



**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.pdcc.wa.gov

December 4, 2019

Delivered electronically to dstokesbary@stokesbarypllc.com

Subject: Complaint filed by Fennelle Miller, PDC Case 59159

Dear Drew Stokesbary, counsel for Cory Wright

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

As noted in the letter to Fennelle Miller, the PDC has dismissed this matter in accordance with RCW 42.17A.755(1) and will not conduct a more formal investigation into these allegations or take further enforcement action in this matter.

If you have questions, contact Alice Fiman at (360) 586-4746, toll-free at 1-877-601-2828, or by e-mail at pdcc@pdcc.wa.gov.

Sincerely,

/s

Alice Fiman
Compliance Officer

Endorsed by,

/s

Barbara Sandahl
Deputy Director
For Peter Lavallee
Executive Director



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December 4, 2019

Delivered electronically to fennelle@icloud.com

Subject: Complaint regarding Cory Wright, PDC Case 59159

Dear Fennelle Miller:

The Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) has completed its review of the complaint you filed October 24, 2019. The complaint alleged Kittitas County Commissioner Cory Wright may have violated RCW 42.17A.555 by using county facilities to support the 2019 campaign of Cory Wright for Kittitas County Commissioner.

PDC staff reviewed the allegations, the applicable statutes and rules, the mailer, and the response provided by Drew Stokesbary of Stokesbary PLLC, counsel for Cory Wright, to determine whether the record supports a finding of one or more violations.

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

- Cory Wright was appointed to the Kittitas County Board of County Commissioners (Board), District 1 in July 2018, and filed a Candidate Registration with PDC on April 19, 2019 for election. Wright was elected to the Board on November 5, 2019.
- On October 11, 2019, Lisa Young sent an email to all Kittitas County department leadership and elected officials informing them of a Public Records Request regarding an August 2019 incident at a Kittitas County Board of County Commissioners executive session.
- The email included all information Young would be releasing to fulfill the Public Records Request, plus a response Wright had prepared when contacted by a local media outlet.
- In response, Stokesbary stated "The Complainant, vaguely and without any evidence, alleges that Mr. Wright "manipulated the resources of the county" and "campaign[ed] for [himself], by sending out an email...defending [himself] from external campaign accusation." Both of these assertions are false and, again, lacking evidence. In reality, Mr. Wright prepared a statement (the "Wright Statement") sharing his perspective about the executive session events. The Wright Statement was prepared without any use of

Kittitas County resources and published on Mr. Wright's personal social media channels and campaign webpage. Unbeknownst to Mr. Wright, Ms. Young had been simultaneously preparing the Young Email as part of her official duties. After the Wright Statement was posted, Ms. Young informed Mr. Wright that she was drafting the Young Email and asked his permission to include a copy of the Wright Statement. Mr. Wright consented to this request, but he never asked, directed, suggested or encouraged Ms. Young to send the Young Email or include the Wright Statement as an attachment."

- Stokesbary also stated, "On October 2, Commissioner Wright was personally notified of the public records request by Lisa Young, as a courtesy and as is customary, because the request specifically asked for documents related to Commissioner Wright. On October 3, the entire Board of County Commissioners was formally notified of the records request. Commissioner Wright never requested copies of the letters in question. Copies were provided to the entire Board of County Commissioners at some point prior to October 10. On the evening of October 10, Commissioner Wright was interviewed by a reporter from the Ellensburg Daily Record. Following the call, to provide additional context to his answers, Commissioner Wright provided the reporter with a copy of the letters on a confidential basis. On October 11, Commissioner Wright publicly posted copies of the letters, as well as his personal statement, on his personal website and Facebook page at 1:46 PM."
- As noted in PDC case 59160, Kittitas County Human Resources Director Lisa Young received a copy of Wright's response on her personal cell phone, however she did not request it. She then requested Wright send the email to her county email, which Wright did.
- RCW 42.17A.555 states "No elective official nor any employee of his or her office nor any person appointed to or employed by any public office or agency may use or authorize the use of any of the facilities of a public office or agency, directly or indirectly, for the purpose of assisting a campaign for election of any person to any office or for the promotion of or opposition to any ballot proposition."
- RCW 42.17A.555 does not restrict the right of any individual to express his or her own personal views concerning, supporting, or opposing any candidate or ballot proposition, if such expression does not involve a use of the facilities of a public office or agency.
- Cory Wright is not found to have used public facilities to promote his 2019 campaign for Kittitas Board of County Commissioners.

Based on these findings staff has determined, in this instance, the alleged use of public facilities to support the campaign of Cory Wright for Kittitas County Commissioner does not amount to a violation warranting further investigation.

Based on this information, the PDC finds that no further action is warranted and has dismissed this matter in accordance with RCW 42.17A.755(1).

If you have questions, contact Alice Fiman at 1-360-586-4746 or toll-free at 1-877-601- 2828, or by e-mail pdcc@pdc.wa.gov.

Sincerely,

Endorsed by,

/s

Alice Fiman
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