



Agenda Report

19-1098

Agenda Date: 10/8/2019

REPORT TO COUNCIL

SUBJECT

Resolution Establishing the Political Campaign Voluntary Expenditure Limit and Campaign Contribution Limit for March 3, 2020

BACKGROUND

The City of Santa Clara Political Campaign Finance Reform Act (the "Act") established an initial base for a candidate's voluntary campaign expenditures at \$25,000 for the November 2000 City election. The Act contains a cost of living adjustment using the index from the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Consumers (CPI-U), San Francisco, Oakland, San Jose subgroup - all items ("CPI"), to be adjusted on an annual basis. The expenditure limit was last adjusted to \$43,400 by the City Council on June 26, 2018.

With the inception of the Act, limits on individual campaign contributions were originally \$500 for candidates who accepted the voluntary expenditure limit and \$250 for those who did not. In 2014, the Act was amended to require that the applicable contribution limits also be adjusted by the CPI, rounded to the nearest ten dollar figure. As adjusted in 2018, the applicable contributions limits were \$590 and \$290, respectively.

The Act was amended in May 2018 to provide maximum transparency to the voters of the City of Santa Clara about who is spending money on local campaigns and to create specific disclosure requirements for contributions to organizations that have historically refused to disclose contributions ("dark money"). The Act now includes mandatory disclosure of all contributions of one hundred dollars (\$100.00) or more to any organization that makes expenditures that affect or are intended to affect a local Santa Clara election to City office or for or against a local Santa Clara ballot measure. Contributions must be reported in the same manner as campaign contributions are required to be reported under SCCC [2.130.280 <http://www.codepublishing.com/CA/SantaClara/>](http://www.codepublishing.com/CA/SantaClara/).

DISCUSSION

Pursuant to City Code Chapter 2.130 - Political Campaign Finance Reform Act, the Council must adjust the contribution limits by Resolution. Accordingly, the attached Resolution has been prepared accounting for the cost of living adjustment applicable to the expenditure limit for the 2020 March Special Municipal Election, which shall be set at \$45,590, a 5.04% increase since 2018 applying the annual CPI adjustment based on the month of August. Similarly, the same CPI adjustments were calculated for the individual campaign contributions. For candidates who accept the voluntary expenditure limit, the limit on individual campaign contributions shall be \$620 and for candidates who do not accept the voluntary expenditure limit, the limit on individual campaign contributions shall be \$300.

Pursuant to City Code section 2.130.050, the last day a campaign contribution may be deposited

shall be eleven (11) calendar days before the election date (i.e., a Tuesday, March 3rd election date would make Friday, February 21st the last day to deposit a contribution) and the last day a payment for campaign expenses may be made shall be the last day of the month following the election month (i.e., a March election would require that all campaign expenses be paid by April 30th - the last day of the month following the election month).

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The action being considered does not constitute a “project” within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15378(a) as it has no potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no cost associated with this action other than staff time and expense.

COORDINATION

This report was prepared in coordination with the Finance Department and City Attorney’s Office.

PUBLIC CONTACT

Public contact was made by posting the Council agenda on the City’s official-notice bulletin board outside City Hall Council Chambers. A complete agenda packet is available on the City’s website and in the City Clerk’s Office at least 72 hours prior to a Regular Meeting and 24 hours prior to a Special Meeting. A hard copy of any agenda report may be requested by contacting the City Clerk’s Office at (408) 615-2220, email clerk@santaclaraca.gov <<mailto:clerk@santaclaraca.gov>> or at the public information desk at any City of Santa Clara public library.

RECOMMENDATION

Adoption of a Resolution establishing the Political Campaign Voluntary Expenditure Limit and Campaign Contribution Limit for the March 3, 2020 Special Municipal Election.

Reviewed by Nora Pimentel, Assistant City Clerk

Reviewed by Hosam Haggag, City Clerk

ATTACHMENTS

1. Resolution