

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT:**

Susan P. Guma, Chair  
Westchester County Fair Campaign Practices Committee  
Phone: (914) 337-6007  
Email: [susanpguma@gmail.com](mailto:susanpguma@gmail.com)  
Website: [www.faircampaignpractices.org](http://www.faircampaignpractices.org)



**FINDING IN THE COMPLAINT OF  
KEVIN HANSAN, ALISON BOAK, NAMASHA SCHELLING, AND ERIN  
TROSTLE AGAINST JOHN MCCOWN, SUSAN LEE, AND CYNTHIA  
SHEREDA, CANDIDATES FOR POUND RIDGE GOVERNMENT**

Tarrytown, NY (November 05, 2023) - The Westchester County Fair Campaign Practices Committee met via Zoom on November 04, 2023 to hear the complaint of incumbent Kevin Hansan (Democrat), candidate for Town Supervisor, incumbent Alison Boak (Democrat), candidate for Town Board, Namasha Schelling (Democrat), candidate for Town Board, and incumbent Erin Trostle (Democrat), candidate for Town Clerk, against John McCown (Pound Ridge Party), candidate for Town Supervisor, Susan Lee (Pound Ridge Party), candidate for Town Board, and Cynthia Shereda (Pound Ridge Party), candidate for Town Board. All candidates except Namasha Schelling attended the Hearing. Roslyn Stone attended the Hearing as chair of the Pound Ridge Democratic Committee.

**COMPLAINT:** Mr. Hansan, Ms. Boak, Ms. Schelling, and Ms. Trostle complained that a town-wide mailing sent by the Pound Ridge Party, which contained 16 statements about the current administration, was false and misleading.

**FINDING: UNFAIR CAMPAIGN PRACTICE**

The Committee discussed with the candidates many of the statements made in the mailing. The Committee found that some of the statements could be considered fair or normal political discourse. Normal political discourse should enable community members to define issues and exchange views, free from false or misleading statements. However, several of the statements in the mailer were deemed false or misleading. Three examples of this are:

- *Hundreds of thousands of \$ on consultants for wastewater in biz district but no disclosure on what plan is and why residents should foot the bill* – The waste water task force has open meetings and a website that provides updates. Therefore, the statement that there was no disclosure is false.
- *Civil service filing errors by Pound Ridge Town Clerk result in employees losing years of credit* – No employee lost years of credit and therefore this statement is false.
- *Undisclosed medical and retirement benefits to town leadership* – Benefits for elected officials are a matter of public record and therefore this statement is false.

The Committee contends that including false or misleading statements in the mailer, even if some of the statements are fair, violates the following FCPC Principle: “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.”

WESTCHESTER COUNTY  
**FAIR CAMPAIGN**  
PRACTICES COMMITTEE

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Committee Members: Susan P. Guma, [Chair], Jennifer Mebes Flagg [Coordinator], Elizabeth Bermel, Gisele Castro, Victor J. Goldberg, LaRuth Gray, Kyle-Beth Hilfer, Lee Kinnally, Robert C. Kirkwood, Carole Princer Levy, Don Marra, Paul Bennett Marrow, Joy Rosenzweig, Susan Schwarz, John Stern, Evelyn M. Stock  
Party representatives (ex officio): Republican Party, Democratic Party, Working Families Party, Independence Party, Green 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:

- 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 or 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 from the Committee's Findings unless the individual Finding cited is quoted in its entirety. The Committee considers selective quotation or misrepresentation of its Findings to be an unfair campaign practice.
- The candidate will publicly repudiate materials or actions made on behalf of their candidacy that violate this Statement of Principles.