



**State of Washington
PUBLIC DISCLOSURE COMMISSION**

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June 10, 2025

Delivered electronically to Hugo Garcia at hugogarcia30@gmail.com

Subject: PDC Case 167604 regarding Hugo Garcia

Hugo Garcia:

The Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) completed its review of the complaint filed by Siva Pothan on February 19, 2025. The complaint alleged violations of RCW 42.17A.555 for improper use of public facilities or resources for the purpose of supporting a measure.

Applicable Laws and Rules

[RCW 42.17A.555](#) prohibits elected or appointed officials, their employees, and employees of a public office or agency from using, or authorizing the use of, public office/agency facilities (resources), directly or indirectly, for the purpose of assisting an election campaign or for the promotion of, or opposition to, any ballot proposition.

[WAC 390-05-271](#) states that .555 does not restrict the right of individuals to express their own personal views concerning supporting or opposing any candidate or ballot proposition, provided that such expression does not involve the use of public office or agency facilities.

Background and Findings

- Hugo Garcia was elected to the Burien City Council in the 2021 general election and held office during calendar year 2025.
- The City of Burien placed Initiative Measure No. 1, concerning a minimum wage increase, on the February 11, 2025, Special Election. Initiative No. 1 passed with 57.18% of the vote.
- The complaint alleged that Councilman Garcia posted a “Vote Yes” message regarding Initiative No. 1 via social media without identifying if he was doing so personally or in his official capacity.
- In the response, Mr. Garcia confirmed he has both a personal (Hugo Garcia) Facebook page and an official (Councilmember Hugo Garcia) Facebook page. His councilmember page provides contact information that includes the city’s mailing address and Garcia’s city email.
- Mr. Garcia stated on February 4, 2025, he used his personal Facebook account to post the “Vote Yes” message. He further stated that 8:00 p.m. on February 11, 2025, when no further ballots

could be cast for the February 11 Special Election, he updated his official Facebook cover photo of himself with others supporting the ballot measure and then on February 13, 2025, he shared an opinion editorial regarding the election outcome also on his official Facebook page.

Summary and Resolution

It appears that the message to vote in support of Burien's Initiative Measure No. 1 was only posted to the Respondent's personal Facebook page. Further, the Respondent purposely waited to post any additional information regarding the outcome of the February 11, 2025, election until after ballots could no longer be cast.

PDC staff is reminding you about the general prohibition against the use of public facilities or resources to support or oppose a candidate or ballot measure. It is staff's opinion that the posts you made regarding support of a local initiative to your councilmember Facebook page were not a violation in this instance only because they were posted after the date of the election. Staff expects you to adhere to PDC statutes and rules regarding the use of public facilities in the future.

Based on this information, the PDC has dismissed this matter in accordance with [RCW 42.17A.755\(1\)](#).

If you have questions, you may contact Jennifer Hansen at 1-360-753-1111, toll-free at 1-877-601-2828 or by e-mail at pdcc@pdcc.wa.gov.

Sincerely,

Electronically signed by Jennifer Hansen
Jennifer Hansen
Compliance Officer

Endorsed by,

Electronically signed by Kim Bradford
Kim Bradford
Deputy Director
For Peter Frey Lavalley
Executive Director

cc: Siva Pothan