

[Smittyforjudge](#)

Mon, 23 Dec 2024 at 4:07 PM

To:"PDC Support" <pdcc@pdcc.wa.gov>

External Email

Hello Ms. Mercier:

This is intended to respond to the complaint(s) filed by Mr. Edwards.

Using his order, the **1st complaint** attached to the email (above) regarding my having parked my car in front of the courthouse on Election Day. Yes I did do that, as I do every day, including on weekends, when I am in the office. And, ever since I got my signs from the printer, (June, 2024) I have placed one or 2 of them in or on my car while it is parked outside of the courthouse. Please note that the parking area around the Stevens County Courthouse is all on public streets and there is no reserved parking. So I take issue with Mr. Edwards on this alleged violation.

My reading of the rules regarding campaigning includes the legislative intent, 2nd paragraph:

"...The intent of the law is not to trap or embarrass people when they make honest remediable errors. A majority of smaller campaigns are volunteer-driven and most treasurers are not professional accountants. The public disclosure commission should be guided to review and address major violations, intentional violations, and violations that could change the outcome of an election or materially affect the public interest." (from the NOTES in RCW 42.17A.235)

The **2nd issue/complaint** alleges that I used official government e-mail address for campaign purposes, then he kindly shows the PDC exactly how that was done. Specifically and only for the purpose of corresponding with him regarding his request to review my bookkeeping for my campaign. Please also note that within the email chain, I also used my candidate email account as much as time allowed me to do so. Accessing that email account can only take place before or after work, and I live 33 miles north of the courthouse and work 8 – 5 or 6 – sometimes later, so it doesn't leave a lot of time to respond and time was of the essence to reply.

So, while it is true, obviously, that I used the work account to respond to him, several times, the way that this use of government resources fits into the category of "campaign purposes" seems benign at least, and it is a public record in case further investigation needs to be done for scrutiny of my, presumably, alleged efforts to get around the rules of public disclosure of my campaign finances. Having said that, and as a segue into the 3rd complaint, I do admit that if I had had my bookkeeping in better order as the campaign went along, I would have been able to respond to him more immediately and probably without using the work email, so in the end, I am at fault for this violation. But even with these facts, I do not believe this violation endangers the transparency sought by these PDC goals and rules in this case.

3rd complaint: I do not agree that I failed to provide Mr. Edwards my complete books of account. I do agree that I did not keep receipts of purchases I made with either my checking account – copies of which checks I gave Mr. Edwards, or with my specifically designated campaign credit card, copies of which I gave to Mr. Edwards as well. I also provided the vendors' invoices to Mr. Edwards.

Most of the other information that Mr. Edwards sought within these categories of financial expenditure for my campaign are identified within the documents I provided to Mr. Edwards, such as the newspaper ads, and the number of printed material items purchased. I'm not entirely sure what he means by the word "subvendors".

I explained the process I used in keeping records of my purchases to him. To repeat for the benefit of the PDC's review of my response, I only paid for campaign related services with my campaign specific credit card or my checkbook from my personal checking account. I had a store of money from a home I sold in East Wenatchee in 2023 in preparation for finalizing my divorce and I used those funds to finance my campaign expenses. I moved money from my savings account from the house sale (account labeled "house"), into my campaign account as necessary to cover the payments on my campaign credit card. My campaign was entirely self-funded and each expenditure has been disclosed. I believe that (being self-funded) is a slightly different category of scrutiny for PDC rules purposes under the rules for public disclosure according to my reading of them.

I DO acknowledge that I was not as timely with my reporting as the rules call for. I also acknowledge that my efforts to navigate the website reporting process were at first abysmally inaccurate, as I wrote down expenses more than once, thinking that they had not been recorded the first or even the 2nd time I added them, but I was under the impression that after I spent a significant amount of time with one of the helpful staff members at the PDC, I had corrected those double or otherwise inaccurate entries. I now see that according to the list in one of the attachments to Mr. Edwards' complaints included, there are still 2 double entries: specifically, a double entry indicating that I paid PressCats \$2,988.59 twice on the same date of 5/19/2024 when in fact I only paid that once. Similarly, I see that the initial filing fee paid to the State for entry into the race of \$2,173.91 appears twice from the same day, May 12, 2024 when it should only be in there once.

On the 2nd attached complaint (above) I think I addressed the dearth of C-4 filings in my answer above, and have remedied that since, admittedly not timely. The negative cash on hand balance was filed due to my inability to navigate the website's requirements and procedures, but I believe I was able to correct/amend that and the filing after I spoke to the support staff at PDC at some length some time later in the summer.

The quantity of yard signs: I disclosed that when I emailed the invoices from PressCats, copies of which were attached to Mr. Edwards' first attachment complaint (above).

I did not pay the State \$2,173.91 twice. That was the filing fee and I paid that once.

The only contributions (other than advice from Senit Lutgen) that were made to my campaign were from my own account as explained above.

The 3rd complaint contained in the attachments (above) regarding my lack of filing my 21 day pre-general C4 report is also true, I did not file it timely, but I believe it has been remedied also with the filing I did closer in time to the actual election day. It should be in the PDC's records.

Having said all of the above, and not that there are any excuses, I still offer the following additional explanations for my errors and/or omissions with this process:

I did not have a person to manage my campaign nor did I have a treasurer even though I asked some folks to help me with that;

I work a lot;

I did keep records carefully but did not take the time to figure out how to input them properly during the work day when the support staff was available to assist me over the phone. Again I work a lot and I forget to do extracurricular things when I'm working. That's one of the reasons that I was so irritated and reluctant to have to answer Mr. Edwards using my work email;

On July 19 as I walked to my car after work, I was attacked by an individual with a machete. He missed my neck but caught a glancing blow to my shoulder and hit my jaw/face with the blade. I went to the hospital in an ambulance and there received 4 figure 8 stitches to stop the artery bleed, then 16 internal stitches to close a layer, then 32 more to completely close the wound. I admit I was shaken a bit by that event. The individual who assaulted me later was killed by the police when he attacked one of them with the same machete. I think suicide by cop, but who knows? My point is, I was thinking existential thoughts for a while as opposed to campaign finance concerns and the reporting thereof. Especially because I knew where all of my funding was coming