

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
OFFICE OF CAMPAIGN & POLITICAL FINANCE

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July 18, 2019

Annette Kazlauskas, Treasurer
Westfield Democratic City Committee
P.O. Box 115
Westfield, MA 01085

Re: CPF-19-73

Dear Ms. Kazlauskas:

This office has completed its review of the 2016-2018 campaign finance activity of the Westfield Democratic City Committee ("the Committee"). Based on our review, which included an analysis of bank records, we have concluded that the Committee's activity and disclosure did not comply with several provisions of M.G.L. c. 55, the Massachusetts campaign finance law.

Findings

1. Disclosure

Local party committees must disclose financial activity by completing and filing accurate and timely campaign finance reports if receipts, expenditures or liabilities incurred are more than \$100 in a reporting period. See M.G.L. c. 55, § 18. OCPF has determined that the only report the Committee filed during the referenced period was the 2016 pre-primary report and this report was inaccurate and incomplete. The Committee did not file the 2016 pre-election report, the 2016 and 2017 year-end reports, and the 2018 pre-primary, pre-election and year-end reports. Therefore, the Committee did not disclose receipts, expenditures and in-kind contributions in a timely manner.

Specifically, the Committee did not disclose, as required, nearly \$10,000 in contributions received and deposited into the campaign account or approximately \$1,100 in in-kind contributions. Additionally, the Committee did not disclose, as required, approximately \$7,800 in expenditures.

2. Receipt of Corporate Contributions

Our review of the Committee's bank records noted that the Committee received three checks from corporations, totaling \$200. The campaign finance law prohibits any Massachusetts local party committee from receiving funds from a corporation, LLP, LLC or partnership. See M.G.L. c. 55, § 8.



3. Recordkeeping

The Committee received cash contributions during the referenced period in the total amount of approximately \$4,400, but did not maintain adequate records documenting the source of the contributions. A local party committee is required to maintain detailed accounts of all contributions received, regardless of amount. See M.G.L. c. 55, §§ 2, 5 and 970 CMR 1.04(5).

4. Treasurer Writing Check to Self

During the course of OCPF's review, OCPF learned that you wrote a Committee check of \$101.10 to yourself as a reimbursement for expenditures made on behalf of the Committee. The campaign finance law requires, however, that "[n]o expenditure shall be made for, or on behalf of, a political committee without the authorization of the chairman or treasurer.... No person who is authorized to make such expenditures shall sign a committee check payable to himself or herself." See M.G.L. c. 55, § 5. The Committee, to ensure future compliance with Section 5, should designate a second individual on the bank account to sign checks reimbursing you for campaign expenditures.

5. Cash Expenditures Exceeding \$50

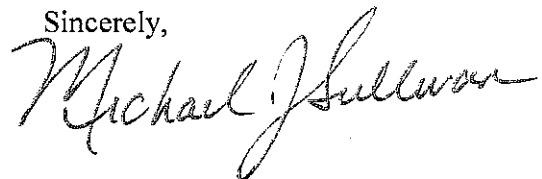
OCPF's review also found that three checks (each exceeding \$50) were written to "cash". The total amount of the cash withdrawn was \$400. The memo line on two of the checks stated that the money was for "change for tickets" and the other check stated it was "cash for silent auction". Section 9 of the campaign finance law requires that no political committee may "...make an expenditure for an amount exceeding \$50 except by check or credit card...." Checks written to "cash" reflect cash expenditures which, if over \$50, exceeded the limit specified in Section 9.

Resolution

To resolve this matter, the Committee has now filed 2016-2018 campaign finance reports to accurately disclose the Committee's activity during the referenced period. In addition, the Committee made a payment of \$400 to reimburse the Commonwealth for costs incurred during OCPF's review, and to purge prohibited corporate contributions.

Because we believe this letter will ensure future compliance with the campaign finance law, OCPF has determined that no further action is warranted and this matter may be closed at this time. In accordance with the opinion of the Supervisor of Public Records, this letter is a public record. Thank you for your cooperation in resolving this matter.

Sincerely,



Michael J. Sullivan
Director

MJS/sh

cc: Kathryn Martin, Chair of the Westfield Democratic City Committee