



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
November 4, 2007

Contact: Barbara Thomas  
(518) 885-9769

FINDINGS IN THE COMPLAINT OF  
ANGELO SANTABARBARA AGAINST  
ANTHONY JASENSKI & ROBERT GODLEWSKI  
COMPLAINT 2007.10

Fair Campaign Practices for the Capital Region, Inc. (FCP) held a hearing on October 30, 2007 to consider a complaint made by Angelo Santabarbara against Anthony Jasenski and Robert Godlewski. All are candidates for District 4, Schenectady County Legislature. Present were Hearing Panel members Joan Elliott (Chair), Jim Miller, Barbara Thomas, Sam Trumbore and Aimee Allaud, along with Coordinator Betsey Swan. Also present was *ex officio* member Richard Nebolini (Independence Party). Mr. Santabarbara appeared through his attorney James Walsh. Mr. Jasenski and Mr. Godlewski appeared through their attorney Bruce Trachtenberg.

Mr. Santabarbara complained about a campaign mailer distributed by the Schenectady County Democratic Committee, consisting of one side showing a picture of a pig and stating that Santabarbara took \$5,000 in taxpayers (sic) money to chair the Rotterdam IDA (Industrial Development Agency) and characterizing this payment as, "Some Pork!" At the hearing Mr. Santabarbara admitted that he had been appointed to chair the Rotterdam IDA with an annual stipend of \$5,000. He stated that he had met with the IDA attorneys in July or August and stated that he would serve without compensation and would not accept the \$5,000 stipend. At the time of the mailing he had received no compensation for chairing the IDA, notwithstanding that the stipend traditionally had been paid on a monthly basis. Mr. Santabarbara submitted a statement of the IDA Treasurer indicating no compensation had been paid. The same mailer accused Santabarbara of having remained silent when Ms. Lazzari, his running mate on the Republican line, voted to close the Glendale Nursing Home, attempted to cut the sheriff's road patrol in half, and voted against the sale of old Carl Company to Proctors. Mr. Santabarbara claimed these statements were inherently misleading because he was not in office at the time these actions were taken and therefore was not in a position to publicly approve or disapprove of Ms. Lazzari's positions. The accuracy of the SCDC's characterization of Ms. Lazzari's actions was ruled on in a previous hearing which found unfair campaign practices.

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**FINDING: Unfair Campaign Practice.**

Mr. Santabarbara clearly has accepted no compensation for chairing the Rotterdam IDA, contrary to the statement in the mailer. Similarly, he was not an elected or public official at the time the Lazzari actions were taken and it was inherently misleading to imply that he was in a position to oppose the positions or speak out against them. Neither Mr. Jasenski nor Mr. Godlewski has taken any steps to disavow the actions of the misleading campaign literature issued on their behalf by the Schenectady County Democratic Committee. They therefore have violated FCP Principle 7, which requires candidates to promptly and publicly disavow campaign materials that would have been in violation of FCP Principles had they been issued by the candidates.

Mr. Santabarbara also complained that by filing Complaint 2007.9, Mr. Jasenski and Mr. Godlewski abused FCP and its hearing process in order to obtain political advantage in violation of Principle 6.

**FINDING: No Unfair Campaign Practice.**

In our Finding in Complaint 2007.9, we held that the materials in question listed no contact information for the sponsor and thus would have violated FCP Principles had they been used in or of relevance to the general campaign. In light of the fact that they were campaign materials for the primary election, we declined to make a finding on this matter. Notwithstanding the lack of a finding, it cannot be said that the bringing of a complaint about these materials was an abuse of the complaint process.

FCP's Principle 7 states that the candidate will promptly and publicly disavow support from and the materials/actions of any individual or group whose activities violate this Statement of Principles or whose activities would violate this Statement of Principles if engaged in by the candidate or the candidate's campaign.

*Candidates are reminded that misrepresentation of FCP findings in order to obtain political advantage constitutes an unfair campaign practice.*

*Fair Campaign practices for the Capital Region, Inc. is a not-for profit corporation formed by the League of Women Voters of Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga, and Schenectady Counties and the Interfaith Alliance of the Capital Region.*

**Fair Campaign Practices For The Capital Region, Inc.**

220 W. Milton Rd., Ballston Spa, NY 12020 Telephone and FAX: (518) 885-9769