

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT:**

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**FINDINGS IN THE COMPLAINTS OF MICHAEL GRACE, CANDIDATE FOR YORKTOWN SUPERVISOR, AND THE COMMITTEE TO ELECT MICHAEL GRACE, AGAINST ILAN GILBERT, CANDIDATE FOR THE SAME POSITION, AND YORKTOWN FIRST, THE YORKTOWN DEMOCRATIC COMMITTEE; ALICE ROKER & VISHNU PATEL, CANDIDATES FOR TOWN COUNCIL, & AVIAH COHEN PIERSON, CANDIDATE FOR TOWN JUSTICE**

RYE BROOK, NY (September 8, 2017) - The Westchester County Fair Campaign Practices Committee met on September 7, 2017 to hear the complaints of Michael Grace, candidate for re-election as Yorktown Supervisor, and the Committee to Elect Michael Grace, against Ilan Gilbert, candidate for the same position; and against Yorktown First and the Yorktown Democratic Committee; Alice Roker, and Vishnu Patel, candidates for Town Council; and Aviah Cohen Pierson, Candidate for Town Justice. Christopher Arnold represented Mr. Grace and Marc Oxman represented Yorktown First and its candidates.

**COMPLAINT:** Mr. Grace and his campaign committee complain that Yorktown First and its slate of candidates give the false and misleading impression that he is using his position as Supervisor for personal benefit by granting tax incentives to a proposed development on a property in which he currently shares an ownership interest.

**FINDING: UNFAIR**

The language implying that Mr. Grace is “using his position as Supervisor for personal benefit by granting tax incentives” is unfair because an independent body would have to approve any application for tax benefits were they to be sought in the future by Mr. Grace.

**COMPLAINT:** Mr. Grace complains that Yorktown First conveyed the false and misleading impression that stores are vacant in Yorktown by taking several photos out of context as well as using outdated photos.

**FINDING: FAIR**

The use of the photos falls within the bounds of normal political practice.

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**COMPLAINT:** Mr. Grace complains that his opponent Ian Gilbert, Council candidate Alice Roker and Town Justice Candidate Aviah Cohen Pierson gave the false and misleading impression that they are incumbents on their campaign material.

**FINDING: FAIR**

The campaign literature presented does not give a false or misleading impression that the candidates are incumbents.

**Committee Members:** Susan P. Guma, [Chair], Jennifer Mebes Flagg [Coordinator], Paul C. Atkinson, Nick Beilenson, Elizabeth Bermel, Gisele Castro, Miriam Cohen, Daniel S. Franklin, Jr., Victor J. Goldberg, LaRuth Gray, Joan Grangenois-Thomas, Lee Kinnally, Robert C. Kirkwood, Polly Kuhn, Carole Princer Levy, Philip M. Maley, Harry Phillips III, Joy Rosenzweig, Susan Schwarz, Evelyn M. Stock, William N. Walker  
*Party representatives (ex officio):* Republican Party, Democratic Party, Conservative Party, Working Families Party, Independence Party, Green Party, Reform Party

**The purpose** of the Westchester County Fair Campaign Practices Committee is to help set an acceptable standard for political discussion by offering a forum for identifying unfair campaign practices and promoting a climate in which candidates conduct honest and fair campaigns. The Committee encourages candidates to conduct campaigns openly and fairly, to focus on issues and qualifications, to refrain from dishonest and defamatory attacks, and to avoid the use of campaign materials that distort the facts.

The Committee accepts written complaints from candidates about alleged unfair campaign practices. The Committee may then hold hearings to determine whether the action complained about is indeed unfair or whether it falls within acceptable political discourse. Among other things that the Committee will consider to be an unfair campaign practice is a misstatement of a material fact or any communication that misleads the public.

The Committee has no power to compel anyone or any group to stop doing what it has found to be unfair, nor does it have the authority or power to enforce election or other laws.

If the Committee acts on a complaint, it will release its findings to inform the public. The Committee may choose not to consider a complaint; in that case, a hearing is not held and the parties to the complaint are notified.

**Statement of Principles** of the Committee, as stated in its Manual, is available at [www.faircampaignpractices.org](http://www.faircampaignpractices.org). The Westchester County Fair Campaign Practices Committee believes that candidates should conduct their campaigns in accordance with the following principles:

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- The Candidate will conduct a campaign for public office openly and fairly, focusing on issues and qualifications.
- The Candidate will not use or condone any campaign material or advertisement that misstates, misrepresents or distorts material fact or any communication that misleads the public. The Candidate will neither engage in nor be involved with false or misleading attacks upon the character of an opponent, nor in invasions of privacy unrelated to fitness for office.
- The Candidate will not participate in nor condone any appeal to prejudice.
- The Candidate will clearly identify by name the funding source of all advertisements and campaign literature published and distributed.
- The Candidate will not abuse the Westchester County Fair Campaign Practices Committee process in order to obtain political advantage. This includes, but is not limited to, announcing that he/she has filed a complaint, or quoting the Committee's Findings unless the individual Finding cited is quoted in its entirety.

**The Candidate will publicly repudiate materials or actions from any individual or group that violates this Statement of Principles.**

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