

4.B.1



STATE OF CALIFORNIA
FAIR POLITICAL PRACTICES COMMISSION
1102 Q Street • Suite 3050 • Sacramento, CA 95811

January 19, 2024

Annika Peacock

Via email: [REDACTED]

Re: FPPC Case No. 2024-00091

Dear Annika Peacock:

This letter is to notify you that the Enforcement Division of the Fair Political Practices Commission will investigate the allegation(s), under the jurisdiction of the Commission, of the sworn complaint you submitted in the above-referenced matter. However, please note that, at this time, there is insufficient evidence of a violation by Steve Voboril, Margaret Long, and Chester Public Utility District so they will not be named respondents in the case. The Enforcement Division will instead pursue the allegations related to Statement of Interest non-reporting on the part of Adam Cox.

You will next receive notification from us upon final disposition of the case. However, please be advised that at this time we have not made any determination about the validity of the allegation(s) you have made or about the culpability, if any, of the person(s) you identify in your complaint. Thank you for taking the time to bring this matter to our attention. If you have any questions, please contact Laura Mandler at lmandler@fppc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

James M. Lindsay

James M. Lindsay, Chief
Enforcement Division

JML/lem

cc: Adam Cox, Steve Voboril, Margaret Long, Chester Public Utility District



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December 20, 2023

Adam Cox
Via email: adam@sectaris.partners

Steve Voboril
Via email: stlvo57@yahoo.com

Chester Public Utility District
Via email: cheryl.cpud@frontier.net

Re: Complaint No. COM-12192023-03924; Steve Voboril, Adam Cox, Chester Public Utility District

Dear Adam Cox, Steve Voboril, and Chester Public Utility District:

The Enforcement Division of the Fair Political Practices Commission has received a sworn complaint against you. It appears the complainant is alleging you have violated the Political Reform Act's¹ conflict of interest provisions. The information filed in the complaint is below and any attachments filed are enclosed. The complaint was filed against all those listed above.

The person filing the Complaint is:
Annika Peacock
Complainant
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Via email: [REDACTED]

The following individuals are listed as Witnesses:
Tom McGowan
Witness
[REDACTED]
Via email: [REDACTED]

Mercedes Garcia
Witness

¹ The Political Reform Act is contained in Government Code sections 81000 through 91014, and all statutory references are to this code. The regulations of the Fair Political Practices Commission are contained in Sections 18110 through 18997 of Title 2 of the California Code of Regulations, and all regulatory references are to this source.

Ft Jones, CA
Via email: [REDACTED]

Brian Meiers
Witness
[REDACTED]

The violations alleged are:

Conflict of Interest in Public Contracts (GC 1090)

N/A

I am writing to file a formal complaint against Adam Cox, General Manager of the Chester Public Utility District (CPUD), and the CPUD Board of Directors for conflict of interest in public contracts and other serious misconduct.

1. Conflict of Interest in Contractual Obligations: In 2023, Mr. Cox was concurrently contracted in four separate districts, including CPUD, without appropriately disclosing his other professional commitments. This non-disclosure raises significant conflict of interest concerns, especially given that his contract with CPUD stipulated a 30-hour work commitment per week in Chester.

2. Failure to Fulfill Contractual Hours: Witness accounts suggest that Mr. Cox rarely fulfilled his contractual obligation of 30 hours per week at CPUD. This neglect not only breaches his contract but also deprives the district of the managerial oversight it requires.

3. Concealment of Communications: Mr. Cox has a documented pattern of concealing crucial communications that could potentially lead to his removal. This includes hiding applications received by his search firm for positions at CPUD and ignoring or misplacing citizen complaints, effectively obstructing due process.

4. Refusal to Address Complaints and Use of Board as a Barrier: Mr. Cox systematically refuses to address complaints, instead using the board as a barrier against legitimate citizen grievances. This behavior undermines the accountability mechanisms essential in public administration.

5. Unprofessional Communication and Evasive Tactics: Mr. Cox routinely engages in unprofessional and dismissive communication, often evading complaints through bureaucratic red tape. Examples include losing letters, instructing that formal emails should have been phone calls, and vice versa, thereby hindering effective communication and resolution of issues.

These actions by Mr. Cox, abetted by the CPUD Board's failure to effectively oversee and rectify these issues, constitute a gross violation of the ethical standards expected in public service. They not only undermine the operational effectiveness of CPUD but also erode public trust in the institution.

I urge your office to thoroughly investigate these allegations and take appropriate action to ensure accountability and rectification of these serious governance failures. The community of Chester deserves a public utility district that operates with integrity, transparency, and a commitment to serving the public interest.

Enclosed are supporting documents and witness statements corroborating these claims. I am available for further discussion or to provide additional information as required.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,

Annika Peacock

At this time, we have not made any determination about the allegation(s) made in the complaint. Within 14 days, the complainant will be notified of our intent to:

- investigate the allegations of the complaint;
- refer the complaint to another governmental agency;
- take no action on the complaint because, on the basis of the information provided, the Commission does not appear to have jurisdiction to investigate; or
- take no action on the complaint because the allegations of the complaint do not warrant the Commission's further action.

A copy of that letter will be forwarded to you. If you have any comments on the allegation(s), your comments must be submitted in writing directed to Laura Mandler at the address shown above or by email to lmandler@fppc.ca.gov. Please include the complaint number referenced above in your response.

Sincerely,

James M. Lindsay

James M. Lindsay, Chief
Enforcement Division

JML:lem

RE: Complaint No. COM-12192023-03924; Steve Voboril, Adam Cox, Chester Public Utility District

 **Laura Mandler** <lmandler@fppc.ca.gov>
To: Stephen Voboril <stivo57@yahoo.com>

Good Morning Steve,

The allegations we are pursuing against Mr. Cox are not criminal in nature nor is there any indication to me that he purposely attempted to hide this information. I think it is likely he just was not aware that he needed to report this information on his Form 700 because of it is income that is from a governmental entity that goes to a private business. Mr. Cox has been extremely cooperative with us on this.

We have hundreds of cases on this issue every year, it is not unusual nor do I think it should be a major cause for concern.

Let me know if you have any further questions!

Best,

Laura

From: Stephen Voboril <stivo57@yahoo.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 21, 2024 10:08 AM
To: Laura Mandler <lmandler@fppc.ca.gov>
Subject: Re: Complaint No. COM-12192023-03924; Steve Voboril, Adam Cox, Chester Public Utility District

You don't often get email from stivo57@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

EXTERNAL EMAIL

Laura, Thank You for your email Friday. Annica Peacock has made many complaints against the Board and Management of the Chester Public Utility District. To you department and the Plumas County District Attorneys office. And as of Friday I was told there was no evidence of a crime provided by Annica to the Plumas County D.A.. Do you believe there is evidence of a crime By Adam Cox? Is this a Misdemeanor, Felony, etc.? As a Board we may have a duty to take action if such an event occurred.

We Have a Meeting Tuesday I have a feeling this may be a topic of discussion with our Legal Council.

Thank You! Steve Voboril

On Friday, January 19, 2024 at 05:05:42 PM PST, Laura Mandler <lmandler@fppc.ca.gov> wrote: