



Publication of Information in the Public Interest

Related to Case 2024-29

Ethic Rule 6.9 Confidentiality of Complaint or Investigation.

“Unless the Commission determines that a complaint or a formal investigation should be made public, all complaints and formal investigations, including documents and discussions in executive session, shall remain confidential and shall not be disclosed[.] ... The Commission may make a complaint or formal investigation and any documents relating thereto public at any time it deems release of that information to be in the public interest.”

At the May 14, 2026 Ethics Commission Meeting, the Commission determined that the following information relative to Case 2024-29 was necessary for the purpose of public transparency and education:

The Oklahoma Ethics Commission has approved a settlement agreement resolving allegations involving the Oklahoma House Democratic Campaign Committee and its former Chair and Treasurer, Joe Hartman, related to campaign finance activity during the 2024 election cycle.

Under the terms of the agreement, the Respondents will pay a cumulative total of \$37,500 to the State of Oklahoma. Of that amount, \$32,500 is to be paid by former Chair and Treasurer Joe Hartman through 21st Century Majority Project, LLC, while the Oklahoma House Democratic Campaign Committee will pay \$5,000. The settlement includes acknowledged violations of the Oklahoma Ethics Rules involving recordkeeping deficiencies, expenditure practices, contribution reporting, and required financial documentation. The settlement amount is among the larger campaign finance settlements approved by the Commission in recent years. Specifically, the settlement includes admissions related to:

- Improper expenditure methods utilizing internet transfers rather than authorized payment methods;
- Reporting inaccuracies regarding payments and consulting services;
- Failure to maintain complete and accurate committee records as required by Ethics Rules; and
- Deficient invoicing and documentation practices.

Additionally, for purposes of resolving the matter without litigation, the Respondents agreed not to contest allegations involving unreported in-kind contributions and contribution limit issues connected to office space provided through 21st Century Majority Project.

“Campaign finance transparency only works when committees maintain accurate records and fully disclose how money is received and spent,” said Executive Director Lee Anne Bruce Boone. “The violations addressed in this settlement involved reporting deficiencies, inadequate documentation, and undisclosed or improperly reported financial activity. Those requirements are not technicalities — they exist so the public can have confidence in the integrity and transparency of the electoral process.”

The investigation was authorized by the Commission in December 2024 after a finding of reasonable cause to believe violations of the Ethics Rules may have occurred. A formal Notice of Allegations was issued in March 2026. The settlement agreement further states that the Respondents have since adopted revised recordkeeping and expenditure policies intended to prevent similar violations in the future.

All settlement payments are paid to the State of Oklahoma and do not financially benefit the Oklahoma Ethics Commission. A copy of the executed settlement agreement is available [HERE](#).