



City of Seat Pleasant

Ethics Commission

VIA E-mail:

April 12, 2023

Steve Thompson

RE: Councilwoman Shireka McCarthy Ethics Complaint Response

Dear Mr. Thompson;

The City of Seat Pleasant received your Ethics Complaint on January 17, 2022, via e-mail. This complaint could not be addressed in absence of an Ethics Commission, which was not appointed until February 2022, by the Council. The Commission then had to adhere to certain organizational requirements before formally addressing your complaint.

The Commission has reviewed and investigated the complaint, which states in pertinent part:

***“The formal complaint against Councilwoman Shireka McCarthy for violations of the City of Seat Pleasant Public Ethics Ordinance. We allege Councilwoman McCarthy gave rise to circumstance suggesting that favoritism is a motivating force in the conduct of the city’s business, influenced the city to retain the business services of a specific person, and used the prestige of office to inappropriately benefit others.*”**

***This complaint is based on five separate occurrences between May 2019 and January 2022. The first happened in May 2019, when Councilwoman McCarthy influenced the city to retain catering services from “All About U Events, LLC” a company owned by her brother, Terry McCarthy, also known as DJ Nephew. On April 1, 2020, she advertised an online census discussion on her officially titled Facebook page. A flyer that read “featuring DJ Nephew” in large font accompanied the post along with comments thanking DJ Nephew for providing the music. On November 19, 2020, Councilwoman McCarthy advertised a Thanksgiving Dinner Menu from “All About U Catering” on the Facebook page and wrote, “Contact Terry McCarthy for details!” Then, on January 4, 2021, she posted a link to Amazon’s baby registry and wrote, “in lieu of a baby shower my brother Terry McCarthy and sister-in-law India McCarthy are accepting gifts in preparation for their baby boy!” Finally, on October 29, 2021, she published a post from Terry McCarthy advertising the sale of equipment that read, “Friday Special \$2800 it’s your iPad Ring Light Photobooth and printer for sale get at me ASAP it’s taking up space.”*”**

The Commission has determined that certain actions of the respondent violated ethics laws, Specifically, the Commission found the respondent in violation of all allegations except the allegation she influenced the city to retain catering services from All About U Events, LLC. Having determined violations occurred, the Commission has the authority to provide a disposition pursuant to §18-11(B) of the Seat Pleasant Ethics Code, which states as follows:

§ 18-11. Enforcement.

B. Violations.

- (1) Upon a finding of a violation of any provision of this chapter, the Commission may:
Issue an order of compliance directing the respondent to cease and desist from the violation;
 - (b) Issue a reprimand; or
 - (c) Recommend to the appropriate authority other appropriate disciplines of the respondent, including censure or removal if that discipline is authorized by law.

- (2) If the Commission finds that a respondent has violated § 18-9 of this chapter, the Commission may:
 - (a) Require a respondent who is a registered lobbyist to file any additional reports or information that reasonably relate to the information that is required under § 18-9 of this chapter;
 - (b) Impose a fine not exceeding \$1,000 for each violation; and
 - (c) Suspend the registration of an individual registered lobbyist if the Commission finds that the lobbyist has knowingly and willfully violated § 18-9 of this chapter or has been convicted of a criminal offense arising from lobbying activities.

Pursuant to § 18-11(B)(1)(a), the Commission has directed the respondent to immediately cease and desist from using the prestige of her office, and further recommended the respondent seek ethics training. Please be advised that the respondent took immediate action upon receiving the complaint to address certain issues.

If you have any questions regarding the above matter, please feel free to contact the Seat Pleasant Ethics Commission directly on 301-336-2600, extension 3263 and leave a message with the City Clerk.

We thank you in advance for submitting the noted concerns to the attention of the Seat Pleasant Ethics Commission.

Sincerely,



Garry Jones,
Chairman, Seat Pleasant Ethics Commission

cc: Seat Pleasant Ethics Commission
City Attorney
File