

TO: Freedom of Information Commission
FROM: Russell Blair
RE: Minutes of the Commission's regular meeting of December 18, 2024

A regular meeting of the Freedom of Information Commission was held on December 18, 2024. The Commission meeting of December 18, 2024 was conducted in person. The meeting convened at 2:08 p.m. with the following Commissioners present:

Commissioner Owen P. Eagan, presiding
Commissioner Jonathan J. Einhorn
Commissioner Kate Farrish (participated via speakerphone)
Commissioner Stephen Fuzesi Jr. (participated via speakerphone)
Commissioner Judith Ganswindt (participated via speakerphone)
Commissioner Christopher P. Hankins
Commissioner Thomas A. Hennick
Commissioner Matthew Streeter

Also present were staff members Colleen M. Murphy, Paula S. Pearlman, Valicia D. Harmon, Danielle L. McGee, Mary-Kate Smith, C. Zack Hyde, Nicholas A. Smarra, Marybeth G. Sullivan, Paul V. Arce, Jennifer Mayo and Russell Blair.

The Commissioners unanimously voted to amend the Commission's regular meeting minutes of November 20, 2024 with the following changes:

The Commissioners [unanimously] voted **8-0** to add to the agenda Consideration of Appeal of Denial for Expedited Hearing in *Fred Camillo v. Chairman, Board of Education, Greenwich Public Schools; and Board of Education, Greenwich Public Schools*, Docket #FIC 2024-0653. The Commissioners voted 8-0 to deny the appeal. Commissioner Fuzesi [abstained] **RECUSED HIMSELF** from [the vote] **THIS MATTER**.

The Commissioners unanimously voted to approve the Commission's regular meeting minutes of November 20, 2024 as amended.

Those in attendance were informed that the December 18, 2024 regular meeting of the Commission was being recorded.

[Docket #FIC 2024-0010](#) Michael Ward v. Chief, Police Department, City of Stamford;
Police Department, City of Stamford; and City of Stamford

Michael Ward appeared on his own behalf. The Commissioners unanimously voted to adopt the Hearing Officer's Report. The proceedings were digitally recorded.

[Docket #FIC 2024-0057](#) Michael Ward v. Ronnell Higgins, Commissioner, State of Connecticut, Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection; and State of Connecticut, Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection

Michael Ward appeared on his own behalf. The Commissioners unanimously voted to adopt the Hearing Officer's Report. The proceedings were digitally recorded.

[Docket #FIC 2024-0036](#) Thomas E. Marra v. Commissioner, State of Connecticut, Department of Correction; and State of Connecticut, Department of Correction

The Commissioners unanimously voted to adopt the Hearing Officer's Report. The proceedings were digitally recorded.

[Docket #FIC 2023-0663](#) Roger Coddling v. Commissioner, State of Connecticut, Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities; and State of Connecticut, Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities

Attorney Libby Reinish appeared on behalf of the respondents. The Commissioners unanimously voted to adopt the Hearing Officer's Report. The proceedings were digitally recorded.

[Docket #FIC 2024-0006](#) Robert Hagar v. Keith Hedrick, Mayor, City of Groton; Director, Human Resource Department, City of Groton; Human Resource Department, City of Groton; and City of Groton

The Commissioners unanimously voted to adopt the Hearing Officer's Report. The proceedings were digitally recorded.

[Docket #FIC 2024-0025](#) Utility Workers Union of America AFL-CIO v. Chairman, State of Connecticut, Public Utilities Regulatory Authority; and State of Connecticut, Public Utilities Regulatory Authority

Attorney Joseph D. Szerejko appeared on behalf of the complainant. Attorney Scott Muska and Assistant Attorney General Robert Marconi appeared on behalf of the respondents. The Commissioners voted 7-0 to adopt the Hearing Officer's Report. Commissioner Fuzesi was not present for the vote. The proceedings were digitally recorded.

[Docket #FIC 2024-0026](#) Raymond Martin, Jr. v. Chairman, Board of Ethics, Town of Easton; Board of Ethics, Town of Easton; Commissioner, State of Connecticut, Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection; and State of Connecticut, Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection

The Commissioners unanimously voted to adopt the Hearing Officer's Report. The proceedings were digitally recorded.

[Docket #FIC 2024-0030](#)

Karolyn Ryan v. Commissioner, State of Connecticut,
Department of Children and Families; and State of Connecticut,
Department of Children and Families

The Commissioners unanimously voted to adopt the Hearing Officer's Report. The proceedings were digitally recorded.

[Docket #FIC 2024-0103](#)

Charles Setaro v. Assessor, Office of the Assessor, City of
Danbury; Office of the Assessor, City of Danbury; Corporation
Counsel, Office of the Corporation Counsel, City of Danbury;
and City of Danbury

The Commissioners unanimously voted to adopt the Hearing Officer's Report. The proceedings were digitally recorded.

[Docket #FIC 2024-0304](#)

D. Brown v. Karl Jacobson, Chief, Police Department, City of
New Haven; Police Department, City of New Haven; and City
of New Haven

Desiree Brown appeared on her own behalf. The Commissioners voted 7-0 to adopt the Hearing Officer's Report. Commissioner Fuzesi was not present for the vote. The proceedings were digitally recorded.

The Commissioners voted 7-0 to table Consideration of the Motion to Stay dated December 3, 2024 and received by the Commission on December 3, 2024, filed by Respondents in *David Cummings v. Chief Court Administrator, State of Connecticut, Judicial Branch; and State of Connecticut, Judicial Branch*, Docket #FIC 2023-0633. Commissioner Fuzesi was not present for the vote.

The Commissioners voted 7-0 to approve the Petition for Reconsideration dated December 3, 2024 and received by the Commission on December 3, 2024, filed by Respondents in *David Cummings v. Chief Court Administrator, State of Connecticut, Judicial Branch; and State of Connecticut, Judicial Branch*, Docket #FIC 2023-0633. The Commissioners voted 7-0 to remand the matter to the Hearing Officer. Commissioner Fuzesi was not present for the votes.

Attorney C. Zack Hyde reported on the Superior Court decision dated December 5, 2024, in Aviva Stahl; Seth Wessler v. FOIC and DOC, Docket No. HHB-CV23-6077479-S. The Court upheld the Commission's final decision in Docket # FIC 2021-0697, *Aviva Stahl and Seth Wessler v. Commissioner, State of Connecticut, Department of Correction; and State of Connecticut, Department of Correction*. The Commissioners took no action.

The Commissioners voted 7-0 to approve the filing of a Joint Motion for Remand in Bridgeport Police Department, et al. v. Freedom of Information Commission, AC47762 on the

condition that: the Commission's agreement to file the Joint Motion to Remand is based on the unique facts and circumstances of the instant case and is not intended to provide any precedential value to the procedures set forth in such Motion; and it does not constitute a concession regarding the process by which exemptions to disclosure are to be raised and proven by respondent agencies appearing before it, as such agencies must raise exemptions to disclosure during the contested case hearing on the underlying matter and must provide detailed evidence proving the applicability of such exemptions to the records at issue, so that the Commission can properly hear and decide the contested case within the timeframes required by law. Commissioner Fuzesi was not present for the vote.

Attorney Valicia D. Harmon reported on three appeals that had recently been filed in Superior Court:

Director, State of Connecticut, Connecticut Insurance Department et al. v. Freedom of Information Commission et al., HHB-CV24-6090969-S, an appeal filed November 8, 2024 of the Commission's Final Decision in Docket #FIC 2023-0444, *Terry A Stringer v. Director, State of Connecticut, Connecticut Insurance Department; and State of Connecticut, Connecticut Insurance Department*.

Secretary, State of Connecticut, Office of Policy and Management et al. v. Freedom of Information Commission et al., HHB-CV24-6091229-S, an appeal filed November 19, 2024 of the Commission's Final Decision in Docket #FIC 2023-0558, *Jacqueline Rabe Thomas, Investigative Reporter v. Secretary, State of Connecticut, Office of Policy and Management; and State of Connecticut, Office of Policy and Management*.

Cooke, Ian T. v. FOIC Commissioner et al., HHB-CV24-5037203-S, an appeal filed November 1, 2024 of the Commission's Final Decision in Docket #FIC 2019-0707, *Ian Cooke v. Commissioner, State of Connecticut, Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection; and State of Connecticut, Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection*.

Executive Director Colleen M. Murphy reported that Commission staff had recently presented at the annual conference of the Council on Governmental Ethics Laws (COGEL) in Los Angeles.

Executive Director Colleen M. Murphy reported that the 2025 session of the General Assembly is scheduled to begin on January 8, 2025 and that she planned to introduce a legislative package to the Commissioners for their approval at the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:53 p.m.

/s/ Russell Blair
Russell Blair