



City of St. Catharines

Decision of the Niagara Compliance Audit Committee

Established under Section 88.37(1) of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* (the "Act")

A Compliance Audit Application regarding the Campaign Finances of Mike Britton, Candidate, Mayor

IN THE MATTER OF an Application for a Compliance Audit pursuant to subsection 88.33(1) of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*;

AND IN THE MATTER OF a meeting of the Compliance Audit Committee (the "Committee"), held Monday, July 10, 2023.

PURPOSE

The Niagara Compliance Audit Committee (the "Committee") met on July 10, 2023 to consider an application for a Compliance Audit submitted by Ann-Marie Zammit (the "Applicant") with respect to the 2022 Municipal and School Board Election and the campaign finances of Mike Britton (the "Candidate"), Candidate for office of Mayor.

DECISION

That a request for a Compliance Audit of the Mike Britton campaign be denied.

REASONS

The reasons for the decision are as follows:

1. With respect to the application from Ann-Marie Zammit and the evidence presented on election signage: the Committee finds that the Candidate provided a reasonable explanation for the existence of the sign prior to the start of the official campaign period, and therefore, that the existence of the sign did not constitute a campaign expense for the Candidate.

2. The Applicant raised concerns that the photos adduced to the application may have been taken by a professional photographer. If this were the case, then the photos would be considered an unreported contribution of goods and services to the campaign received prior to the Candidate filing his nomination. However, the Candidate has denied that the photographs were taken by a professional photographer, and the committee has no additional evidence upon which to evaluate the concerns raised by the Applicant. Therefore, the denial of the allegation by the Candidate must be accepted at face-value. The committee further notes that the photography allegations were not raised in the written application and were only subsequently presented in the Applicant's oral statement.

Written and approved by the following Committee Members:

July 14, 2023
Date

Murray Christie
Murray Christie, Chair
Niagara Compliance Audit Review Committee Member

13 July 2023
Date

Larry Peebles
Larry Peebles,
Niagara Compliance Audit Review Committee Member

July 14, 2023
Date

Heather Salter
Heather Salter,
Niagara Compliance Audit Review Committee Member

Jul 14/23
Date

Margo Pinder
Margo Pinder,
Niagara Compliance Audit Review Committee Member

13 July 2023
Date

Dinesh Parakh
Dinesh Parakh,
Niagara Compliance Audit Review Committee Member