

# **STATE REGULATION OF PUBLIC UTILITIES REVIEW COMMITTEE**

## **CANDIDATES FOR THE SOUTH CAROLINA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION EDITED PERSONAL DATA QUESTIONNAIRE**

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**NOTICE:** The information requested herein is needed to assist the Committee in its investigation of candidates for the Public Service Commission. This questionnaire is the initial step in the investigation of your candidacy. A completed questionnaire should be returned to the Committee as soon as possible, but in any event no later than noon, 12:00 p.m., on Friday, October 11, 2019. *(Use and attach separate sheets, if necessary.)*

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**PLEASE SPECIFY THE SEAT FOR WHICH YOU ARE APPLYING (THE CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT IN WHICH YOU RESIDE; YOU MAY ONLY APPLY FOR ONE SEAT):**

### **Applying for District 3 Seat**

1. Full Name: Mr. **Stephen Michael Caston**  
Ms.

Home Address: **128 Riverpoint Drive, Clemson, SC 29631**

Business Address: **128 Riverpoint Drive, Clemson, SC 29631**

6. List each institution of higher learning you attended, including dates of attendance and degrees awarded. Please provide an official transcript prior to your screening hearing. If you left any institution without receiving a degree, state the reason for leaving.

**Clemson University, 1974-1978, BS Civil Engineering**

**Clemson University, 1979 (6 hrs. of graduate courses in Reinforced Concrete Design and Prestressed Concrete Design)**

**Clemson University/University of South Carolina Joint Master Program), 2000-2004, Master Public Administration**

7. List any continuing education courses or other professional education or training programs that you have attended in the past five years.

Numerous technical, operational, and managerial/leadership programs and conferences required to maintain Professional Engineering (PE) Licenses (minimum of 15 hours of CEUs required annually). Also, annually for approximately 25 years, I have attended the American Water Works Association (AWWA) Annual Conference and numerous other national technical and leaderships meetings and conferences. All PE licenses are current.

Some of these technical, operational and managerial/leadership conferences and topics are as follows (note, I am unable to locate 2015 list of PDHs/CEUs):

**2016 SC Rural Water Association (SCRWA) Decision Makers Summit –**  
*Key Financial Indicators for Water Systems; Managing Generational Attitudes in the Utility Workplace; Getting More Out of Your Day: A Lesson in Time Management; Columbia’s Flood-Lessons Learned; RD Apply-A Walk Through the Electronic Application Process*

**2016 South Carolina Environmental Conference (SCEC) – South Carolina Water Quality Association (SCWQA) Initiatives; Water Utility Council (WUC) Open Discussion: Cyanotoxins Regulatory Framework; Construction Manager-At-Risk: SJWD’s Process for Middle Tyger River Intake and Pump Station; Where is Water Going? Greenville Water’s Approach to Master Planning and Demand Projections in Light of National Trends of Decreasing Per-Capita Water Use; Utilization of Autonomous Underwater Vehicle to Support Taste-and-Odor Assessments in a Drinking-Water Supply Reservoir in SC; What You Can Learn About Water Future at the Esso Club (co-presenter)**

**2016 GA, NC, SC Confluence Conference – Selling the Benefits of Tap Water: Denver Water’s Partnership with Health Professionals and Latino Communities; Stressful Situations, Successful Strategies: Case Studies in Engaging with Constituents in Water Related Crise; Eye to Eye: What it Really Means to Relate to Diverse Audiences; Morning Mojo: Updates and Implications of Regulations and Policies Affecting Southeast Water Resources; Creating Partnerships with the Public Health Sector**

**2016 SCRWA Annual Conference – Update on the SC Surface Water Assessment Model; Groundwater Modeling in the SC Coastal Plain; Using Dendroclimatology for Water Resource Planning (researched, wrote and presented paper)**

**2016 Water Environment Association SC (WEASC) Operator Conference – Wastewater Treatment Facility Optimization; DHEC’s General O&M Overview; Quality Matters, Implementing Maintenance Programs for Lift Stations; Optimization of Conventional Surface Water Treatment: Truth or Consequences; Grease Trap University-Vessel Design and Inspections; Ultrafiltration Membrane Technology for the Water Plant**

***2017 South Carolina Climate Connection Workshop Series – Hurricanes, Droughts, Rain Bombs, and More: An Overview of Recent Extreme Events Affecting SC; How Flashy is Your Flood Risk? Understanding the SC Flood Mitigation Program; After the Flood: Revitalization of the SC Dam Safety Program; Climate Impacts on Built Environment: Extreme Impacts to Transportation Infrastructure; From Too Much to Not Enough: SC Water Planning...Planning for Which Drought?; Catching Fire: Wildfire Risks, Impacts and Management***

***2017 SCRWA Annual Conference – DHEC Groundwater and Surface Water Permitting and Planning Initiatives; Repairing Asphalt Using a Water Activated Cold Patch***

***2017 GA, NC, SC Confluence Conference – Responding to Water Quality Challenges; Responding to Water Availability Challenges; Morning Mojo: State Regulators Interactive Panel Discussion; Responding to Extreme Events***

***2017 SCEC – What If...?Using Dendroclimatology for Water Resource Planning (researched, wrote, presented paper)***

***2017 SC Drought & Water Shortage Tabletop Exercise – (September 27, 2017 I participated in the first SC Drought & Water Shortage Tabletop Exercise at the SC Emergency Operations Center in West Columbia, SC)***

***2018 SCRWA Decision Makers Summit – Unlocking the Keys to Public Utility Finance; Legislative Initiatives 2018-“Politics is too serious a matter to be left to politicians”; It’s All About Content: Taking Advantage of Communications to Improve Relationships; Technology & Cybersecurity; Workforce Development and Staffing Through Industry Specific Apprenticeship Programs; LLR Initiatives-ABC Testing Improvements; Water Utility Roundtable; Human Resources Law: The Facts from an Expert, Not Just What’s Right, but What’s Legal***

***2018 SCEC – Aerobic Granular Sludge-Design of the First AGS WWTP in North America; Adkins WTP: A Case Study in the Power of Planning; Updating Flood: Frequency Estimates & Regional Regression Equations for Rural Basins in the Southeastern US; Getting Our Assets in Gear at Greenville Water; Going Deep-Innovative Tunnel Design Beneath Downtown Greenville, SC***

***2018 SC Water Resources Conference (Clemson University) – Morning Plenary Session (State and Federal Agencies Update); SC State Water Plan Update; Preparing SC for Drought: lessons Learned from the State’s First Drought and Water Shortage Tabletop Exercise; Ensuring a Sustainable Water Supply through Watershed Management and Stakeholder Engagement; Morning Plenary Session-SC Legislative Panel***

***2018 SCRWA Annual Conference – Managing Service Area Disputes; Planning and Preparing for Stakeholder Involvement in the State Water Planning Efforts***

***2018 GA, NC, SC Confluence Conference – How the Politics of Cheap Energy and Water Scarcity Shaped a Region; Land Application versus Direct Discharge: What Have We Learned?; American Rivers Dam Removal Program; Changes in Historical Approaches to Water Utility Rate Setting;***

***Blazing the Path: Georgia's Water Loss Control Program; Planning and Design for Rock Quarries as Multi-Use Water Storage Facilities; Mitigating Negative Press: How Did We Get Here?; Morning Mojo: Updates and Implications of Regulations and Policies Affecting Southeast Water Resources; Future Viability of Rural Utilities and Impact on the Industry; Dig Greenville: Technical and Public Relations Challenges for Greenville's Largest Ever Tunneling Project; Catawba Wateree Management Group Master Plan; Succession Planning: It's Easier than you Think***

***2019 SCRWA Decision Makers Summit – FEMA Recovery: Planning Now for your Next Emergency; LLR Update; Keeping the Confidence: Public Communications, Notification and Engagement; Communicating Emerging Contaminates to Your Customers; State Water Planning-Groundwater Advisory Committee, Planning Process Advisory Committee and River Basin Councils; Water Quality from 438 Thousand Feet; Insurance and Cost Reduction Strategies Applicable to Property & Casualty Insurance for Utilities; 2CFR200 Compliance & Other Must Do's to Keep Your Utility Out of Trouble; FEMA Recovery Ways to Increase Your Security; Liquidity, and Yield on Cash and Cash Reserves; Planning for the Future: Succession Planning and Culture (researched, wrote and presented paper)***

8. Have you been employed or held any position in any of the following areas?

- ☐ (a) energy issues
- ☐ (b) telecommunications issues
- ☐ (c) consumer protection and advocacy issues
- X ☐ (d) water and wastewater issues
- ☐ (e) finance, economics, and statistics
- ☐ (f) accounting
- X ☐ (g) engineering
- ☐ (h) law

Please provide the duration of your employment or service and details about the nature of the work or the position.

**June 1978 - October 1978, Engineer for James T. Triplet and L.R, Ryan Bridge Contractors**

**October 1978 – 1988, Design Engineer and Contract Construction Manager for Enwright Associates (Engineering Consulting firm specializing in water and wastewater treatment, commercial buildings, and educational buildings)**

**1988-1991, Project Engineer for Black & Veatch (Worldwide Engineering Consultant specializing in water, wastewater and environmental engineering; power; telecommunications)**

**November 1991-June 1997, District Engineer for SJWD Water District, I performed all engineering, developed and managed all professional contracts (outside consultants, contractors, etc.)**

**1997-March 2019, General Manager/Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of SJWD Water District; Responsible for all aspects of the utility (staff, projects, strategic planning...)**

9. Have you served in the military? If so, give the dates of service, branch of service, highest rank, serial number, present status, and the character of your discharge or release. Please provide a copy of your DD-214 prior to your screening hearing. **No**
10. Have you ever held public office? If so, provide details, including the office, whether elected or appointed, the length and dates of your service. Also, state whether or not you timely filed reports with the State Ethics Commission during the period you held public office. If not, were you ever subject to a penalty. If so, provide details, including dates.

**Board member of the Pickens County Water and Sewer Authority (later became known as Pickens County Public Service Commission). This position was appointed by Pickens County Council (1985-1991)**

11. Have you ever been an unsuccessful candidate for elective, judicial, or other public office? If so, provide details, including dates. **No**
12. Please list in chronological order any employment of you by any governmental agency (whether full time or part time, contractual or at will, consulting or otherwise). Provide dates of employment, name of employer, name of supervisor, and major job responsibilities.

**November 1991-June 1997 District Engineer SJWD Water District, Mr. Danny Blackwell, GM (my former supervisor - deceased), SJWD Water District. I performed all engineering, developed and managed all professional contracts (outside consultants, contractors, etc.)**

**June 1997-March 2019 SJWD Water District, was the General Manager/Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for SJWD Water District, employed at the pleasure of 5-member Board of Commission. The SJWD Commissioners are recommended by the local delegation and appointed by the Governor. The present Chair of the Commission is Mr. Sanford (Buddy) Carlton. Highlights of major accomplishments as CEO:**

**SJWD Water District is a very successful water utility that is filled with ordinary people who have done extraordinary things. I began what I called, "SJWD's Pursuit of Excellence" in 1997. I did not set out with specific outcomes in mind (such as desired number of staff, rates, infrastructure plans, and so on). My only goal was to achieve excellence, to be the best we could be. I fully believed this would be good for internal customers (staff) and external customers (rate payers, suppliers...). I knew we needed to focus on our infrastructure and water resources, but I also knew we needed a culture that would focus on the right thing for the right reasons now and into the future. We studied the military, private industry, private utilities and great public utilities. We developed Level 5 Leaders that Jim Collins describes in**

**“Good to Great”**. Over the past 20+ years, SJWD has achieved extraordinary tangible, measurable outcomes. A few of these outcomes are:

- Changed from bimonthly meter reading (5 full-time meter readers) to monthly meter reading (one full time reader). SJWD is currently deploying an AMI meter reading system allowing SJWD to remotely read all meters from the office and to use data to quickly detect anomalies (such as leaks, unauthorized usage, trends...). This will not only benefit SJWD and help reduce costs but help customers by allowing quick detection of leaks or abnormal usage. These changes in meter reading has occurred as SJWD’s customer base has increased from approximately 12,000 customers in 1996 to approximately 27,000 in 2019.
- Using technology as a strategy and performing honest assessments of business practices, we decreased the number of employees from 51 to 39 in 2016 (primarily through attrition). It is anticipated to be reduced by 3 – 5 more within the next 5 years. All of this has occurred over the past 20 years while the number of customers has more than doubled.
- No base rate increase since 1996
- Reduction in customer service fees
- Changed from a declining block rate structure to an inclining block rate over 15,000 gallons/month
- Tax millage for general obligation bonds remains steady (10-12 mils) and has been so since 1996
- Establishment of a capital reserve fund to self-fund the bulk of our capital expenditures (currently around \$12M).
- Low debt: \$1.3M revenue bond that will be paid off July 2020, leaving zero debt
- Installed approximately \$75M of infrastructure since 1997.
- Developed a strategic plan entitled, Path to the Future, that focuses on long-term needs (sustainability of water resources, infrastructure, finances and organizational/operational human resources and business practices).

13. Please list in chronological order any occupation, business, or profession in which you have been engaged or employed (other than serving in a public office or being employed by a governmental agency). Please briefly note the nature of your work during each period.

**June 1978 - October 1978, Engineer for James T. Triplet and L.R, Ryan Bridge Contractors**

**October 1978 – 1988, Design Engineer and Contract Construction Manager for Enwright Associates (Engineering Consulting firm specializing in water and wastewater treatment, commercial buildings, and educational buildings)**

**1988-1991, Project Engineer for Black & Veatch (Worldwide Engineering Consultant specializing in water, wastewater and environmental engineering; power; telecommunications)**

**November 1991-March 2019 (tenure at SJWD as described in items 8 & 12 above)**

**March 2019-present, President of Mike Caston Consulting LLC. I retired from SJWD Water District March 31, 2019. I set up an LLC in December 2018 in anticipation of my retirement.**

14. Are you now an officer or director or involved in the management of any business enterprise? Explain.

**President of Mike Caston Consulting LLC. I retired from SJWD Water District March 31, 2019. I set up an LLC in December 2018 in anticipation of my retirement.**

15. Describe any financial arrangements or business relationships that you currently have or have had in the past that could pose a conflict of interest in the position you seek. Explain how you would resolve any potential conflict of interest.

**I have a contract with Goodwyn Mills Cawood (GMC) and Clearwater Services (a subsidiary of GMC). GMC is an engineering/architectural consulting firm and Clearwater Services is a contract Operations company. GMC and Clearwater contracts mostly with public utilities and private developers. GMC and Clearwater recently engaged Blue Granite Water Company as a client. Blue Granite is a private water and wastewater utility that is regulated by the Public Service Commission. My role as a contractor for GMC and Clearwater Services is primarily Business Development.**

**I fully understand that I can perform no outside employment during regular business hours and at no time perform any work for any organization that is regulated by the Public Service Commission.**

20. Have you ever been a named party in a lawsuit, either personally or professionally? If so, provide details.

**Original response: No**

**Amended Response (December 18, 2019):**

**Riverpoint Property Owner/Glotfelty Trust (February 2004) – dispute between some neighbors that rented units to students and some neighbors who did not want rentals to students. My wife and I were joint owners with in-laws (Glotfelty) who owned units that rented to students, as did some other neighbors. This was dismissed/settled.**

**Stephen M Caston/Unknown Defendants (September 2001) – attempt to recover costs incurred from the City of Easley for an action that was dismissed/ruled in our favor.**

**Lidell/SJWD Water District (June 2006) – dispute between property owner and SJWD Water District, I was Executive Director of SJWD. Case was terminated.**

22. Are you now or have you ever been employed as a “lobbyist,” as defined by S.C. Code Section 2-17-10(13), or have you acted in the capacity of a “lobbyist’s principal,” as defined by S.C. Code Section 2-17-10(14)? If so, please provide the dates of your employment or activity in such capacity and specify by whom you were directed or employed. **No**
23. Since your decision to seek a position on the Public Service Commission, have you accepted lodging, transportation, entertainment, food, meals, beverages, money, or any other thing of value, as defined by S.C. Code Section 2-17-10(1), from a lobbyist or lobbyist’s principal? If so, please specify the item(s) received, date of receipt, and the lobbyist or lobbyist’s principal providing the item(s). **No**
26. Other than expenditures for travel or room and board, please itemize all expenditures (by amount, type, and date) by you, or on your behalf, in seeking the office of Public Service Commissioner.

**\$22, Clemson University transcript, August 19, 2019**

27. Please list the amount and recipient of all contributions made to members of the General Assembly within six months of filing this questionnaire. **None**
28. Have you directly or indirectly requested a pledge of any member of the General Assembly as to your election for the position for which you are being screened? Have you received the assurance of any public official or public employee that they will seek the pledge of any member of the General Assembly as to your election for the position for which you are being screened? **No to both questions**
29. Have you or has anyone on your behalf solicited or collected funds to aid in the promotion of your candidacy for the position of Public Service Commissioner? If so, please specify the amount, solicitor (if applicable), donor, and date of solicitation and/or receipt. **No**
30. List all professional organizations of which you are a member and give the titles and dates of any offices that you have held in such groups.

**SC American Water Works Association (SCAWWA) – Chair 1999-2000**

**American Water Works Association (AWWA) – Board of Directors 2004-2007**



**SC Water Utility Council – Chair (approximately 2002)**

**SC Water Environment Association (SCWEA) – Chair of numerous committees (1990-2000)**

**Water Environment Federation (WEF) – member (1990 to present)**

**Blue Ridge Foothills District of SCWEA – Chair 1996-1997**

31. List all civic, charitable, religious, educational, social, and fraternal organizations of which you are or have been a member during the past five (5) years.

**Kairos Prison Ministry at Perry Correctional Facility**

**Metanoia Prison Ministries Mentoring Program at Perry Correctional Facility**

**NewSpring Clemson Church member**

**Tiger Lettermen (Clemson University Athletic Department)**

32. State any other information which may reflect positively or negatively on you, or which you believe should be disclosed in connection with consideration of you for a position on the Public Service Commission.

**Registered Professional Engineer:**

- **South Carolina (9441), 1984**
- **North Carolina (14241), 1987**
- **Georgia (16880), 1987**

**“A” Water Distribution License issued by SC LLR**

**2002 Herman H. Wiedemen Award (SCAWWA award may be presented annually to a member who has been actively engaged in the water supply profession and has contributed substantially toward achievement and science of the water supply industry)**

**2004 George Warren Fuller Award (AWWA award for Distinguished Service to the Water Supply Field)**

**2008 Public Servant of the Year (Upstate Forever)**

**AWWA Committees: Quality Management in Engineering & Construction, Engineering and Construction Research, Source Water Protection, Competitive Practices, Business Practice Standards**

**Governor's Drought Response Committee (2000-present)**

**Task Force Leader for Governor Sanford's Management, Accountability, and Performance (MAP) Committee**

**Peer Review team leader for AWWA's QualServe program. QualServe is a program developed by AWWA to help utilities across North America achieve maximum performance using total quality management (TQM) practices through the use of self-assessments and peer reviews. My team performed multiple peer reviews of utilities in North Carolina, Florida, Colorado, and Canada**

**Former Board member of Foothills Resource Conservation and Development Council, Inc. (appointed by Spartanburg County Council)**

**Appalachian Council of Governments (ACOG) Regional Water Quality Advisory Committee (appointed by Spartanburg County Council)**

**Member of ACOG's Basin Planning Authority (appointed by ACOG)**

**SCDHEC Regulation Revision Committee, chair of sub-committee responsible for design criteria on Pumping, Storage, and Distribution for the State Primary Drinking Water Regulations**

**Former Board member of Voluntary Certification for Utility Distribution and Collection Personnel**

**Former President of Spartanburg County Water Managers' Association**

**Former Vice-Chair of Pickens County Public Service Commission (formerly Pickens County Water and Sewer Authority)**

**Former Vice-Chair of Board of Directors for South Carolina Special Purpose Districts (SCSPDs) (approximately 2014 – 2018)**

**Former Board member of SC Rural Water Association (approximately 2008 – 2012)**

33. List the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of five (5) persons, including your banker, from whom references could be required. Also, provide this Committee with original letters of recommendation from each person listed herein, including their signature. A photocopy, facsimile, or electronic submission of a letter of recommendation will not be accepted.

**1) Mr. Bill Harley**

**2) Mr. Clint Shealy**

- 3) **Ms. Hope Walker**
- 4) **Mr. Bob Faires**
- 5) **Ms. Jennifer Barrington, PE**

YOUR SIGNATURE WILL BE HELD TO CONSTITUTE A WAIVER OF THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF ANY PROCEEDING BEFORE A GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE OR ANY RECORD INFORMATION CONCERNING YOUR CREDIT.

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE ANSWERS TO THE ABOVE QUESTIONS ARE TRUE AND CORRECT TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE.

Signature:

Date:

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***PLEASE NOTE: S.C. CODE SECTIONS REFERRED TO IN THIS DOCUMENT ARE CONTAINED IN THE PDQ CODE REFERENCES DOCUMENT.***

**I ACKNOWLEDGE, AS A CANDIDATE, THAT I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR REVIEWING THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS. THESE DOCUMENTS ARE PROVIDED ON THE USB FLASH DRIVE WITH THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION APPLICATION MATERIALS AND ARE ACCESSIBLE ON THE PUBLIC UTILITY REVIEW COMMITTEE'S WEBSITE:**

- (1) **An Introduction to the Public Service Commission;**
- (2) **The press release issued by the Committee announcing the start of its application process;**
- (3) **An Advisory Opinion relating to attendance by candidates for the Public Service Commission at legislative receptions;**
- (4) **An Advisory Opinion relating to attendance by candidates for the Public Service Commission at legislative caucus meetings;**

- (5) The Judicial Code of Conduct;**
- (6) Statutory definitions and statute concerning pledges; and**
- (7) Information regarding accessing your credit report.**

**Signature:**

**Date:**