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PRESS RELEASE

State Ethics Commission Announces Court Approval of Settlement Agreement with Village of Taos Ski Valley Village Councilor Jay Christopher Stagg

Albuquerque, NM, July 17, 2024 – The Honorable Emilio Chavez, Chief Judge of the 8th Judicial District Court, has issued an order approving a settlement agreement between the State Ethics Commission and Village of Taos Ski Valley Village Councilor Jay Christopher Stagg. Under the order, the court reserves continuing enforcement authority for the terms of the settlement agreement, including Councilor Stagg’s commitment to recuse from all quasi-judicial proceedings and commercial transactions involving his employer, Taos Ski Valley, Inc (TSVI).

The agreement concludes the ongoing litigation initiated by the Commission alleging violations of the Governmental Conduct Act. The commission alleged that official actions taken by Mr. Stagg during four different Village of Taos Ski Valley Planning and Zoning Commission meetings constituted a conflict of interest because they directly related to and benefited his employer, TSVI. Mr. Stagg denied these allegations and contended that he operated under the good faith belief that he complied with the applicable law at all times.

The parties worked together to reach an amicable resolution in this matter, resulting in a joint motion to approve a settlement agreement that includes the following terms:

- **Recusal Commitment:** So long as he is employed by TSVI, Mr. Stagg agrees to recuse himself from any quasi-judicial proceedings and commercial transactions by the Village of Taos Ski Valley involving TSVI or any related entities for the remainder of his current and any future terms on the Village Council or any other Village government entity.
- **Continuing Enforcement Authority by the Court:** The court reserves continuing enforcement authority to enforce Mr. Stagg's recusal commitments, allowing the Commission to return to the court for an enforcement order if Mr. Stagg violates his agreements to recusal quasi-judicial proceedings and commercial transactions involving TSVI.

[Click here to read the Settlement and Release entered into by the Commission and Mr. Jay Christopher Stagg](#)

[Click here to read the Order Approving the Settlement Agreement](#)

About the State Ethics Commission

The State Ethics Commission is an independent, constitutional state agency with the authority to enforce civil violations of New Mexico's governmental ethics and disclosure statutes. The Commission is comprised of three Democratic Commissioners, three Republican Commissioners, and one independent Commissioner who is registered as "decline to state."

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For more information about the State Ethics Commission, please visit sec.nm.gov.