

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FINDINGS IN THE COMPLAINTS OF ROSEANN SCHUYLER, CANDIDATE FOR CROTON-ON-HUDSON VILLAGE TRUSTEE, AGAINST CROTON DEMOCRATIC COMMITTEE ET AL.

ELMSFORD, NY (October 26, 2017) - The Westchester County Fair Campaign Practices Committee met on October 25, 2017 to hear the complaints of Roseann Schuyler, candidate for Croton-on-Hudson Village Trustee, against the Croton Democratic Committee and Brian Pugh, candidate for Croton-on-Hudson Mayor, and Amy Attias and Sherry Horowitz, candidates for Croton-on-Hudson Village Trustee. Croton United representatives were Bob Anderson, Deputy Mayor, candidate for Village Trustee and Roseann Schuyler, candidate for Village Trustee. Brian Pugh, candidate for Mayor, and Amy Attias, candidate for Village Trustee, appeared for the respondents.

COMPLAINT 1: Ms. Schuyler complained that, in a letter that was then posted online, the Croton Democratic Committee and candidates engaged in an unfair campaign practice by claiming that Croton United opposed the rezoning of the Harmon area.

FINDING: UNFAIR

The statement is inaccurate because Croton United did not yet exist when the rezoning of the Harmon area was discussed by the Village Board.

COMPLAINT 2: Ms. Schuyler complained that the Croton Democratic Committee and candidates engaged in an unfair campaign practice by claiming that Croton United opposed the Croton Landing riverfront purchase.

FINDING: UNFAIR

The statement is inaccurate because Croton United did not yet exist at the time of the Croton Landing riverfront purchase.

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COMPLAINT 3: Ms. Schuyler complained that the Croton Democratic Committee and candidates engaged in an unfair campaign practice by claiming that Croton United prevented Croton from participating in Sustainable Westchester’s Community Choice Aggregation program and “as a result, Croton residents were not given the chance to buy energy from 100 percent renewable sources and save money on our electric bills...”

FINDING: FAIR

The Croton United Village Board majority opposed and helped to defeat a proposal for the Village to participate in the Community Choice Aggregation program. So the statement that Croton United “prevented” that action is a fair characterization.

COMPLAINT 4: Ms. Schuyler complained that the Croton Democratic Committee and candidates engaged in an unfair campaign practice by claiming that the Croton United majority on the Village Board had “stalled” the replacement of two fire department vehicles.

FINDING: FAIR

The assertion that the Croton United majority “stalled” action on the fire department vehicles represents statement of an opinion, which falls within normal political discourse and is not an unfair campaign practice.

COMPLAINT 5: Ms. Schuyler complained that the Croton Democratic Committee and Mr. Pugh engaged in an unfair campaign practice by claiming in June 2017 that Mr. Pugh was an attorney even though he was not admitted to practice law until October 4, 2017.

FINDING: UNFAIR

At the time of the letter, Mr. Pugh was not an attorney.

COMPLAINT 6: Ms. Schuyler complained that Maria Slippen, a former Democratic Village trustee, engaged in an unfair campaign practice by publishing a letter claiming that Deputy Mayor Bob Anderson, who is running for reelection on the Croton United ticket, opposed adopting a local law regarding the selling of tobacco products and asked rhetorically if “he merely opposes[s] regulations on tobacco sales because they were proposed by a Democrat?”

FINDING: FAIR

The statements by Ms. Slippen fall within normal political discourse and are not unfair campaign practices.

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, Harry Phillips III, Joy Rosenzweig, Susan Schwarz, Evelyn M. Stock, William N. Walker

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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. 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 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.

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- 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.