



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
OFFICE OF CAMPAIGN & POLITICAL FINANCE

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OCPF, Everett Mayor Ragucci sign disposition agreement

BOSTON – The Office of Campaign and Political Finance announced today it has entered into a disposition agreement with Everett Mayor David Ragucci and his campaign committee regarding several violations of the campaign finance law relating to his successful campaign for mayor in 1997.

The agreement states that in 1996 and 1997, the Committee:

- improperly solicited and accepted contributions from business corporations and did not use best efforts to determine if the businesses were incorporated. The Committee received \$1,175 in monetary contributions and \$2,035 in in-kind contributions in this manner.
- received several contributions in the form of money orders of more than the statutory limit of \$50. Such contributions were received from 12 individuals, for a total of \$1,670 in excess receipts.
- received contributions from three individuals that were in excess of the \$500 annual limit. The total amount of excess contributions was \$545.
- failed to report in-kind contributions of approximately \$365 received from local food establishments in connection with a September 1997 campaign event.

The agreement also states that while an employee of the Bureau of Special Investigations, Department of Public Safety, in 1996 and 1997, Mayor Ragucci made 607 telephone calls to Everett numbers, including a substantial number of calls to his Committee treasurer. The Supreme Judicial Court has ruled in *Anderson v. City of Boston* (1978) that public resources, such as the phone and staff time, may not be used for campaign purposes.



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As part of the agreement the Committee will make a payment to charity of \$5,425, which is the sum of the improper contributions described above. The Committee will also amend its 1997 pre-election report to reflect the receipt of the in-kind contributions for the September event that were not included in the original report. The Committee will also provide OCPF with copies of the 1998 and 1999 reports it files with the city clerk and establish written guidelines to ensure future compliance with the campaign finance law.

The agreement also calls for Mayor Ragucci to pay personally \$500 to the Commonwealth, which represents the approximate value of his telephone calls and the paid time during which he made them.

The agreement was signed by Mayor Ragucci, Committee treasurer Joseph D. Cataldo and OCPF Director Michael J. Sullivan.

Sullivan said one of the most salient points of the case is the importance of knowing and reporting relevant information about contributors.

"A committee should know whom it's dealing with," Sullivan said. "A business may in fact be incorporated even if its name doesn't indicate that. A person may have already reached the contribution limit for the year. It's the committee's responsibility to ascertain those and any other facts necessary to assure compliance with the law."

A copy of the agreement is available for public inspection at OCPF, Room 411, McCormack Building, One Ashburton Place. A copy will also be placed in the Committee's records at Everett City Hall.

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