

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF
PENNSYLVANIA

Michael J. Robinson v. City of Shamokin, et al.

Michael J. Robinson v. City of Shamokin, No. 4:25cv1134 (M.D. Pa. Nov. 25, 2025) · No. No. 4:25cv1134 ·
Decided November 25, 2025

SUMMARY

The United States District Court for the Middle District of Pennsylvania overruled Michael J. Robinson’s objections to a magistrate judge’s report and recommendation. The court adopted the recommendation, dismissed Robinson’s second amended complaint with prejudice under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B)(ii), dismissed related motions as moot, and directed the Clerk of Court to close the case.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	United States District Court for the Middle District of Pennsylvania
WRITING FOR THE COURT	United States District Judge Malachy E. Mannion
JURISDICTION	United States District Court for the Middle District of Pennsylvania
DECIDED	November 25, 2025
DOCKET	No. 4:25cv1134
DISPOSITION	dismissed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	The district court reviewed a magistrate judge's report and recommendation recommending dismissal with prejudice of Robinson's second amended complaint for failure to state a claim, together with dismissal of related motions as moot.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The district court must conduct a de novo determination of portions of a magistrate judge's report and recommendation to which specific objections are made. General objections do not require a complete de novo review of the underlying issues.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	unpublished
PARTIES	Michael J. Robinson v. City of Shamokin, et al.

TOPICS

- motions to dismiss
- pleadings
- section 1983
- civil rights
- civil procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

civil procedure

civil rights

constitutional law

municipal law

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether Robinson's general objections required the district court to conduct a complete de novo review of the magistrate judge's report and recommendation.
2. Whether Robinson's second amended complaint stated any claim upon which relief could be granted.
3. Whether further leave to amend should be granted.
4. Whether motions associated with the second amended complaint remained viable after dismissal.

HOLDINGS

1. General objections that merely express disagreement with a report and recommendation and do not address the magistrate judge's analysis do not require the district court to conduct a complete de novo determination of the underlying issues.
2. The second amended complaint failed to state any claim upon which relief could be granted and was properly dismissed under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B)(ii).
3. Further leave to amend was denied because amendment would be futile.
4. The motions associated with the second amended complaint were dismissed as moot following dismissal of the complaint.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“remarkably obscure...sentence fragments which set forth various random allegations in a scatter-shot fashion.” (Doc. 75 at 2)

“Providing a complete de novo determination where only a general objection to ar R&R is offered, however, “would undermine the efficiency the magistrate system was meant to contribute to the judicial process.”” (749 F.2d at 7)

“a pro se complaint, however inartfully pleaded, must be held to less stringent standards than formal pleadings drafted by lawyers.” (551 U.S. at 94)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Robinson alleged that shortcomings in municipal elections resulted from a broad government conspiracy involving local officials and other individuals. His pleadings were characterized as sprawling, cryptic, obscure, and composed of sentence fragments and disconnected allegations. Despite two opportunities to amend, Robinson did not identify the alleged conspirators, specify their conduct, or explain how the alleged events formed a legally cognizable claim.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Robinson's original complaint was dismissed under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B)(ii), with leave to amend. His first amended complaint was also dismissed, again with an opportunity to amend. After Robinson filed a second amended complaint and several related motions, Magistrate Judge Carlson recommended dismissal with prejudice. Robinson filed general objections, which the district court overruled, adopted the R&R in full, dismissed the second amended complaint with prejudice, dismissed the ancillary motions as moot, and closed the case.

DISPOSITION

dismissed

CASES CITED

- Henderson v. Carlson, 812 F.2d 874, 877 (3d Cir. 1987)
- Goney v. Clark, 749 F.2d 5, 7 (3d Cir. 1984)
- Erickson v. Pardus, 551 U.S. 89, 94 (2007)

OPINION

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA MICHAEL J. ROBINSON,: No. 4:25cv1134 Plaintiff:: (Judge Munley) ": (Magistrate Judge Carlson) CITY OF SHAMOKIN, et al.,: Defendants: ORDER Before the court is the report and recommendation ("R&R") of United States Magistrate Judge Martin C. Carlson recommending that the second amended complaint be dismissed with prejudice for failure to state a claim.

(Doc. 75). The R&R also recommends that the motions ancillary to that complaint be dismissed. Id. Plaintiff Michael J. Robinson has filed objections in response to the R&R. (Doc. 76). For brevity, the court incorporates the background section of the prior memorandum dated November 3, 2025, which adopted an R&R recommending dismissal of Robinson's original complaint.

(Doc. 56). Specifically, the prior memorandum detailed Robinson's designation as an "experienced pro se litigant by the Third Circuit Court of Appeals and his ongoing efforts to associate his shortcomings in municipal elections to a vast government conspiracy. Id. At that time, the court endeavored to understand Robinson's allegations about this conspiracy and its participants, which included small-town officials in Northumberland County as well as several individuals who had pursued criminal charges against President Donald J. Trump between his terms of office.

Because the original complaint and Robinson's subsequent filings were sprawling, cryptic, and otherwise incompatible with basic federal pleading standards, the court dismissed the plaintiffs complaint but afforded him with an opportunity "to identify the members of the conspiracy, make specific allegations regarding their conduct, and explain how everything fits together" in an amended complaint. Id. at 6.

To give Robinson sufficient time to address these issues, he was provided with thirty (30) days to file an amended complaint, or by December 3, 2025. *Id.* at 12. Rather than avail himself with the time afforded to carefully spell out this alleged conspiracy, Robinson filed an amended complaint just two (2) days later. (Doc. 58). Unfortunately, the amended complaint did not cure the deficiencies noted by the R&R or the courts memorandum.

Rather, the amended complaint provided even less clarity than Robinson's prior filings. Although the amended complaint was also dismissed pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B)(ii), this dismissal came with a caveat.

The court again afforded plaintiff with an opportunity to amend. Per the order, a second amended complaint was due on or before December 3, 2025. (Doc. 61). Three (3) days later, however, Robinson again hastily responded with thirteen (13) separate filings including a motion for recusal and reassignment, (Doc. 65), and a second amended complaint, (Doc. 70).

The undersigned denied the recusal motion. (Doc. 74). The second amended complaint was referred to Magistrate Judge Carlson for review. *Id.* Magistrate Judge Carlson promptly issued an R&R recommending that the second amended complaint be dismissed with prejudice. (Doc. 75). Robinson promptly responded with objections. (Doc. 76).

In his objections, Robinson takes issue with the R&R calling his second amended complaint "incomprehensible." *Id.* at 1. He asserts that his second amended complaint sets forth plausible claims. *Id.* Further, Robinson contends that his various ancillary motions are not moot. *Id.* Upon review, Robinson's one-page response to the R&R demonstrates only disagreement and does not delve into the specifics of his pleading, Magistrate Judge Carlson's analysis, or even the alleged conspiracy.

Therefore, the court construes plaintiff's response to the R&R as general objections. In disposing of objections to a magistrate judge's report and recommendation, the district court must make a de novo determination of those portions of the report to which objections are made. 28 U.S.C. § 636(b)(1)(C); see also *Henderson v. Carlson*, 812 F.2d 874, 877 (3d Cir.1987).

The court may accept, reject, or modify, in whole or in part, the findings or recommendations made by the magistrate judge. The district court judge may also receive further evidence or recommit the matter to the magistrate judge with instructions. *Id.* Providing a complete de novo determination where only a general objection to an R&R is offered, however, "would undermine the efficiency the magistrate system was meant to contribute to the judicial process." *Goney v. Clark*, 749 F.2d 5, 7 (3d Cir.

1984). Upon consideration of Robinson's second amended complaint, the various contemporaneous motions, Magistrate Judge Carlson's R&R, and the pattern that has emerged in Robinson's filings, the court agrees that plaintiff's most recent allegations are "remarkably

obscure...sentence fragments which set forth various random allegations in a scatter-shot fashion.”
' (Doc.

75 at 2). The court also agrees that the second amended complaint fails to set forth any claims upon which relief could be granted. The second amended complaint will thus be dismissed pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B)(ii) as Magistrate Judge Carlson recommends. 1 The court recognizes that pro se filings are liberally construed and “a pro se complaint, however inartfully pleaded, must be held to less stringent standards than formal pleadings drafted by lawyers.” *Erickson v. Pardus*, 551 U.S. 89, 94 (2007) (citations omitted).

Even when liberally construed, Robinson’s conspiracy allegations are disconnected. Furthermore, Robinson has been provided with sufficient opportunities to spell out the facts supporting the alleged conspiracy to deprive him of his civil rights.

To date, there has been no indication that Robinson's allegations will start making sense in an amended pleading. Providing Robinson with further leave to amend would be futile. Thus, as recommended by the R&R, this case will be dismissed with prejudice and his ancillary motions dismissed as moot.

Accordingly, it is hereby ORDERED that: 1) Plaintiff Michael J. Robinson’s objections to the R&R, (Doc. 76), are OVERRULED; 2) The R&R dated November 14, 2025, (Doc. 75), is ADOPTED in full; 3) Plaintiff's second amended complaint, (Doc. 70), is DISMISSED with prejudice pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B)(ii); 4) Plaintiff's motions associated with his second amended complaint, (Docs.

62-64, 66, 69, 71-72, 77) are DISMISSED as moot; and 5) The Clerk of Court is directed to close this case. Date: 05/14/2025 DE ULIA K. MUNTEY United States District Court