

**STATE OF MINNESOTA
CAMPAIGN FINANCE AND PUBLIC DISCLOSURE BOARD**

**PRIMA FACIE
DETERMINATION**

IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPLAINT OF JOSEPH SHEFFER REGARDING GARY STEUART

On May 3, 2024, the Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board received a complaint submitted by Joseph Sheffer regarding Gary Steuart. The complaint alleges that Mr. Steuart is a candidate for Minnesota House District 26B. On May 10, 2024, counsel for Mr. Steuart provided higher-resolution copies of the documents attached to the complaint.

The complaint alleges, and Board records confirm, that Mr. Steuart has not registered a principal campaign committee with the Board. The complaint alleges that more than \$750 has been spent on Mr. Steuart’s campaign and that Mr. Steuart therefore was required to register a principal campaign committee. The complaint also alleges that two pieces of campaign material were disseminated by the Steuart campaign without a required disclaimer.

In support of those allegations, the complaint includes images of two pieces of campaign material. The first is a flyer for a meet and greet event with Mr. Steuart at a restaurant on April 16, 2024. The flyer does not include a disclaimer stating who paid for its production. The complaint does not specify how the flyer was disseminated.

The second is a piece of literature that the complaint alleges was professionally produced. The literature includes information about Mr. Steuart and his beliefs and a photo of Mr. Steuart. The complaint alleges that the literature was disseminated on April 20, 2024, at the Republican Party of Minnesota’s House District 26B endorsing convention. The literature does not include a disclaimer stating who paid for its production, but it does include Mr. Steuart’s email address, website address,¹ post office box address, and social media user names.

Determination

Minnesota Statutes section 10A.105, subdivision 1, states that “[a] candidate must not accept contributions from a source, other than self, in aggregate in excess of \$750 or accept a public subsidy unless the candidate designates and causes to be formed a single principal campaign committee for each office sought.” Absent unique circumstances regarding the period immediately before and after the end of a reporting period, Minnesota Statutes section 10A.14, subdivision 1 requires a principal campaign committee to register with the Board “no later than 14 days after the committee . . . has made a contribution, received contributions, or made expenditures in excess of \$750.” The complaint alleges and provides evidence that Mr. Steuart held a campaign event on April 16, 2024, and that Mr. Steuart or his campaign disseminated what appears to be a professionally produced literature piece on April 20, 2024. The complaint

¹ garysteuartforminnesota.com

alleges and provides evidence that Mr. Steuart has a website promoting his candidacy. The complaint alleges and provides evidence that Mr. Steuart has a post office box being used for campaign purposes. The Chair therefore concludes that the complaint states a prima facie violation of Minnesota Statutes section 10A.14.

Minnesota Statutes section 211B.04 requires principal campaign committees to include on their campaign material a disclaimer substantially in the form provided in Minnesota Statutes section 211B.04, subdivision 1. The complaint alleges and provides evidence that Mr. Steuart or his campaign prepared or disseminated campaign material that lacked a disclaimer. The Chair therefore concludes that the complaint states a prima facie violation of Minnesota Statutes section 211B.04.

Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes section 10A.022, subdivision 3 (d), within 60 days of the date of this determination, the Board will make findings and conclusions as to whether probable cause exists to believe that a violation of Minnesota Statutes sections 10A.14 or 211B.04 has occurred and warrants a formal investigation. The complainant and the respondent named in this prima facie determination will be given an opportunity to be heard by the Board prior to any decision on probable cause.

Until the Board makes a public finding or enters into a conciliation agreement, this matter is subject to the confidentiality requirements of Minnesota Statutes section 10A.022, subdivision 5.



David Asp, Chair
Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board

Date: May 16, 2024