

Chicago, Illinois 60602

Case No. 2014 I 01

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Monday through Friday, at CCBR's downtown office (118 N. Clark Street, Chicago, Illinois).² Outside of his County employment, Gadzinski also holds two political offices. Gadzinski has served as the Republican committeeman for Norwood Park Township since 2006 and a trustee for the Village of Harwood Heights since 2007. Gadzinski was a candidate for re-election during the March 18, 2014 primary election.

An associate of Gadzinski's opponent for Republican committeeman in that election observed Gadzinski on Monday, December 30, 2013, participating in signature challenges to candidate petitions at the Cook County Clerk's Office (Fifth Floor, 69 W. Washington, Chicago, Illinois) from approximately 8:45 A.M. until 9:53 A.M. Gadzinski sat with an election judge for approximately an hour to review the validity of signatures on candidate petitions. This associate also reported that Gadzinski participated in another hearing related to these signature challenges. Gadzinski had filed a motion to strike some of the signatures he reviewed on December 30, 2013. The hearing on this motion took place at the Board of Elections (Lower Level, 69 W. Washington, Chicago, Illinois) on Wednesday, January 15, 2014, from approximately 12:00 P.M. until 2:00 P.M. Finally, Gadzinski was observed campaigning and participating in other election-related hearings at various locations throughout the day on Monday, March 17, 2014, and Tuesday, March 18, 2014 (*i.e.* Election Day).

County employees working for CCBR can request time off – for sick, vacation, personal or compensatory leave – in writing or verbally by contacting the Head of Review. The timekeeper receives this request and submits the information to the Comptroller's Office. The timekeeper or secretary also prepare various documents reflecting the hours worked (or taken off) by all CCBR employees.

The Board obtained copies of these timesheets and related documentation:

- The CCBR Attendance Verification Sheet, dated Sunday, December 29, 2013 – Saturday, January 11, 2014, includes an entry indicating that Gadzinski used one hour of personal leave on December 30, 2013.
- The CCBR Timecard Detail, dated December 29, 2013 – January 11, 2014, includes an entry dated December 30, 2013, for Gadzinski referencing the personal leave code, "315."
- The CCBR Attendance Verification Sheet, dated Sunday, January 12, 2014 – Saturday, January 25, 2014, includes an entry indicating that Gadzinski used two hours of personal leave on January 15, 2014.
- The CCBR Timecard Detail, dated January 12, 2014 – January 25, 2014, also includes an entry dated January 15, 2014, for Gadzinski referencing the personal leave code.

² During the summer months, CCBR working hours are typically a half hour earlier, *i.e.* from 8:30 A.M. until 4:30 P.M., Monday through Friday.

- The CCBR Attendance Verification Sheet, dated Sunday, March 9, 2014 – Saturday, March 22, 2014, shows six days of vacation leave for Gadzinski, including entries dated March 17, 2014 and March 18, 2014.
- The CCBR Timecard Detail, dated March 9, 2014 – March 22, 2014, also reflects entries dated March 17, 2014 and March 18, 2014, for Gadzinski with the compensatory leave code, “320.”

The Comptroller’s Office provided Board investigators with access to its database to externally validate the accuracy of the CCBR records on these four dates. The Board did so, and this documentation confirms Gadzinski’s representation to Board investigators that: (1) he took one hour of personal time on December 30, 2013, during which he participated in the hearing at the Clerk’s Office; (2) he took two hours of personal time on January 15, 2014, during which he participated in the hearing at the Board of Elections; and (3) he took a week-long vacation using compensatory time up to, and including, March 17, 2014 and March 18, 2014, during which he engaged in various campaign-related activities.

DISCUSSION

The Ethics Ordinance provides that County employees “shall not intentionally perform any prohibited political activity during any compensated time (other than vacation, personal, or compensatory time off).” Cook County Code of Ordinances (“County Code”), § 2-583(c). Gadzinski does not dispute that he engaged in some political activity on the four dates in question. Instead, Gadzinski asserts that he was on his own time – not the County’s – when he was observed away from the CCBR office during regular working hours engaged in various election-related activities.

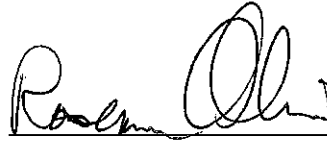
The Board’s investigation corroborates Gadzinski’s version of the events. The best available documentation from sources inside and outside of CCBR confirms that Gadzinski had taken the appropriate leave before engaging in the observed political activities. The Ethics Ordinance does not prohibit a County employee who is “off the clock” from exercising his or her political rights to run for public office (so long as that employee does not misappropriate other County resources in the process).

CONCLUSION

For the forgoing reasons, with respect to the above-captioned matter, the Board of Ethics finds NO VIOLATION of Section 2-583(c) of the Ethics Ordinance. Any request for reconsideration of this determination must also be made within thirty (30) days of receipt of this notice.

July 16, 2014

So ordered
COOK COUNTY BOARD OF ETHICS

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Roseann Oliver", is written over a horizontal line.

Roseann Oliver, Chairperson