

**Regular Meeting of the Cincinnati Elections Commission  
Minutes of March 10, 2022**

**CEC members present:** Marcus Bethay, Constance Hill, and Seth Walsh.

**City representatives present:** Laura Hayslip, Law; Christopher Liu, Law; Teninnah Ross, Law; Linda Smith, Law Christine Zimmer, Law.

**Old Business:**

**1. Approval of February 10, 2022, meeting minutes.**

Mr. Bethay moved for approval of the February 10, minutes, and Ms. Hill seconded. A vote was taken, and the February 10, 2022, minutes were approved unanimously.

**New Business:**

**1. Report on TeAirea Powell post-election campaign finance reports not submitted for December 10, 2021, filing deadline tabled discussion from February 10, 2022 meeting**

Mr. Liu reported the following:

- Council candidate, TeAirea Powell, had not filed any reports by the December 10, 2022 deadline.
- Council candidate, TeAirea Powell had not submitted the post-election campaign finance reports by the March 10, 2022 meeting.

Two subsequent votes were conducted:

- The CEC voted that council candidate, TeAirea Powell was in violation of the requirement to file a campaign finance report by December 10, 2021.
- The CEC recognized that council candidate, TeAirea Powell, was a first time candidate and voted to impose a \$0 fine.

**2. Discussion of the 5-Month Report**

Mr. Liu presented the 5-Month Report to the CEC Board. Mr. Liu explained that the CEC is required to file a 5-month report to the City Manager's office. The report is due by April 2, 2022. The previous report was used to outline the fines and hearings of this election cycle. This 5-month report outlines the hearings and fines and includes the advisory opinions that were approved by the CEC for this election cycle. The report also includes a summary on the new Campaign Finance Portal and additional staffing that has been provided within the CEC.

Mr. Liu further explained that the report includes recommendations or changes for the next election cycle including the possibility of the mayor appointing a fifth CEC Board Member and implementing a proactive outreach for the next election cycle, including in-person seminars.

Mr. Walsh opened discussions to add clarification to the timelines for turnaround responses and fines imposed. Mr. Liu noted that the report is to the City Manager and is intended to summarize what happened during the election year. Mr. Liu recommended that the CEC rules be revisited, and any clarification can be done by amending the CEC rules.

Mr. Walsh made a motion to approve the 5-month report. Motion was seconded by Ms. Hill. Motion passed.

### **3. Discussion of whether to conduct future CEC Meetings virtual or in-person**

Mr. Liu opened discussions and explained the recent efforts by the City of Cincinnati administration to return to in-person meetings. However, the City of Cincinnati Council also passed legislation that permitted remote open meetings to continue. Mr. Liu further stated that the CEC can continue to conduct and attend hearings virtually provided the meeting was readily available to the public.

Mr. Bethay opened discussion noting that the virtual landscape allows for more efficiency. Mr. Bethay also pointed out the hybrid meetings require less travel time. Ms. Hill expressed no preference to virtual or in-person meetings. Mr. Walsh added that he prefers the virtual option. Mr. Walsh believes viewership is increased through the virtual option.

The CEC decided to continue holding virtual meetings and no vote was taken to change the current process or procedures.

### **4. Discussion of CEC objectives prior to 2023 Election Cycle**

Mr. Liu explained that the 5-month report gave recommendations regarding outreach and other proactive measures for the 2023 election cycle. Mr. Liu also stated this will allow time to accomplish other projects to be better equipped for the 2023 election cycle. Mr. Liu believes the CEC rules should be revised to provide clarity and consistency on how CEC rules are interpreted. Mr. Liu asked for any input from the CEC members on issues that should be pursued.

Mr. Bethay asked about proactive approaches to streamline the next election cycle. Mr. Liu explained that templates are currently provided to candidates. Mr. Liu further suggested a meeting for candidates prior to the election that explains their filing requirements and what should be in the reports. This meeting would also be recorded and made available on the CEC webpage.

Ms. Hill added that the most important thing is to revisit the rules. Mr. Liu stated that a draft will be attached to the next agenda to provide a platform for discussion. Ms. Zimmer added that a current version of the rules will be sent to the CEC members for review to provide feedback prior to the next meeting.

**Next meeting:**

The next meeting was scheduled for April 14, 2022, at 4:00 PM.

**Meeting Adjourned:**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:32 PM.