



State of Washington
PUBLIC DISCLOSURE COMMISSION

711 Capitol Way Rm. 206, PO Box 40908 • Olympia, Washington 98504-0908
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Toll Free 1-877-601-2828 • E-mail: pdcc@pdcc.wa.gov • Website: www.pdcca.wa.gov

January 24, 2023

Sent electronically to Tracy Murphy

Subject: Complaint filed by Elizabeth Rohr, PDC Case 114226

Tracy Murphy:

Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) staff has completed its review of the complaints filed by Elizabeth Rohr against you, Mike Hadaller, Harry Bhagwandin, and the Lewis County News. The complaint alleged a violation of RCW 42.17A.235 and .240 by your Campaign for failing to report an in-kind contribution from the Lewis County News on Summary Full Campaign Contribution and Expenditure report (C-4 report) for a political advertisement/editorial content that appeared in the publication during the 2022 election cycle.

As noted in the complaint resolution letter sent to Elizabeth Rohr, PDC staff found no evidence of a violation that would require conducting a more formal investigation into the complaint or pursuing any enforcement action in this instance.

The PDC has dismissed this matter in accordance with RCW 42.17A.755(1). Thank you for your cooperation and assistance in resolving this matter. If you have questions, please contact PDC Compliance Officer Kurt Young by e-mail.

Sincerely,

Endorsed by,

/s/

Electronically Signed Kurt Young
Compliance Officer

/s/

Electronically Signed Kim Bradford, PDC Deputy
Director for Peter Lavalley, PDC Executive Director



Public Disclosure Commission
Shining Light on Washington Politics Since 1972



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January 24, 2023

Sent electronically to Elizabeth Rohr

Subject: Complaint filed against Tracy Murphy, PDC Case 114226

Elizabeth Rohr:

Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) staff has completed its review of the complaints you filed on October 26, 2022, against Tracy Murphy, Mike Hadaller, Harry Bhagwandin, and the Lewis County News.

Specifically, this complaint was filed against Tracy Murphy, a 2022 candidate for Lewis County Sheriff, alleging a violation of RCW 42.17A.235 and .240 by failing to report an in-kind contribution from the Lewis County News on Summary Full Campaign Contribution and Expenditure report (C-4 report) for a political advertisement/editorial content that appeared in the publication during the 2022 election cycle.

PDC staff reviewed the allegation listed in the complaints; the applicable statutes, rules, and reporting requirements; the C-4 reports filed by the Tracy Murphy Campaign; and the email responses from Tracy Murphy, to determine whether the record supports a finding of one or more violations. Based on staff's review, we found the following:

- On February 6, 2022, Tracy Murphy filed a Candidate registration with the PDC declaring his candidacy for election to the office of Lewis County Sheriff, selecting the Full Reporting option, and listing Dana Murphy as Ministerial Treasurer. Mr. Murphy was a first-time candidate for public office in 2022.
- Mr. Murphy stated that he placed one newspaper advertisement in the Lewis County News (LCN) during the 2022 election cycle, which he believed ran on October 12, 2022, costing a total of \$255. He stated that his "campaign was initially contacted by "Gina", who identified herself as an employee of Lewis County News and asked if I would be interested in the price list for advertising." He stated that his spouse "called Gina back and they discussed advertising. Additionally, Gina asked if the campaign would be willing to participate in an interview, which my wife told her "Yes"".
- Mr. Murphy stated that he was contacted later by LCN reporter Lynette Hoffman, who asked him if he was interested in being interviewed by her for the paper. He stated that he "had a few different interviews with Ms. Hoffman over the course of a few weeks, both in person and over the phone."

- Mr. Murphy stated that his Sheriff Campaign was contacted by an LCN representative back in May or June initially about advertising in the paper. He stated that he was “not sure of the exact date for the interview, but I believe it was near the end of September.” He stated that it was his “understanding that Ms. Hoffman was providing articles for her readers to learn about the candidates running in Lewis County. I was given an opportunity to participate in that process, so I did.”
- Mr. Murphy stated that Ms. Hoffman indicated to him during the interview “that she wanted the articles to sound like we were talking to the readers; therefore, she had me phrase my answers as though I were speaking to an audience.”
- Mr. Murphy stated that the information that ran on pages 3 and 5 of the October 19, 2022, edition of the LCN, “was not paid advertising by the Murphy campaign. The only paid advertising was the ad ran on October 12, 2022. As to what the LCN calls the article, you would have to ask them. Tracy Murphy and The Murphy Campaign has no control over what is written in the newspaper.” He added that he had “no control over what the LCN prints, or who they endorse as candidates.”

Based on these findings, PDC staff found no evidence of a violation that would require conducting a more formal investigation into the complaint or pursuing any enforcement action in this instance.

PDC has dismissed this matter in accordance with RCW 42.17A.755(1). If you have questions, please contact PDC Compliance Officer Kurt Young by e-mail.

Sincerely,

Endorsed by,

/s

Electronically Signed Kurt Young
Compliance Officer

/s

Electronically Signed Kim Bradford, PDC Deputy
Director for Peter Lavalley, PDC Executive Director



cc: Tracy Murphy