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STUDENT GOVERNMENT
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In The

Supreme Court of the Student Government

Iowa State University

Brandt Vlasek, *Petitioner*

v.

Election Commission, *Respondent*

Decided March 3, 2025

No. 2025-02

On February 19, 2025, The Petitioner, Colby Brandt, filed a Writ of Certiorari regarding Election Commission Violation 25-02 against Respondent, Election Commission. The Court grants certiorari.

On Sunday, February 2, 2025, The Brandt-Vlasek Campaign team chalked across campus, including the ramp outside of the library. The Election found the Brandt-Vlasek campaign guilty of violating Section 8.13 of the Election Code for chalking in a prohibited area. The Brandt-Vlasek campaign claims the chalk was not located in within the library, and did not violate any university policy. The Election Commission quotes from the Parks Library's websites that no literature, display signs, products, or flyers may be distributed on the steps and ramp into Parks Library.

On Monday, February 3, 2025, the Brandt-Vlasek Campaign held an event outside Parks Library. The Election Commission stated that the event did not complete event authorization and violated Section 8.13 of the Election Code. The Election Commission says that an event authorization must be submitted for any event, including handing out food. The campaign claims that the event's location is considered a "Free Speech Zone" and references that in years past, campaigns could host events that give out food without event authorization.

On Sunday, February 2, 2025, the Brandt-Vlasek Campaign held an event in Curtiss 0127. The event was registered under Student Government. The Election Commission found the campaign guilty of violating Section 8.13, stating that university policy prohibits reserving a space under an organization and using it for a different purpose. The Election Commission further goes on to say that registering the event under Student Government would create the appearance of an endorsement. The Brandt-Vlasek Campaign states that this was a misunderstanding and no student saw it. The campaign states that since no student saw the registration, it cannot indicate an endorsement. The campaign further states that the Election Commission had no room reservation policy.

The issue that this Court is answering is whether or not the Brandt-Vlasek Campaign violated section 8.13 of the Election Code.

JUSTICE JONES delivered the opinion of the Court in which BARTA, BRIESEMEISTER, HAES, and MILLER joined.

In their later arguments, it is essential to note that the Petitioner stated that Article XI Section 6.t of the Election Commission Constitution was violated. This Court will not be addressing this claim. This argument was not included or alluded to in the Statement of the Case. The Statement of the Case is the only information given to the Respondent. We believe the Respondent was not given the proper information to address this argument.

Section 8.13 of the Election Commission Code states, "All candidates and slates must adhere to all University, Local, State, and Federal laws." While the University chalking guidelines do not provide explicit information on whether chalking is allowed on the ramp leading up to Parks Library, the policies website of Parks Library states, "The library is a solicitation-free zone. No one can solicit or distribute products, flyers, or other literature, display signs, or set up a table in the library or on the steps and ramp into Parks Library." It is clear from this language that the Brandt-Vlasek campaign violated university policy by chalking on the ramp. We find the Election Commission violation and charges to be valid.

Section 14.3.7 of the Election Code states that food at events shall follow food service requirements set by Iowa State Event Authorization. The Brandt-Vlasek Campaign argues that in years past, campaigns have been able to host events that involve giving away food in the "Free Speech Zone" without event authorization. While this may have been the case, election guidelines change year to year, and it is up to the campaign to stay informed. The Election Commission states that the campaign was informed that they should submit their event authorization request through the Election Commission but never did. We find the Election Commission violation and charges to be valid.

The Election Commission states that university policy prohibits reserving a space under an organization and using it for another purpose. The campaign and the Election Commission state that the event was registered under Student Government. While it could have been a misunderstanding, it still violates university policy. We find the Election Commission violation and charges to be valid.

The Brandt-Vlasek Campaign shall comply with the violations and charges that were discussed above.

IT IS SO ORDERED

KABANUK concurs with the court.
MATTHIAS and ZIMMERMAN abstained from the proceedings.

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Chief Justice - Emily Haes