve
19 books of account, bills, receipts, and all other financial records of the campaign or political
20 committee for not less than five calendar years following the year during which the transaction
21 occurred.

22 5. Respondent BCDCC violated RCW 42.17A.235 and .240 by failing to timely
23 report contributions deposited between October 17, 2013 and October 31, 2016 totaling
24 \$18,503.10, and expenditures made between September 1, 2014 and November 30, 2016
25 totaling \$34,707.41.

1 6. Respondent BCDCC violated RCW 42.17A.205 by failing to file updated
2 committee registration forms disclosing a change in treasurers on two occasions.

3 7. Respondent BCDCC violated RCW 42.17A.235(6) by failing to preserve books
4 of account concerning its contributions received.

5 **IV. ORDER**

6 Based upon the findings and conclusions, the Commission orders that:

7 1. Respondent BDCC is assessed a total civil penalty of \$3,000.00, of which
8 \$2,000.00 is suspended on the following conditions:

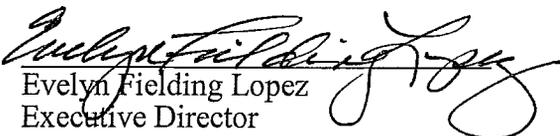
- 9 a. Respondent BCDCC pays the \$1,000.00 non-suspended portion of the
penalty within 30 days of receiving this Order.
- 10 b. Respondent BCDCC is in compliance with all required reporting
obligations under RCW 42.17A and WAC 390.
- 11 c. Respondent BCDCC commits no further violations of RCW 42.17A or
12 WAC 390 for four years from the date of the Order.
- 13 d. In the event Respondent BCDCC fails to meet any of the above terms of
14 this order, the entire penalty of \$3,000.00, which includes the suspended
15 portion of the penalty (\$2,000.00) will become immediately due without
any further intervention of the Commission, and PDC Staff will refer
any outstanding debt to the Department of Enterprise Services (DES) for
collection.

16 The Executive Director is authorized to enter this order on behalf of the Commission.

17 So ORDERED this 7th day of March, 2017.

18 WASHINGTON STATE PUBLIC
19 DISCLOSURE COMMISSION

20 FOR THE COMMISSION:

21 
22 Evelyn Fielding Lopez
Executive Director

23 *Copy of this Order mailed and emailed to:*
24 David Rose, Chair BDCC (chair@bencodems.org)
25 Phil Stutzman, PDC Staff (phil.stutzman@pdc.wa.gov)

26 FINAL ORDER
DISCLOSURE C
PDC CASE NO.

I, Kurt Young, certify that I mailed a
copy of this order to the Respondent/ Applicant at his/her
respective address postage pre-paid on the date stated
herein.

Signed WK/Young Date 3/7/2017

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4 NOTICE: RECONSIDERATION

5 PURSUANT TO THE PROVISIONS OF RCW 34.05.470 AND WAC 390-37-150 YOU
6 MAY FILE A PETITION FOR RECONSIDERATION WITH THE PDC WITHIN TWENTY-
7 ONE (21) DAYS FROM THE DATE THIS FINAL ORDER IS SERVED UPON YOU. ANY
8 REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION MUST STATE THE SPECIFIC GROUNDS FOR
9 THE RELIEF REQUESTED. PETITIONS MUST BE DELIVERED OR MAILED TO THE
10 WASHINGTON STATE PUBLIC DISCLOSURE COMMISSION, 711 CAPITOL WAY,
11 ROOM 206, BOX 40908, OLYMPIA WA 98504-0908.

9 NOTICE: PETITION FOR JUDICIAL REVIEW

10 YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO APPEAL THIS FINAL ORDER TO SUPERIOR COURT,
11 PURSUANT TO THE PETITION FOR JUDICIAL REVIEW PROVISIONS OF
12 RCW 34.05.542. ANY PETITION FOR JUDICIAL REVIEW OF THIS FINAL ORDER
13 MUST BE FILED WITH THE COURT AND ALSO SERVED UPON BOTH THE
14 COMMISSION AND THE OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL WITHIN THIRTY
15 (30) DAYS AFTER THE DATE THIS FINAL ORDER IS SERVED UPON YOU.
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