



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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FINDINGS IN THE COMPLAINT OF  
JOSEPH SCALZO V. RONALD HOTALING, JR.  
COMPLAINT 2003-2

Fair Campaign Practices for the Capital Region, Inc. (FCP) held a hearing on October 27, 2003 to consider a complaint made by Joseph Scalzo against Ronald Hotaling, Jr., candidates for the office of Coeymans Town Supervisor. Present were Hearing Panel members Elizabeth Angle, Joan Elliott, Terry Lowenthal, James Miller, Eugene Rowland, and Coordinator Betsey Swan.

Mr. Scalzo appeared in person. Mr. Hotaling submitted a written response but did not appear at the hearing.

Mr. Scalzo complained that Mr. Hotaling engaged in unfair campaign practices by publishing or failing to repudiate misleading political advertisements, published without attribution or mention that they were paid political ads in the *Bleezarde Publishing News Herald*. These advertisements appeared in five successive issues of the newspaper and were formatted like newspaper banner headlines.

The parties agree that neither Mr. Hotaling nor a group or individual acting on his behalf placed the advertisements. They also agree, after conversations with the publisher, that the headlines are paid political advertisements, even though not identified as such.

**FINDING: UNFAIR CAMPAIGN PRACTICE.** The materials in question were inherently misleading because they were not identified as paid political advertisements. Given that the Hotaling campaign had no involvement in publication of the advertisements, Mr. Hotaling cannot be said to have participated in, permitted, or condoned these ads.

Mr. Hotaling did, however, violate FCP's seventh principle, which requires a candidate to promptly and publicly disavow the materials or actions of any individual whose activities would violate the principles if engaged in by the