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

7 In Re: The Matter of Enforcement Action
8 Against:

9 CHARLES KNUTSON,
10 Respondent.
11

PDC CASE NO. 94096

FINAL ORDER ON REQUEST
FOR RECONSIDERATION

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13 This matter was heard at a Special Meeting of the Washington State Public Disclosure
14 Commission (Commission) on October 12, 2021, by telephonic and online streaming access.
15 Charles Knutson (Respondent), requested review of the Presiding Officer's Order, issued
16 following a Brief Enforcement Hearing (Brief Adjudicative Proceeding) held July 15, 2021. The
17 hearing was held in accordance with Chapters 34.05 and 42.17A RCW, and Chapter 390-37
18 WAC.

19 Commissioners present were Fred Jarrett, Commission Chair (presiding); Nancy Isserlis,
20 Commission Vice-Chair; and Commissioners William Downing and Allen Hayward. Also
21 present both telephonically and online were Assistant Attorney General John S. Meader
22 representing the Commission, Assistant Attorney General Chad Standifer, representing PDC
23 Staff, and Tabitha Townsend, PDC Compliance Coordinator. The Respondent appeared on his
24 own behalf. The proceeding was open to the public as limited by Governor's Proclamation 20-
25 28 *et seq.* and recorded.

26 The Commissioners had before them the following materials:

- 1 1. Case memorandum dated October 6, 2021, prepared by Tabitha Townsend, PDC
2 Compliance Officer;
- 3 2. Brief Enforcement Hearing Notice served June 25, 2021;
- 4 3. Initial Order Imposing Fine, PDC Case #93968, entered August 17, 2021;
- 5 4. F-1 report covering calendar year 2020, filed September 16, 2021;
- 6 5. Respondent's request for reconsideration, dated September 22, 2021;
- 7 7. Reconsideration Hearing Notice, served October 4, 2021.

8 9 **I. FINDINGS OF FACT**

10 This matter involves Charles Knutson (Respondent), a Professional Staff member for the
11 Office of Financial Management during calendar year 2020. His position ended on December
12 22, 2020. During a Brief Enforcement Hearing held on July 15, 2021, Respondent was found to
13 have violated RCW 42.17A.700 for failure to timely file a Personal Financial Affairs Statement
14 (F-1 Report) no later than April 15, 2021. At the Brief Enforcement Hearing an Order imposing
15 a \$250 civil fine, with \$150 suspended, was entered. The Respondent has no prior violations of
16 RCW 42.17A.700 with the PDC.

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18 1. Pursuant to RCW 42.17A.700, an elected or appointed official who held office in
19 2020 was required to file an F-1 report, disclosing financial information for calendar year 2020,
20 no later than April 15, 2021.

21 2. Between February and May, 2021, PDC staff sent email reminders to all elected
22 and appointed officials regarding their missing F-1 reports for calendar year 2020.

23 3. On May 11, 2021, PDC staff emailed a warning notice regarding the missing F-1
24 report for calendar year 2020. The notice was sent to the Respondent's email address of record.

25 4. On June 29, 2021, PDC staff emailed a hearing notice for a July 15, 2021, Brief
26 Adjudicative Proceeding (Brief Enforcement Hearing) to Respondent's email address of record.

1 5. At the Brief Enforcement Hearing held on July 15, 2021, the Respondent was
2 found in violation of RCW 42.17A.700 for failure to timely file the F-1 report no later than April
3 15, 2021. Respondent was assessed a \$250 penalty consistent with WAC 390-37-143, the Brief
4 Enforcement Hearing penalty schedule adopted by the Commission. The Presiding Officer
5 suspended \$150 of the \$250 penalty conditioned upon the Respondent filing the missing F-1
6 report and paying the non-suspended \$100 penalty within 30 days of the Initial Order being
7 served.

8 6. On August 17, 2021, PDC staff served the Initial Order to the Respondent’s email
9 address of record.

10 7. The F-1 report was filed covering calendar year 2020 on September 16, 2021.

11 8. On September 22, 2021, the Respondent submitted written materials to PDC staff
12 appealing the August 16, 2021, Initial Order based on the Respondent’s belief that the email
13 account the PDC used to notify him was no longer functioning, and that his work on the state’s
14 emergency response to COVID-19 frustrated compliance.

15 9. On October 4, 2021, PDC staff served the Respondent by email with a hearing
16 notice for a October 12, 2021, Reconsideration Hearing before the Public Disclosure
17 Commission along with instructions on how to participate in the hearing remotely.

18 19 **II. CONCLUSIONS OF LAW**

20 1. The Commission has jurisdiction over this proceeding pursuant to Chapter
21 42.17A RCW, the State campaign finance and disclosure law; Chapter 34.05 RCW, the
22 Administrative procedure Act; and Title 390 WAC.

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24 2. The Respondent violated RCW 42.17A.700 by failing to timely file the F-1
25 report for calendar year 2020 that was due no later than April 15, 2021.
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1 **II. ORDER**

2 The civil penalty of \$250, with \$150 suspended, assessed at the July 15, 2021, brief
3 adjudicatory hearing, is RESCINDED in full. The finding of a violation of RCW 42.17A.700 for
4 failing to timely file the annual Personal Financial Affairs Statement (F-1 report) that was due
5 no later than April 15, 2021 stands as stated in the order dated July 15, 2021.

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7 SO ORDERED this __8th__ day of October, 2021.

8 WASHINGTON STATE PUBLIC
9 DISCLOSURE COMMISSION

10 FOR THE COMMISSION:

11 

12 Fred Jarrett,
13 Chair, Public Disclosure Commission

14 *This order sent by email to:*
15 Charles Knutson, Respondent
charlesgknutson@gmail.com

16 Tabitha Townsend,
17 PDC Compliance Coordinator,
pdc@pdc.wa.gov

18 I, __Tabitha Townsend__, certify that I emailed and
19 mailed a copy of this order to the Respondent at his
20 respective email and mailing addresses.

21 Electronically Signed Tabitha Townsend 11/9/2021
22 Signed Date

23 **NOTICE: PETITION FOR JUDICIAL REVIEW**

24 You have the right to appeal this Final Order to Superior Court, pursuant to the Petition for
25 Judicial Review provisions of RCW 34.05.542. Any Petition for Judicial Review of this Final
26 Order must be filed with the court and also served upon both the Commission and the Office of
the Attorney general within thirty (30) days after the date this Final Order is served upon you.