



State of Washington
PUBLIC DISCLOSURE COMMISSION

711 Capitol Way Rm. 206, PO Box 40908 • Olympia, Washington 98504-0908
(360) 753-1111 • FAX (360) 753-1112

Toll Free 1-877-601-2828 • E-mail: pdcc@pdcc.wa.gov • Website: www.pdcc.wa.gov

October 31, 2018

CATHERINE GOTTS
17311 MCRAE RD NW
ARLINGTON, WA 98223

And delivered electronically to "sgotts@stillaguamish.com"


Subject: PDC Order, Case 38936

Dear Catherine Gotts,

Enclosed is a copy of the Public Disclosure Commission's Order Imposing Fine that was entered in the above-referenced case. At the October 25, 2018, Initial Order Review Hearing, the Commission vacated the fine assessed against you.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter. If you have questions, please contact us by email at pdcc@pdcc.wa.gov.

Sincerely,


Tabatha Blacksmith
Compliance Coordinator

Enclosure: Initial Order

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7 **BEFORE THE PUBLIC DISCLOSURE COMMISSION**
8 **OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON**

9 In re the Matter of Enforcement Action
10 Against:

PDC CASE NO. 38936

FINAL ORDER

11 Catherine Gotts,

Respondent.

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13 **I. INTRODUCTION**

14 This matter was heard by the Washington State Public Disclosure Commission
15 (Commission) on October 25, 2018, at the Public Disclosure Commission Office, 711 Capitol
16 Way, Room 206, Olympia, Washington 98504. The hearing was held pursuant to Chapter 34.05
17 RCW, Chapter 42.17A RCW, and Chapter 390-37 WAC.

18 Commissioners present were Anne Levinson, Commission Chair (presiding); David
19 Ammons, Commission Vice-Chair; and Commissioner William Downing. Also present were
20 Assistant Attorney General John S. Meader representing the Commission; Fox Blackhorn-
21 Delph, PDC Compliance Coordinator; Tabatha Blacksmith, PDC Compliance Coordinator; and
22 Assistant Attorney General Chad Standifer on behalf of PDC Staff. Respondent Catherine Gotts
23 did not participate. The proceeding was open to the public and recorded.

24 The Commissioners had before them the following materials:

- 25 • Enforcement Hearing Memorandum prepared by PDC Compliance Coordinator Tabatha
26

1 Blacksmith dated October 17, 2018;

- 2 • Freshdesk ticket log dated August 8, 2018, describing the initial complaint;
- 3 • E-mail sent by PDC Staff to Respondent regarding the missing Personal Financial Affairs
- 4 Statement (F-1 report), dated August 17, 2018, and providing notice of the Brief
- 5 Adjudicative Proceeding on September 24, 2018;
- 6 • E-mail from PDC staff to Respondent acknowledging her attempt to file the F-1 report on
- 7 August 1, 2018, but accidentally amending a previous report rather than submitting the new
- 8 report.
- 9 • E-mail from PDC Staff to Respondent dated October 5, 2018, notifying her of the outcome
- 10 of the Brief Adjudicative Proceeding held September 24, 2018;
- 11 • PDC Case No. 38936 cover letter and Order Imposing Fine against Respondent Catherine
- 12 Gotts dated October 5, 2018;
- 13 • E-mail from Respondent dated October 22, 2018, requesting an appeal and explaining her
- 14 attempts to file the F-1 report and how she was prevented from doing so due to technical
- 15 difficulties.
- 16 • E-mail dated October 23, 2018, to the Respondent acknowledging her timely request for
- 17 review and providing notice of the Review Hearing on October 25, 2018.
- 18 • F-1 report for calendar year 2017, received by the PDC on August 27, 2018.

19 The hearing concerned allegations that Respondent violated RCW 42.17A.700 by failing
20 to file a Personal Financial Affairs Statement (F-1 report) for calendar year 2017, no later than
21 April 16, 2018.

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23 After reviewing the record, including the testimony by PDC Staff and the Respondent,
24 the Commission HEREBY ORDERS that the following Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law,
25 and Final Order of the Commission be entered:
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3 **II. FINDINGS OF FACT**

4 1. Respondent Catherine Gotts has served as a School Director for Meridian School
5 District 505 since at least 2014.

6 2. The Respondent was required to file an F-1 report disclosing financial activities in
7 calendar year 2017 no later than April 16, 2018, and did not timely do so.

8 3. From April to June 2018, PDC staff sent seven e-mail reminders to the Respondent
9 concerning the F-1 filing requirement.

10 4. On July 16, 2018, PDC staff sent a warning letter by U.S. Mail, concerning the
11 Respondent's failure to file the F-1 report.

12 5. On August 16, 2018, PDC staff served Respondent Catherine Gotts by U.S. Mail and
13 e-mail with a hearing notice for a Brief Adjudicative Proceeding to be held on September 24,
14 2018, concerning failure to file the F-1 report.

15 6. On September 24, 2018, a Brief Adjudicative Proceeding was held in which the
16 Presiding Officer found Catherine Gotts in violation of RCW 42.17A.700 for failing to file an
17 F-1 report for calendar year 2017. Ms. Gotts was assessed a \$250 penalty in accordance with
18 WAC 390-37-143, the penalty schedule adopted by the Commission, which was payable within
19 30 days of the date of the Order.

20 7. An Initial Order was entered October 5, 2018.

21 8. Review by PDC staff indicated that Ms. Gotts had attempted to file the F-1 on August
22 1, 2018, and was able to successfully file the F-1 report on August 27, 2018.

23 9. Respondent has no previous violations.

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III. CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. The Commission has jurisdiction over this proceeding pursuant to Chapter 42.17A RCW, the State campaign finance and disclosure law; Chapter 34.05 RCW, the Administrative Procedure Act; and Title 390 WAC.

2. RCW 42.17A.700 states in part: "After January 1st and before April 15th of each year, every elected official and every executive state officer shall file with the commission a statement of financial affairs for the preceding calendar year."

3. WAC 390-24-025 states in part: "Any person holding elected public office, except as exempted by the terms of RCW 42.17A.700, ... is required to file the statement of financial affairs if such person holds such public office between January 1 and April 15 of any year. Such report shall be for the preceding calendar year."

4. Respondent Catherine Gotts violated RCW 42.17A.700 by failing to file the F-1 report for calendar year 2017 no later than April 16, 2018.

IV. ORDER

Based upon the Findings and Conclusions, the Commission orders that:

1. The Initial Order and civil penalty of \$250 are VACATED due to the following mitigating circumstances: the Respondent made good faith efforts to file before hearing notices were issued, and technical difficulties frustrated compliance.

2. The Respondent shall file all required PDC reports in accordance with RCW 42.17A.755(4) and have no further violations of Chapter 42.17A RCW or Title 390 WAC within

1 four years of this order.

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3 The Executive Director is authorized to enter this Order on behalf of the Commission.

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5 So ORDERED this 31st day of October, 2018.

6
7 WASHINGTON STATE PUBLIC
8 DISCLOSURE COMMISSION

9 FOR THE COMMISSION:

10 
11 Peter Lavallee
12 Executive Director

13 *A copy of this Order mailed and/or emailed to:*

14 Catherine Gotts, Respondent
15 17311 McRae Rd NW
16 Arlington, WA 98223
17 (sgotts@stillaguamish.com)

18 Phil Stutzman, PDC Staff (phil.stutzman@pdc.wa.gov)
19 Chad Standifer, Assistant Attorney General (ChadS@atg.wa.gov)

20 I, Tabatha Blackwell, certify that I mailed a copy of
21 this order to the Respondent/ Applicant at his/her respective
22 address postage pre-paid on the date stated herein.
23 Tabatha Blackwell 10/31/18
24 Signed Date

1 **NOTICE: RECONSIDERATION**

2 Pursuant to the provisions of RCW 34.05.470 and WAC 390-37-150, you may file a Petition for
3 Reconsideration with the PDC within ten (10) days from the date this Final Order is served upon
4 you. Any Request for reconsideration must state the specific grounds for the relief requested.
5 Petitions must be delivered or mailed to the Washington State Public Disclosure Commission,
6 711 Capitols Way, Room 206, Box 40908, Olympia WA 98504-0908.
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8 **NOTICE: PETITION FOR JUDICIAL REVIEW**

9 You have the right to appeal this Final Order to Superior Court, pursuant to the Petition for
10 Judicial Review provisions of RCW 34.05.542. Any Petition for Judicial Review of this Final
11 Order must be filed with the court and also served upon both the Commission and the Office of
12 the Attorney general within thirty (30) days after the date this Final Order is served upon you.
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