



**State of Washington
PUBLIC DISCLOSURE COMMISSION**

711 Capitol Way Rm. 206, PO Box 40908 • Olympia, Washington 98504-0908

(360) 753-1111 • FAX (360) 753-1112

Toll Free 1-877-601-2828 • E-mail: pdcc@pdcc.wa.gov • Website: www.pdca.wa.gov

July 26, 2019

Delivered electronically to "lisaloni@yahoo.com"

Subject: PDC Case 51796

Dear Lisa Thomas:

Below is a copy of an electronic letter sent to Carly Coburn concerning a complaint filed with the Public Disclosure Commission (PDC).

As noted below to Carly Coburn, the PDC will not be conducting a more formal investigation into these allegations or taking further enforcement action in this matter

PDC staff are reminding you about the importance of the timely and accurate disclosure of the Candidate Registration (C-1 report). The C-1 report must be filed within two weeks of becoming a candidate. A person becomes a candidate for PDC purposes when he or she first does any one of the following: (1) Receives contributions, makes expenditures, or reserves space or facilities with intent to promote his or her candidacy; (2) Purchases commercial advertising space or broadcast time to promote his or her candidacy; (3) Authorizes another person to take one of these aforementioned actions on his or her behalf; (4) Announces publicly that he or she is seeking office; or (5) Files a declaration of candidacy with the appropriate elections official.

If you have questions, you may contact Micaiah Ragins at 1-360-586-4555 toll-free at 1-877-601-2828, or by e-mail at pdcc@pdcc.wa.gov.

Sincerely,

/s _____
Micaiah Ragins
Compliance Coordinator

Endorsed by,

/s_____

Barbara Sandahl

Deputy Director

For Peter Lavallee

Executive Director



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July 26, 2019

Delivered electronically to "carlycoburn4109@gmail.com"

Subject: Complaint regarding Lisa Thomas, PDC Case 51796

Dear Carly Coburn:

The Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) has completed its review of the complaint you filed on May 22, 2019. Your complaint alleged that Lisa Thomas, a first-time candidate seeking the office of Council Member for the City of Richland, may have violated RCW 42.17A.205 for failure to timely file the Candidate Registration (C-1 report) within two weeks of becoming a candidate.

PDC staff reviewed your allegations, the applicable statutes, rules, and reporting requirements; the response provided by Lisa Thomas; and the applicable PDC reports filed by the Campaign, to determine whether the record supports a finding of one or more violations.

Based on staff's review, we found the following:

- On March 6, 2019, Lisa Thomas posted the following announcement on Facebook: "Welp, guess I'm runnin for city council!" Lisa Thomas subsequently filed a public declaration of candidacy with the Benton County Auditor's Office on May 16, 2019.
- On May 22, 2019, Lisa Thomas filed a Candidate Registration (C-1 report) with the PDC, declaring her candidacy for Council Member for the City of Richland and selecting the Full Reporting option. The C-1 report was filed over 2 months after posting the Facebook announcement about running for city council. The C-1 report was filed on the same day that the PDC received the complaint.
- On June 2, 2019, Lisa Thomas provided a response to the allegations which stated that the "Facebook post in March was not a public declaration of candidacy; but rather a sarcastic and humorous expression of frustration in reaction to a decision of a public entity that I disagreed with."

- RCW 42.17A.005 states that a "Candidate" means any individual who seeks nomination for election or election to public office. This includes posting on social media an intent to run for office and subsequently filing a public declaration of candidacy. The evidence indicates that Lisa Thomas became a candidate for public office when the Facebook post was made on March 6, 2019. According to RCW 42.17A.205, candidates in jurisdictions of 5,000 or more registered voters are required to file the Candidate Registration (C-1 report) with the PDC within two weeks of declaring candidacy or no later than June 1, 2019.

Based on these findings and the following facts, staff has determined that in this instance, the failure to timely and accurately file the Candidate Registration (C-1 report) does not amount to a material violation warranting further investigation since: (1) Lisa Thomas was a first-time candidate for public office in 2019 and the Campaign was inexperienced with the PDC reporting requirements; (2) The late Candidate Registration (C-1 report) was submitted to the PDC prior to the filing of a complaint regarding the late report; and (3) The noncompliance did not occur during a critical election period and did not materially impact the public interest.

PDC staff are reminding Lisa Thomas about the importance of the timely and accurate disclosure of the Candidate Registration (C-1 report). The C-1 report must be filed within two weeks of becoming a candidate. A person becomes a candidate for PDC purposes when he or she first does any one of the following: (1) Receives contributions, makes expenditures, or reserves space or facilities with intent to promote his or her candidacy; (2) Purchases commercial advertising space or broadcast time to promote his or her candidacy; (3) Authorizes another person to take one of these aforementioned actions on his or her behalf; (4) Announces publicly that he or she is seeking office; or (5) Files a declaration of candidacy with the appropriate elections official.

Based on this information, the PDC has dismissed this matter in accordance with RCW 42.17A.755(1), and will not be conducting a more formal investigation into your complaint or pursuing further enforcement action in this case. If you have questions, you may contact Micaiah Ragins at 1-360-586-4555 toll-free at 1-877-601-2828, or by e-mail at pdcc@pdcc.wa.gov.

Sincerely,

/s _____
Micaiah Ragins
Compliance Coordinator

Endorsed by,

/s _____
Barbara Sandahl
Deputy Director
For Peter Lavallee
Executive Director