

## **Willamette Week**

# **County Commissioner Loretta Smith Faces \$250 Fine for Campaign Elections Violations**

*By Rachel Monahan  
November 17, 2017*

Smith violated state elections laws when public employees were solicited during work meetings to volunteer for her campaign.

Multnomah County Commissioner Loretta Smith violated Oregon elections law when her staff were asked to volunteer for elections work during their work meetings, according to findings from the Oregon Secretary of State's office.

She faces fines of \$250.

The Portland Tribune first reported the findings and the fine earlier this week.

State elections law prohibits public resources from being spent on political elections. Smith violated those prohibitions when staff were solicited to work at campaign events during work meetings on three occasions in October 2015, January 2016 and January 2017.

The findings stem from a complaint originally filed in February by Smith's former chief of staff, MeeSon Kwan.

Kwan alleged that she felt pressure to volunteer for campaign events and that Smith wanted her to sign a nondisclosure agreement to cover up elections law violations, WW reported in February.

Smith downplayed the significance of the finding.

"I thank the Secretary of State's Office for responding to my request that they review this matter," said Smith in statement. "I am gratified they found no evidence of any violations except a minor single issue, which we had already taken action to correct."

The findings come on the heels of accusations that Smith may be violating the new county campaign finance rules that limit campaign contributions. She has announced her intentions to run for City Commissioner, but cannot formally announce her candidacy until January without giving up her current post.

The Secretary of State's office did not rule on whether staff were being pressured into volunteering on the campaign.

"Concerns of retaliation, and what was expected of staff are best left to county personnel rules," wrote Secretary of State's Director of Elections Stephen Trout in his November 13 letter.

A previous investigation by the county found that Smith likely bullied staff, but did not weigh in on elections violations.

Smith denied all wrongdoing and said the investigation vindicated her.

Kwan was paid \$23,000 in a settlement with the county.

## **The Portland Mercury**

### **Commissioner Eudaly Staffer, Who Attended an Avocado-Toast Based Party With Portland Tenants United, Cleared of Wrongdoing By Elections Officer**

*By Doug Brown  
November 17, 2017*

Did a key staffer for Commissioner Chloe Eudaly violate city rules by being too cozy with lobbyists? An anonymous complainer said so. The city elections officers says no.

The issue at hand: Whether Jamey Duhamel, Eudaly's policy director, had too much avocado toast at an impromptu Portland Tenants United (PTU) gathering at a Southeast Portland bar this summer. She was reported to the city by an unnamed landlord lobbyist accusing her of not disclosing the "gift" from the city.

City Elections Officer Deborah Scroggin, who runs the lobbyist registration program in the city auditor's office, notified Duhamel this afternoon that she was cleared of violating the city code that requires city officials to disclose when they receive gifts, including meals, over \$25 from lobbying entities.

"I confirmed that expenses for the event, hosted and partially paid for by registered lobbying entity Portland Tenants United, were under the amount per person requiring disclosure by City Officials," Scroggin's letter says.

Margot Black, head of PTU, tells the Mercury she and PTU supporters headed to the Space Room Lounge on Hawthorne Ave in July. They were there to celebrate an Oregon judge's ruling against the landlord lobby in their push to dismantle the city's new renter relocation ordinance, which was strongly pushed by Eudaly and backed by PTU. The complainer found a picture of Duhamel there with PTU on Black's husband's Facebook account.

They had avocado toast at the bar, Black says, as a jokey reference to an Australian millionaire blaming millennials inability to afford homes on their avocado toast habits.

"If this is the best you guys got..." Black says about the anonymous complainer.

Eudaly was the subject of another complaint this winter, alleging she was wrongly meeting with PTU, "which is not properly registered as a lobbyist entity despite meeting the definition." After that, Black says, PTU registered as a lobbying entity with the city: "I didn't know that was a thing" PTU needed to do. "We weren't trying to break rules or sneak around, we just had no idea."