

2017

University of Southern California

**UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT GOVERNMENT
ELECTIONS COMMISSION**

MILLION VORHOFF *v.* AUSTIN MORGAN

Transcription

BASED ON THE FORMAL COMPLAINT SUBMITTED ON JANUARY 27, 2017

Hearing Held January 29, 2017 Decision Decided January 29, 2017

Deciding Commissioners:
Nillani, Therese, Christian, Kara, Kyle

Chairs of the Commission:
Katherine (Kat) Lee, *Associate Director of Elections*
Donielle Bunyard, *Assistant Director of Elections*

Representatives of Million Vorhoff:
Daniel Million, *Presidential Candidate*
Timothy (Tim) Vorhoff, *Vice Presidential Candidate*
Hashim Osman, *Campaign Manger*
Keith Keer, *Witness*

Representatives of Austin Morgan:
Austin Dunn, *Presidential Candidate*
Morgan Monahan, *Vice Presidential Candidate*
Paul Breslin, *Campaign Manager*

Observing:
Luis Canton, Program Coordinator, Campus Activities

Donielle: Okay, we already introduced ourselves. Again, my name is Donielle and I will be chairing the commission today. Um, you also all introduced yourself. In case anyone is not aware, the Million/Vorhoff team is the petitioner, and the Austin/Morgan team is the respondent. Okay, we already did that, okay great!

The Elections Commission is assembled here today, Sunday, January 29th, 2017 to hear the case of Austin/Morgan who is charged with, oh yeah, II.7.A.I. When directed by the Chair of the Commission, all witnesses and all others without responsibilities for this hearing will be requested to leave the room.

A student called before the Elections Commission as a respondent has the following rights:

- The right to review the statements of the petition;
- The right to present information supporting his/her version of the alleged complaint;
- The right to a hearing;
- The right to present up to three witnesses who have information relevant to the case at hand;
- The right to be present throughout the hearing and to consult with his/her advisor during the testimony;
- The right to appeal the final decision of the Elections Commission in accordance with the appeal procedure outlined in the USG Elections Code.

The petitioner filing a complaint before the Elections Commission has the following rights:

- The right to review the statements of the respondent (the student who is the subject of the alleged infraction);
- The right to present information supporting her or his version of the alleged complaint;

The hearing will be guided by the following procedures:

- The petitioner will have up to one hour to present his/her case including witnesses. The respondent may question the petitioner's witnesses through the Elections Commission. The Elections Commission may question the petitioner's witnesses.
- When the petitioner has finished, the respondent will have up to one hour to present his/her case including witnesses. The petitioner may question the respondent's witnesses through the Elections Commission. The Elections Commission may question the respondent's witnesses.
- When the student who is the respondent has finished, both the petitioner and the respondent will have five minutes to summarize what each believes has been shown to be

true.

- The Commission reserves the right to ask questions at any time.
- The Commission may call any witnesses whose testimony bears on the case.
- The Commission insists on honest and forthright responses to its questions and may recommend penalties, including suspension or dismissal, for any witness who is found responsible for not being truthful or intentionally misleading the Commission.
- Advisors are reminded that they do not possess the right to address the Commission, the witnesses, or the opposing person. Advisors are present solely for the purpose of advising the student.
- As stipulated in the Undergraduate Student Government Constitution, the Elections Commission advisor, Luis, may participate in the hearing if he/she deems that the Elections Commission is not following its own guidelines. In this case, the Elections Commission advisor can halt the proceedings. He's not participating, he's just overseeing—just to clarify.
- All parties are reminded that they cannot speak unless they have been recognized from the Chair of the Commission, myself, who may also remove any member(s) of a party from the proceedings who refuse(s) to adhere to set guidelines.
- A record of this hearing will be made by the Elections Commission clerk by tape recording [*or by another method determined by the Council prior to the hearing*].
- Is all of this understood?

[ALL AGREE]

Donielle: Yes, yes, yes. Great. Okay, will the petitioner present any and all information relevant to the allegations?

Daniel: Sorry, again, I'm just gonna say my name.

Donielle: Yeah, yeah absolutely.

Daniel: I'm Daniel. So basically, the nature of the situation was 8:30pm on the first day of media campaigning, January 26th, I received a call from one of the RAs who's in Residential Education that I've worked with pretty closely. He was having a conversation, his name is Keith Keer, he's actually the person who's going to be calling. He had called me, talking to me about how he was talking to a resident about the election. The resident is a freshman, very excited about getting involved in his first election, and he was just a little unclear, he had thought the election had started on January 26th at 7pm, so when he was talking to his resident he was like oh, you know I got invited to a group a day beforehand, January 25th at 11am, 32 hours before the actual, official media campaign had

started.

So, as he was talking to his resident he was like oh, you know he's been on Elections and Recruitment last year, so he understands the guidelines of the elections process when things start. So, he had asked his resident if he would show him the page, so he had looked at the page and had saw the dates and times and he had realized having prior experience in USG being in Elections and Recruitment that this was against the Bylaws, this was against the time, and it was an unfair of the other ticket to have, having that time, especially being on the first day.

We definitely believe that first impression is definitely the main thing people look for in this election, and we feel like this doesn't only personally affect our ticket. Also, looking at the other ticket, Rachel and Rebeca, their page has the amount of likes both of our pages have combined, so we feel that the 32 hours in preparation beforehand definitely had an impact, and I'll pass it over to Tim.

Tim: Yeah, I think that you guys can look at the screenshot that we printed out. I think that you can see the time pretty clearly; it says January 25th at 11am, so that's very clearly more than a day ahead of time. As well, you can see a post where 65 people like it, so you know at least 65 people were a part of this group, and not only part of it but active participants in it. So, this essentially means that at 7pm, a day before, they have an entire team who know about their election and who are ready to essentially spread a social media campaign. And I believe that this is a huge advantage for their campaign, because the first day is the most important. It's when everybody's liking the page, when everybody's active on Facebook.

Additionally, the more likes on their page means that when they ask for endorsements from clubs, they look more reputable, they look more official and more represented of the students, that will be a huge advantage for them moving forward. Additionally, it gives them clout, so not only does it help them with endorsements from clubs, it also attracts student. You know, if a student is going online, they don't know who to vote for, they'll know that Austin/Morgan has close to 900, we have close to 550, Rebecca/Rachel has close to 400. Just that sheer discrepancy gives students more incentive to vote for the person with more likes. Did I leave out anything?

Million/Vorhoff Team: Nope.

Donielle: Anything else to add? Okay, great. Does the respondent have any questions for the petitioner?

Paul: No.

Donielle: Does the commission have any questions for the petitioner? Nope, do you have any witnesses? Yes, it's not 10 o'clock yet.

Daniel: Yeah.

Tim: We can go ahead and try call him.

Daniel: Yeah.

Donielle: Worth a shot.

Daniel: Yeah, he was really out of breath last time I called him.

[Calling witness: Keith Keer]

Daniel: Hey, what's up Keith, man? We're at the witness stage of this process. Do you mind if I just put you on speaker real quick? Alright cool, you can just introduce yourself. My bad, I know you're running right now. Alright. Alright, Keith, wait, not yet. Not yet. Not yet. Alright. Alright. You can go now. You can talk now. You're ready, alright.

Keith: Hey everyone. My name is Keith Keer, studying Chemical Engineering. Just for your reference, I was the Assistant Director of Elections and Recruitment last year, so I'm pretty well aware of what the process is like. So, yeah, thanks for having me.

Kat: He's still running.

Keith: Haha, I know.

Donielle: Keith, you can go ahead, I'm Donielle, I'm the Assistant Director of Elections.

Keith: Yeah, I figured.

Donielle: You can go ahead and share any information you may have regarding this complaint.

Keith: Alright, so, on, wait what day was the first day we start?

Daniel: It was on the 26th.

Keith: Okay, so, on the 25th, I don't know what time, but I was notified by a resident on the afternoon of that day on the 25th—as shown by the time stamp on the picture—that Austin created a page, and there was at least 150 people when he was added to it, most of them USG members. One thing that stood out to me was something very illegal: the fact that the Director of Comm was in the group. I don't think he's in it anymore, but he was in the group. So, that's another violation. But yeah, this group was created with more than the Core 5.

Donielle: Keith?

Daniel: Keith, are you alright? Hello? Keith?

Donielle: Try and call him back.

Daniel: Yeah, I'm gonna call him back real quick.

[BREAK]

Daniel: Alright Keith, you're back on.

Tim: You left off at the Big Five.

Donielle: Yeah, you left off at the Core Five. The group went beyond the Core Team.

Daniel: You said group went beyond the Core Team...Alright, Keith you there?

Keith: Yeah, I stopped.

Daniel: Okay.

Donielle: Do you have any other information regarding this claim?

Keith: Yeah, one thing is that the Director of Comm was in it, and no one in USG is allowed to participate until after...

Daniel: Can you repeat that? Yeah, we can hear you just speak a little louder and a little clearer...Keith, you there?...Okay, I'm just gonna call you back one more time. I'm gonna call you back. Yeah, it's your service. Could you maybe move to a different location?

Keith: I said everything I have to say.

Daniel: Yeah, we can't hear. I'm just gonna call him back.

Donielle: That's fine.

Daniel: We can just have him text us.

Tim: He made it sound like he was mostly finished.

Donielle: I just want him to have the chance to share any and all information that he has.

Kat: Because, once we move on, we can't go back. They also have an opportunity to question him—if you'd like.

Morgan: We don't need it.

Kat: Okay.

Donielle: We just want to let him say anything that he has.

Morgan: Yeah, absolutely.

Kat [to Elections Commission]: Do you guys have questions for the witness? *[via text since there is bad service]*

Christian: I was just gonna ask how he...well, should I hold the question or should I ask it now?

Daniel: We can text it.

Christian: Just how he saw that the Director of Communications was in the group and if there's any proof of that.

Daniel: Yeah, with the screenshot too. When he had talked to the resident, he, the resident, just being a freshman, just being unaware, he was really worried that people that liked the page would get in trouble who got involved with it.

Kat: Oh, is he the one that blocked it out?

Daniel: Yeah, he blocked it out, so that when he sent it, he didn't want us to have the screenshot with the people, because he didn't want to get his friends in trouble. So, Keith, being his RA, sitting with him actually looking at the page, he went through, but he can send you the answer to that too.

Christian: Okay.

Daniel: Yeah, I texted him. If anyone else has any questions I can just shoot him a text too.

Daniel: I can try calling him one more time.

Group: No, it's okay.

Tim: Thank you all for waking up early on a Sunday morning.

Kat: Thank you all.

Daniel: Yeah, this is brutal.

[BREAK]

Donielle: Okay, great, so you've questioned your witness. The respondent doesn't have any questions, the Commission doesn't have any questions, great. Will the respondent present any and all information relevant to the allegations?

Morgan: Can we...We just itemized our notes, can we go through it?

Donielle: Yeah.

Morgan: Okay, cool. So, like Tim said, thank you for being here on a Sunday morning. It's going to be a crazy two weeks, so thank you in advance for all your hard work. Austin and I, from the beginning of getting together, we kind of tried to make it our goal to run a clean campaign. That's been our goal the entire time. We want it to be really smooth because in past year's it's been very very malicious, and we just know how hard everyone's worked on their campaigns and just want to make it a good experience for everyone and really promote USG in a good light.

That being said, we're taking full responsibility for this. We did do it. What happened was, we made this the campaign team group, and it was only intended for our close friends because it's so exciting. We do take full responsibility; we really just...it was hard to keep it a secret from our close friends and we wanted to get that social media buzz, and we completely take credit for that. But with the Vote Austin Morgan page, the one that you were saying has 900 likes, the difference between the two is that this page wasn't published...it's actually a funny story, we couldn't get it to publish until like 7:10pm because Austin was on the phone with DT and he created the page and it wasn't published to...

Paul: ...It wasn't published to Facebook yet, so we couldn't figure out how to do it because only the administrator could do it, so that...

Morgan: ...but the timestamps are here and we set up the entire page previously so that at 7pm we could just click submit, and it would launch and be good to go. So, the page that has 900 likes, that's completely good. We can verify that, we can get you the timestamps on Facebook if you want...anything. But yeah, this page we take full responsibility for; it kind of just spiraled out of control to be honest. People...we left the...or I think that the option of add people got left open, so it just added more people and added more people, and we...our core five just added our very close friends and we don't know how it grew so quickly.

Having to do with Luke, we had no idea Luke was in it. We really respect that he is in a position power in this election, and we did not add him. We specifically knew that. We didn't know until you mentioned it actually that he was in that page. But outside of the campaign period, so our understanding USG people can be in pages but they can't publicly support, right?

Kat: They can publicly support. They can be in pages. The only people that can't are right here and myself, but they can't be on the core five team.

Morgan: Yup.

Kat: But they're not supposed to...no one is supposed to be aware of the campaign so they were added beforehand, before the 26th.

Morgan: Austin actually just sent us the bylaw. It says any person that is considered a currently seated member of USG and/or program board is prohibited from working on a campaign team throughout the entire elections process. Currently seated members may support campaigns, but USG officers shall remain non-partisan space. Cool.

So, continuing...this was in no way meant to be a malicious act against the other two tickets. It was honestly just because we were excited. We've been planning this since October. That being said, getting back to our point about running a clean campaign and a fair campaign and just being in good spirits, we specifically refrained from filing the same offense on both tickets. We have the evidence, we have everything, but we thought we would give them the right because we did it too. We don't want to file at all.

Paul: We have specific cases from both teams about how they actually announced the campaign before we even did, so we thought that it would be in our best favor if we just slid everything under the rug because we're all kind of responsible for that. And we thought it would kind of be best to move forward from that and have a very clean campaign, but other teams may not have felt that way.

Morgan: That being said, we're fully taking responsibility for this. Like I said, we will take any penalty you all deem appropriate, and we hope to not get anymore infractions. Like we said, we really want this campaign to be clean and good. Austin, do you have anything to add?

Austin: No, I think you did a phenomenal job.

Morgan: Thank you.

Donielle: Great. Does the petitioner have any questions for the respondent?

Daniel: We have one question and two comments. So our first question...

Donielle: ...You can ask a question.

Daniel: Okay. One question. We were just wondering...we were also very excited about starting the election too as well as probably Rebecca and Rachel. We were wondering because it was a secret group how did you all not know that Luke Southwell was added into the group, because it, from the core five one of you all...

Morgan: Completely valid...

Austin: ...I can take that.

Morgan: Okay.

Daniel: Yeah.

Austin: So basically, the way that the secret group had begun was I added my core five and it was kind of a failure of communication on my part. In regards to the experience I had of running a campaign previously, I didn't make it very clear to every member of my core five that we weren't quite ready to be adding people yet. And by the time that I checked the page again over, as you saw, I believe over a hundred people had been added. And from then on, it was a scurry to figure out that there wasn't people who had been added who shouldn't have been in the group, but I even asked Morgan via messenger—and you all brought this up—if anyone had any idea that Luke was in the group, because obviously I'm on exec with him, so he would be the last person I'd add to this group.

So, that was kind of gist of the process of this in that it just got out of hand and one thing lead to another and the entire invitation process spiraled out of control.

Morgan: And I can add to that to. How Facebook groups work is that if somebody's added there's a bar that you can type someone's name in and add them even if it's a secret group. So if a person is in it they can add more people, and it can just compound from there. So.

Daniel: As far as mines...just a question I was about to ask...
Donielle: Yeah, absolutely.

Daniel: From what we know, only admin are allowed to add people to secret Facebook groups. There's actually a tab that—we also have a group now after seeing that other tickets had groups too—that we actually have the option. It's very easy to click the option to have just one admin. So just for future reference...

Morgan: ...Yeah good to know. Honestly it happened so quickly that I think it was kind of an oversight, so we completely apologize [*Austin chiming in*].

Hashim: So, what was the intent for making this group?

Morgan: Just like you guys said, it was supposed to be for our close friends. We wanted to let them know that we were running. Like we said, we've been planning this since October...and we honestly should have waited—it was like what, 20 hours, less than that—but yeah, I don't know, we just wanted to share with our close friends. And our core five have been working so hard on the ticket, and like you were saying it is so important to have that first social media presence, but we made sure the public stuff was kept till 7pm, past 7pm, because of malfunction. But this group was in no way to be malicious to the other tickets.

Austin: And I think in addition to that, we kind of learnt what Daniel was just mentioning. I think we picked up on that pretty quickly that I kind of made the mistake of making 7 total people in charge of admin of that page, being the core five and the two of us. And we kind of already switched that so that Morgan and Paul and I are the only people that are admins of our page to keep that more under control and more concise.

Daniel: We have a follow-up question as well. We were wondering, just based on having over a hundred people added to a secret group, don't you feel like that would also affect just having people knowledgeable about the election a day ahead of time, don't you think they could have spread the word to their friends. Just having a hundred people, of course they would probably talk to an additional person or two additional people, and...

Morgan: No, for sure, absolutely. We completely see that, the validity in that. Like we were saying, there's no way we intended for it to do that. This was supposed to be our close friends we trust. We completely respect the rules, and we made it very abundantly clear that this was for our friends to know, because we've been planning it, because it's a huge life event—like you were saying it's an exciting time—so, we apologize sincerely for it, and we just didn't really know.

Austin: Yeah, can I add something?

Morgan: Yeah, go ahead.

Austin: Okay, so for a personal note, for anybody in the room who doesn't already know this, this is my second campaign that I'm running, and Edwin and I probably never had to sit through a hearing throughout the first elections season, and that was very much the intention going into this season of the campaign. With that being said, even the elections hearing that we had, I had already personally—our ticket had already personally—found infractions on both of the other tickets, in which case, we tried to be playing this very nicely in regards to not have to sit through these hearings. And that in no way takes away from the error being made, but I want to make it abundantly clear that I don't know how fair it is to consider our ticket the only ticket at fault for an error like this. I think there might definitely be different severities and I don't know if you can make the connection that a hundred person Facebook group lead to a deficiency in four to five hundred likes. But I totally think that we obviously had an error in this regard that we're totally owning up for, but I just wanted to kind of show that we're trying to continue that across the board I guess.

Hashim: So, following back on intent, you said it was kind of an accident...you guys were excited, you just wanted to tell your close friends. But at what point...how many friends do you have? So it got to 50 people, 70, 80, at what point were you going to stop and say okay these aren't just my close friends I'm excited...?

Morgan: So, honestly, it wasn't an accident. Let me just be clear, we're taking full responsibility for that. We made the group with our friends, but we weren't really keeping track of it to be honest because we were getting, doing everything, working really hard staying up until 3am and weren't really tracking it. So, we just kind of loss control of it. Like we were saying, our core five who's also very excited just started adding people, and Austin, do you have anything else to add.

Austin: Yeah, I mean, I think where the accident comes into play is with the initial creation of the group and the accident in not being clear in our communication in regards to the purpose of that group and who could be added. But the moment that one person added fifteen people and that person added another ten people...at that point Morgan and I and our campaign team even looked to each other like okay, this is totally not what we intended this to be. And at that point, I don't know what we could do other than delete the group, and which case by the time we wanted to do that we were hours away from the campaign launching to the point that when the infractions came across I don't think that it was necessarily a surprise to us, because we knew that the mistake we had made was probably something that could've been caught if that makes sense.

Daniel: In regards to the infractions, because I kind of feel like the infractions are being thrown out and just being completely honest, our ticket had messaged a few people beforehand, one of those in which was an initial—what is it...there was an infraction placed on us beforehand, and one of them was actually someone I had initially asked to be a running mate before I met Tim, which I'm very happy to have met Tim. But I had asked that person and she had known, and the picture we were sent about the infraction was that she had known I had planned on running just because I had asked her to be my running mate in addition to being on my RA staff team. So I just wanted to say...do you all feel like the difference between your infraction versus ours...like us messaging a handful of people three hours before the election on the same day is different from having over a hundred people in a secret campaign group like a day ahead of time?

Paul: Well, there's also no way we can track how many emails you sent out privately, so I don't know if you guys did the same caliber as us, because you could have easily emailed 200 people in one email. But we kind of added 20 people each that we considered very close friends, so I think there is a stark difference, because you probably have told twenty people in your private life even in passing...

Austin: ...I also think that I don't personally have any interest in invalidating the error that we made by comparing it to the error that you made. I think a mistake is a mistake, and we're just trying to take ownership for and improve on not making it again moving forward.

Morgan: We both broke the silent period, and I think should just both own up to that and move forward from there. So...

Daniel: That's valid..yeah, thank you guys. Honestly, at the end of the day, we just—we understand that we also made mistakes—we just all want to have the most clean election possible moving forward...

Morgan: ...Oh no, for sure! Austin and I and Paul were talking, and everyone's put so much work into this like blood, sweat, tears, and it's gonna be a huge two weeks for all of us with school with the whole thing, so we really just want it to be a fair, clean, sportsmanlike, all of the above campaign.

Paul: Hopefully this will be the last time...

Austin: ...Am I allowed to ask a question in this period or is that not okay?

Donielle: Let me read this...I think that already happened.

Morgan: [*To Austin*] Oh yeah, I said we didn't need it, sorry.

Austin: No no, it's perfectly fine...I guess my question arose from stuff you mentioned...does that make sense?

Morgan: No, we can't hear you.

Kat: You guys have five minutes closing...

Morgan: ...We get five-minute closing if it's better

Paul: Make it a comment

Morgan: Don't say it now, it's for closing

Austin: I guess what I was saying, Donielle...

Donielle: ...Just ask it, and if it's not valid we'll just say it's invalid then we'll consider it

Austin: Okay, I guess my question was just as to what was previously mentioned about the deficiency, or I guess, the correlation between the secret group and the likes between our page and

your page. I guess, do you actually believe that because of this Facebook group that we do not deserve the amount of likes that we have, or...what was I guess the thought behind bringing that up?

Donielle: I don't think that's a question you can ask right now.

Morgan: Okay.

Kat: You can make that a part of your closing if you'd like.

Donielle: Okay. Do you all have any witnesses?

Morgan: No.

Donielle: Does the commission have any questions for the respondent?

Kara: Yes. So, are you guys aware that there's a 24 hour period to file any formal complaint?

Morgan: Yup. Yup. We knew that previously, and for both actual tickets we knew that they both did this infraction, so we chose not to file.

Kara: Right. I think that's totally a good choice to make. I would just keep in mind that it doesn't...you shouldn't choose not to file and then continue to bring up your concern or your complaint...

Morgan: ...No, absolutely. Yeah.

Kara: So, in the future, file a formal complaint and don't bring it up as a counter.

Morgan: Okay.

Donielle: Great, okay. We will now take a five-minute break to allow parties to prepare summary statements.

[BREAK to prepare summary statements]

Donielle: The commission has a few last questions it would like to ask. If you have any questions, feel free to ask them.

Christian: I guess I have a general question to both parties. So, you guys stated that the page was posted at the right time, but this evidence doesn't really have a real time stamp; the nine hours doesn't really say anything, so do you guys have specific evidence that you'd wanna provide slash was there...

Daniel: ...We noticed discrepancies on both of these. There was—I feel like it might have gotten cropped out...

Tim: There's actually two different things. There's their Facebook page, which is totally by the rules, and that's where this nine hours is from. And this was posted...

Kat: ...And that was nine hours on the 26th?

Tim: Yes. This was live at the appropriate time. You know, so they made it and published it live at the right time. The discrepancy is that they have a separate page that's completely just Austin/Morgan 2017 Campaign team, and so that's the one that was announced on January 25th ...

Morgan: ...That's the one we owned up to.

Christian: So everyone's in agreement on that part?

Both tickets: Yup, mhm.

Donielle: So, just to clarify, the second page, that large page that says Austin/Morgan, that one you don't have an issue with?

Daniel: We do have...it says 8:05pm on the 26th...

Donielle: ...But you don't have a complaint regarding that picture?

Daniel: Oh no.

Donielle: Just to clarify. Okay, great, any other questions from the commission?

Daniel: Actually, I have one thing to add though. I'm not sure, but I remember we got an email saying we weren't allowed to make a page until 7pm.

Kat: You weren't allowed to post...because, you remember, we actually requested your Facebook URLs and your website URLs, so you all had to create...obviously we assumed that you were creating those pages beforehand.

Daniel: Okay, for sure.

Donielle: It can't be known to the public

Kat: Did you have a question Nillani?

Nillani: Just so we can clarify when we're deliberating and what not, could you give us the *[referring to evidence of time stamp]*

Morgan: Okay, but to make it clear, the time stamp says it's earlier because we had it created and put all the pictures and uploaded them before the launch, but then if you guys need witnesses we can bring them who our team was at the launch with us. But it was funny because like we were saying, we were trying to launch if and we were freaking out because we couldn't get it to work. And then Austin was on the phone and because he had created the page, so we actually launched at 7:07pm or something like that.

Austin: I actually...I actually was the only person to have access to our Facebook page until even after that, and that was part of my error not making Paul and Morgan admin for our page, but that was...the time stamp confusion happened because I believe the morning of the launch is when I started creating the page, but I was the only person with access to it because it hadn't been published yet.

Donielle: Cool, so if you all could just provide that time stamp...

Morgan: ...Yeah, it's earlier than...

Donielle: ...As immediately as possible, that would be phenomenal.

Morgan: It's just clear that it's before, right? Okay.

Donielle: Yup, they don't have issue, we're all in agreement that it's not a problem.

Morgan: Okay, just want to make it clear.

Kat: You can just send it to usselect

Morgan: Alright.

Kat: And just shoot me a text when you send it.

Donielle: Anything else from the commission? Now's the time. Alright, each individual...you all do teams... will have five minutes to make a closing statement. Will the petitioner summarize what he/she believes has been shown to be true. He/she may include any general comments or address the impact of this incident and may include a sanction recommendation

Hashim: Okay, once again my name's Hashim. I am the campaign manager for Daniel and Tim's ticket. We just wanted to conclude with the following facts. The validity of this charge is undeniable. They even agreed to that. We also wanted to add that we believe the severity and effect of this infraction is actually very significant to this campaign more than they're playing it out to be. It's not shown here, but it did say campaign team, it wasn't just a personal thing for friends. Over a hundred people—it was probably close to a hundred fifty when they saw—were added beforehand, and that makes it very public, especially in a school like USC where everyone knows everyone. That just gave them so much more momentum and an unfair advantage. And we believe that an appropriate sanction would be something similar to the nature of this, so possibly losing privileges of digital campaigning and probably a written apology following whatever sanction they get just so the public is aware and they don't think they're just being inactive on the page for no reason. And, that's it.

Kat: I just want to interrupt really quick. They can't do a public apology, because no one outside of this room should know about the complaint. So, no one from the public can know about this. After the fact of this we move on, so they...

Morgan: ...can I ask a question about that? So, if it was to be made public, would that consider more sanctions on the...

Donielle: No one can know that the complaint has been filed or heard other than the respondent, the petitioner, the commission, Luis.

Tim: What about the other ticket?

Kat: The other ticket doesn't know that this is happening.

Donielle: No one other than who is in this room. Any other tickets, senatorial candidates, random members that you're friends with cannot know about this.

Kat: And they're not supposed to know that you're prepping for this too. I mean I was gonna mention this earlier, but it's appropriate right now. Literally I was hanging out with my friends last night and I haven't told them about this. They both came up to me separately and were like oh, I heard you have hearings tomorrow morning...what time are they at? Like early

Donielle: Same. Multiple people have been...

Kat: And it's like, how do you know about this?

Donielle: ...Asking me questions and I am not informing them...

Kat: ...Exactly! If I'm not telling people, if Donielle's not, and obviously I don't think you guys are [*referring to commission*], then someone else is, and it's not appropriate.

Donielle: That is...one could file a violation if others were to know and there was a direct line of where the origin came from. Just so everyone's aware.

Morgan: So, just confirming...if it were to get leaked, there would be harsh sanctions?

Donielle: if you were able to identify the origin. I also want to clarify one thing. Because it is a secret page, correct? If I'm a part of the page, it isn't visible to anyone, you know, to the point that it would be expanded and expanded only if one were to add people? Just to clarify that.

Tim: I think that the point they were trying to make it that they had essentially coordinated at 7pm

Donielle: No, no, totally get that...just wanted to...

Morgan: ...We own up to that for sure.

Donielle: Just wanted to confirm it's not like if you like your open page

Kat: Also, with the complaints, last thing. Even posting in your secret groups...sure, maybe your campaign manager or your core five can know, but your hundred people supporting your campaign shouldn't know about this. Because then that would spread to the next hundred people and the next hundred people, so it's literally these people in this room and maybe your core five if it's necessary.

Donielle: Only those five...

Daniel: Yeah yeah...and we understand that. That's exactly what we meant...spreading something from a hundred people

Kat: Yeah, and we were just talking about the public apology...

Donielle: ...Great, moving forward. Will the respondent summarize what he/she believes has been shown to be true. This may include a sanction recommendation.

Paul: Once again, I'm Paul, and I'm the campaign manager for Austin/Morgan. First of all, we would like to apologize for having to call this meeting in the first place. We understand that we did do something incorrect that is against sanction, and we're also looking forward to running a campaign with no further infractions, because we'd really like to have everything very clean between each and every one of the candidates.

That being said, we in no way meant to counter our infraction with another infraction earlier as someone on the commission mentioned, and we do apologize for that. But something that was not resolved during the previous statements was that our page has over 850 likes whereas there page has over 500 likes, and we don't see how in any way that is fathomable...how one Facebook page with over a hundred people could possibly create that, because that would mean every person in the group would have to add four friends, which is kind of not likely, especially since it was only about the group...the group was very official and was 12 hours before the election, and I don't see how that's possible to get more than two times the amount of likes just because of a Facebook group, which I know for a fact they did have. But we do think that we should have maybe a social media sanction, and if you guys feel that it's appropriate, we can delete the group and make a smaller one,

because we think anything you think is fair should be punishable because we did act against sanction.

Morgan: Yeah, because it is a social media infraction, we think that it should be a social media sanction. Whether it's a day or whatever of no posting or whatever, we're in agreement with that, but we don't feel like it should affect our physical campaign because it was in no way related.

Donielle: Great. After the Commission's deliberation and decision making, all verdicts and sanctions will be emailed to the involved parties and posted on the USG Elections website within 24 hours of the deliberations. Are there any questions?

Austin: The results of the hearing are posted on the website?

Donielle: That's what it says on here...

Austin: I only ask because I thought you all said it was private. Totally fine either way...

Donielle: That is true...

Hashim: Because on the bylaws it states that the recording and the results would be published to the press and to the public.

Donielle: On the what?

Hashim: The bylaws.

Donielle: So we're acting through the code...most importantly, you all will be informed of the verdict, and we'll clarify that for you and include whether or not it will be posted to any additional sources in the email that you all will receive.

Daniel: Wait, so is there something else we should follow?

Donielle: So, the commission only acts on the code, not the bylaws, so if it's not in the code then they don't act upon it. So, rather than have you all sit here while we all figure it out we'll include the results of our digging into this in the email that includes the verdict.

Kat: And to clarify, also with Luke, the code says that members of USG can support. The bylaws is the one that is kind of very specific to exec. You'd have to bring that up with Judicial.

Donielle: That's not something we can...

Kat: ...Yeah, that's not something the code has control over.

Daniel: So how would we do that? Just to address that for future matters.

Donielle: You can file with Judicial Council

Luis: So the way that works—it might have to change—but usually the areas of complaint if it's a bylaws infraction you would submit a written statement to the Vice President...I'm a little confused right now I need to look back...either the Vice President or the Speaker Pro Temp and Senate, so it would be one of them two. But I'll get back to you.

Daniel: Okay, awesome, thank you.

Luis: Email me, and then I'll send you what the process looks like.

Morgan: Wait, I have a question on that really quick. Does that mean that the infraction hearing is going to be drawn out and we won't know what infraction we get leading up to that or is it going to be decided right now?

Donielle: No, that's separate...the judicial thing is completely separate.

Morgan: Okay cool.

Hashim: I have one quick question. On the bylaws, it says following the proceeding, official audio and visual transcript will be released to both the general public and the press. So, after that, if you were to find that to be true, would the apology then be taken into consideration?

Donielle: That's something that the commission can decide upon. They heard all that you've said, and yeah, if it's valid then they can consider that, but yours is a recommendation, so they don't in any way have to.

Hashim: Yeah.

Donielle: Yup! But that's definitely if it's able, then they can considerate it. Any other questions...? Great, this hearing is concluded. All participants are reminded about the confidentiality of this hearing. Thank you.

Everyone: Thank you.

Donielle: We just need all your documents so that we can shred them.