



December 13, 2023

Sue Novasel

Via email: sue.novasel@edcgov.us

No Action Closure Letter: FPPC No. 2020-01103, Sue Novasel

Dear Sue Novasel:

The Enforcement Division of the Fair Political Practices Commission (“Commission”) enforces the provisions of the Political Reform Act (the “Act”).¹ This case was opened in response to a sworn complaint alleging violations of the Act’s conflict of interest provisions as a member of the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors. The Enforcement Division will close this case with no further action.

No public official at any level of state or local government may make, participate in making, or in any way attempt to use their official position to influence a governmental decision in which they know or have reason to know they have a financial interest.² Section 87200 of the Act requires certain public officials who manage public investments to disclose reportable interests in regularly filed Statements of Economic Interests (SEIs). When an official identified in Section 87200 is disqualified from a governmental decision, the official must identify the interest, recuse themselves and leave the room.³

Our investigation determined that you timely filed your SEIs for calendar years 2019 and 2020. In these SEIs, you disclosed your interests in Western Highland Mortgage.

The complaint alleged that Western Highland Mortgage exclusively performed mortgage loans for vacation rentals and “flips,” and you had a conflict of interest when you voted on items before the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors on November 17, 2020, May 11, 2021, and August 24, 2021, related to a vacation rental cap in South Lake Tahoe.

Evidence obtained during our investigation showed that Western Highland Mortgage engaged in construction loans, and in 2020 and 2021, it did not make any consumer loans, only commercial loans. Since Western Highland Mortgage was not involved in making loans for vacation rentals at the time of the relevant governmental decisions, there was no financial effect of the governmental decisions you made regarding a vacation rental cap in South Lake Tahoe on Western Highland Mortgage. Thus, the allegations have been disproven, and the Enforcement Division is closing this case without further action.

¹ The Political Reform Act is contained in Government Code sections 81000 through 91014, and all statutory references are to this code. The regulations of the Fair Political Practices Commission are contained in Sections 18104 through 18998 of Title 2 of the California Code of Regulations, and all regulatory references are to this source.

² Section 87100.

³ Section 87105.

Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please feel free to contact me at (916) 322-5771 or abreron@fppc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Angela J. Breron

Angela J. Breron

Assistant Chief, Enforcement Division