

CITY OF SPOKANE ETHICS COMMISSION

Edwin "Larry" Andrews,

Complainant,

vs.

Kara Odegard,

Respondent

EC-22-02

**FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND
DECISION DISMISSING THE
COMPLAINT**

FINDINGS

1. On September 9, 2022, Mr. Andrews submitted a complaint to the Ethics Commission against City employee Kara Odegard, who at the time was the City's Manager of Sustainability Initiatives under the Spokane City Council.

2. The complaint alleges that Ms. Odegard violated SMC 1.04A.030(A) General Prohibition Against Conflicts of Interest (based on Ms. Odegard's employment with the City of Spokane and her ownership interest in her private for profit company, Measure Meant Consulting, which performs consulting services to private clients that are very similar to her work for the City of Spokane); SMC 1.04A.030(F) Certain Private Employment Prohibited (alleging that Ms. Odegard's private company, Measure Meant Consulting, is too compatible with her management position with the Spokane City Council as she is heavily involved in facilitating widespread community conversation on policy proposals and systems all of which Measure Meant Consulting promotes); SMC 1.04A.030(K) Fair and Equitable Treatment (alleging that she has used her City title in conjunction with the promotion of her business, Measure Meant Consulting which in turn secures a personal benefit, gain or profit for herself or any other person, i.e.,

1 Measure Meant Consulting); and SMC 1.04A.030 (N) Commission of Acts of Moral
2 Turpitude or Dishonesty (alleging that an email Ms. Odegard sent to committee
3 members demonstrated a departure from commonly-held democratic systems of
4 community-based self-governance of volunteer and citizen committees as well as
5 violating the Open Public Meetings Act).

7 3. On October 10, 2022, Mr. Finer, acting on behalf of Ms. Odegard,
8 submitted a letter in response to the ethics complaint. The letter provided a
9 background of Ms. Odegard's involvement with the City of Spokane and Measure
10 Meant Consulting prior to her full-time employment with the City. Additionally, the letter
11 response, although agreed that certain allegations, if true, would constitute a violation
12 of the City's Ethics Code (SMC 1.04A. 030 (A) and (F)), takes issue with the remaining
13 allegations and requests dismissal pursuant to SMC 1.04A.110 (B)(1)(d) (as frivolous,
14 groundless, or brought for the purpose of harassment) and/or SMC1.04A.110 (B)(1)(a)
15 and/or (b) (as some allegations were beyond the Commission's jurisdiction and/or if
16 true, would not constitute a violation). The response letter also brought forward the
17 possibility that a stipulation may be reached.

21 4. On October 19, 2022, the Ethics Commission held a special meeting to
22 review the complaint to determine whether, pursuant to SMC 1.04A.110 (D)(1) and (2),
23 the Commission had jurisdiction to conduct further proceedings and whether the
24 complaint, on its face, alleges facts that, if true, would substantiate a violation.
25 Complainant Edwin "Larry" Andrews, II, was represented by attorney Kenneth W. Hart
26 at the hearing. Respondent Kara Odegard was represented by attorney Jeffry Finer at
27 the hearing.

1 5. At the October 19, 2022, hearing, the Ethics Commission considered the
2 complaint filed by Mr. Andrews, the response filed by Mr. Finer on behalf of Ms.
3 Odegard, the oral arguments presented by Mr. Hart on behalf of Complainant, Mr.
4 Andrews, as well as the oral argument presented by Mr. Finer on behalf of Ms.
5 Odegard and found that the Commission had jurisdiction to hear this complaint
6 pursuant to SMC 1.04A.110 (D) based upon the fact that the complaint cites specific
7 provisions of the Code of Ethics against the Respondent who, at the time of hearing,
8 was a City employee subject to the Code of Ethics. Additionally, the Commission found
9 that the complaint substantially complies with the requirements of SMC 1.04A.110 (C).
10

11 6. The Respondent, through counsel, requested to explore entering into a
12 stipulated agreement.
13

14 7. During the exploration process of entering a stipulation, it was relayed by
15 Respondent's counsel that Respondent's role for which she was hired was completed.
16

17 8. The Respondent has decided to voluntarily terminate her employment
18 with the City of Spokane and is no longer an employee for the City of Spokane.
19

20 CONCLUSIONS

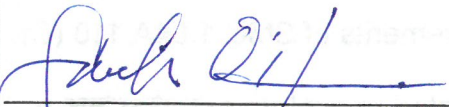
21 Based upon the foregoing findings, the Ethics Commission Co-Chairpersons
22 enters the following conclusions:
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24 1. Although the Commission originally had jurisdiction to hear this complaint
25 pursuant to SMC 1.04A.110 (D), the Respondent has since voluntarily left City
26 employment making this matter moot pursuant to SMC 1.04A.110 (D) 1. (e), i.e., "[t]he
27 matter has become moot because the person who is the subject of the complaint or
28 inquiry is no longer a City officer or employee."
29
30

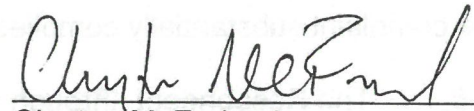
DECISION

Based upon the Findings and Conclusions set forth above, the undersigned Co-Chairs conclude that allegations contained in Mr. Andrews' Complaint dated September 9, 2022 are hereby summarily dismissed as this matter has become moot pursuant to SMC 01.04A.110 (D) 1. (e). This decision is made in accordance with SMC 01.04A.110 D. 3.

DATED this 20th day of December, 2022



Sarah O'Hare
Co-Chair
City of Spokane Ethics Commission



Clayton McFarland
Co-Chair
City of Spokane Ethics Commission