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3 **FAIR POLITICAL PRACTICES COMMISSION**
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8 BEFORE THE FAIR POLITICAL PRACTICES COMMISSION
9 STATE OF CALIFORNIA
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12 In the Matter of) FPPC No. 11/1124
13)
14 ALVINA SHEELEY, ALVINA SHEELEY)
FOR ELECTION F-SUSD GOVERNING) STIPULATION, DECISION and
15 BOARD 2011) ORDER
16 Respondents.)
17)

18 Complainant Gary S. Winuk, Enforcement Chief of the Fair Political Practices Commission, and
19 Respondents Alvina Sheeley, Alvina Sheeley for Election F-SUSD Governing Board 2011 agree that
20 this Stipulation will be submitted for consideration by the Fair Political Practices Commission at its next
21 regularly scheduled meeting.

22 The parties agree to enter into this Stipulation to resolve all factual and legal issues raised in this
23 matter and to reach a final disposition without the necessity of holding an administrative hearing to
24 determine the liability of the Respondent, pursuant to Section 83116 of the Government Code.

25 Respondents understand, and hereby knowingly and voluntarily waive, any and all procedural
26 rights set forth in Sections 83115.5, 11503 and 11523 of the Government Code, and in Sections 18361.1
27 through 18361.9 of Title 2 of the California Code of Regulations. This includes, but is not limited to,
28 the right to personally appear at any administrative hearing held in this matter, to be represented by an

1 attorney at Respondents' own expense, to confront and cross-examine all witnesses testifying at the
2 hearing, to subpoena witnesses to testify at the hearing, to have an impartial administrative law judge
3 preside over the hearing as a hearing officer, and to have the matter judicially reviewed.

4 It is further stipulated and agreed that Respondents Alvina Sheeley, Alvina Sheeley for Election
5 F-SUSD Governing Board 2011 violated the Political Reform Act by (1) failing to timely file a first pre-
6 election campaign statement by September 29, 2011, for the reporting period January 1, 2011 through
7 September 24, 2011, in violation of Government Code Sections 84200.5, subdivision (c), and 84200.8 (1
8 count), and (2) failing to timely file a second pre-election campaign statement by October 27, 2011, for
9 the reporting period September 25, 2011 through October 22, 2011, in violation of Government Code
10 Sections 84200.5, subdivision (c), and 84200.8 (1 count). These counts are described in Exhibit 1,
11 which is attached hereto and incorporated by reference as though fully set forth herein. Exhibit 1 is a
12 true and accurate summary of the facts in this matter.

13 Respondents agree to the issuance of the Decision and Order, which is attached hereto.
14 Respondent also agrees to the Commission imposing upon them an administrative penalty in the amount
15 of Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000). A cashier's check from Respondents in said amount, made payable
16 to the "General Fund of the State of California," is submitted with this Stipulation as full payment of the
17 administrative penalty, to be held by the State of California until the Commission issues its decision and
18 order regarding this matter. The parties agree that in the event the Commission refuses to accept this
19 Stipulation, it shall become null and void, and within fifteen (15) business days after the Commission
20 meeting at which the Stipulation is rejected, all payments tendered by Respondents in connection with
21 this Stipulation shall be reimbursed to Respondents. Respondents further stipulate and agree that in the
22 event the Commission rejects the Stipulation, and a full evidentiary hearing before the Commission
23 becomes necessary, neither any member of the Commission, nor the Executive Director, shall be
24 disqualified because of prior consideration of this Stipulation.

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27 Dated: _____

Gary S. Winuk, Chief of Enforcement
Fair Political Practices Commission

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Dated: _____

Respondent Alvina Sheeley, Individually
and on behalf of Alvina Sheeley for Election
F-SUSD Governing Board 2011, Respondent

EXHIBIT 1

INTRODUCTION

Respondent Committee “Alvina Sheeley for Election F-SUSD Governing Board 2011” (“Committee”) qualified as a candidate controlled recipient committee under the Political Reform Act (the “Act”)¹ on or about September 6, 2011, when it first made expenditures exceeding \$1,000. The Committee is controlled by Respondent Alvina Sheeley, an unsuccessful candidate for the Fairfield-Suisun Unified School District Board of Education in the November 8, 2011 election. Respondent received 3,338 votes, the lowest total out of any of the eight candidates. Respondent Sheeley is also the treasurer for the Committee. Respondents violated the Act by failing to comply with campaign reporting provisions.

For the purposes of this Stipulation, Respondent’s violation is stated as follows:

COUNT 1: Respondents Alvina Sheeley and Alvina Sheeley for Election F-SUSD Governing Board 2011 failed to file a first pre-election campaign statement by September 29, 2011, for the reporting period January 1, 2011 through September 24, 2011, in violation of Government Code Sections 84200.5, subdivision (c), and 84200.8.

COUNT 2: Respondents Alvina Sheeley and Alvina Sheeley for Election F-SUSD Governing Board 2011 failed to file a second pre-election campaign statement by October 27, 2011, for the reporting period September 25, 2011 through October 22, 2011, in violation of Government Code Sections 84200.5, subdivision (c), and 84200.8.

SUMMARY OF THE LAW

An express purpose of the Act, as set forth in Section 81002, subdivision (a), is to ensure that receipts and expenditures in election campaigns are fully and truthfully disclosed, so that voters may be fully informed, and improper practices may be inhibited. The Act, therefore, establishes a campaign reporting system designed to accomplish this purpose of disclosure.

Section 82013, subdivision (a), defines a “committee” to include any person who receives contributions totaling \$1,000 or more in a calendar year. This type of committee is commonly known as a “recipient committee.” A committee controlled directly or indirectly by a candidate, or that acts jointly with a candidate, is known as a candidate-controlled committee. (Section 82016.) Under the Act’s campaign reporting system, candidate-controlled committees are required to file specified campaign statements and reports disclosing contributions received and expenditures made.

¹ The Political Reform Act is contained in Government Code sections 81000 through 91014. All statutory references are to the Government Code, unless otherwise indicated. The regulations of the Fair Political Practices Commission are contained in Sections 18110 through 18997 of Title 2 of the California Code of Regulations. All regulatory references are to Title 2, Division 6 of the California Code of Regulations, unless otherwise indicated.

Duty to File Pre-election Campaign Statements

Under the Act's campaign reporting system, candidates and committees are required to file periodic campaign statements and reports disclosing their financial activities. Section 84215, subdivision (d), requires all county candidates, elected officers, and their controlled committees to file the committee's campaign statements with the elections official of the county in which the candidate or officeholder is domiciled.

For an election not held in June or November of an even-numbered year, candidates and their controlled committees are required to file two pre-election campaign statements according to a specified schedule. (Sections 84200.5, subdivision (c), and 84200.8, subdivision (b).)

For an election held on November 8, 2011, the first pre-election campaign statement for the reporting period January 1, 2011 through September 24, 2011, was due on or before September 29, 2011, and the second pre-election campaign statement for the reporting period September 25, 2011 through October 22, 2011, was due on or before October 27, 2011.

SUMMARY OF THE FACTS

Respondents Alvina Sheeley and Committee “Alvina Sheeley for Election F-SUSD Governing Board 2011” qualified as a candidate controlled recipient committee under the Act on or about September 6, 2011, when Respondent first made expenditures exceeding \$1,000 in connection with her candidacy for Fairfield-Suisun Unified School District Board of Education in the November 8, 2011 election.

Respondent Sheeley spent approximately \$30,000 on her campaign for school board. This consisted almost entirely of her own money. Respondent kept records concerning the expenditures made during the course of her campaign, which included payments to approximately two dozen individual who were employed to hold campaign signs; but failed to make timely campaign disclosures.

COUNT 1

Failure to File a First Pre-Election Campaign Statement

In connection with an election held on November 8, 2011, Respondents has a duty to file the first preelection campaign statement covering January 1, 2011 through September 24, 2011, by the September 29, 2011, due date. No pre-election statements were filed prior to the election.

By failing to timely file a first pre-election statement, Respondents violated Sections 84200.5, subdivision (c), and 84200.8.

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COUNT 2

Failure to File a Second Pre-Election Campaign Statement

In connection with an election held on November 8, 2011, Respondents has a duty to file the second pre-election campaign statement for the reporting period September 25, 2011 through October 22, 2011, by the October 27, 2011, due date. No pre-election statements were filed prior to the election.

By failing to timely file a second pre-election statement, Respondents violated Sections 84200.5, subdivision (c), and 84200.8.

CONCLUSION

This matter consists of two counts, which carries a maximum possible administrative penalty of Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000) per count, for a total of Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000).

In determining the appropriate penalty for a particular violation of the Act, the Enforcement Division considers the typical treatment of a violation in the overall statutory scheme of the Act, with an emphasis on serving the purposes and intent of the Act. The Enforcement Division also considers the facts and circumstances of the violation in context of the factors set forth in Regulation 18361.5, subdivision (d)(1)-(6), which include: the seriousness of the violations; the presence or lack of intent to deceive the voting public; whether the violation was deliberate, negligent, or inadvertent; whether the Respondent demonstrated good faith in consulting with Commission staff; whether there was a pattern of violations; and whether upon learning of the violation the Respondent voluntarily filed amendment to provide full disclosure. Additionally, liability under the Act is governed in significant part by the provisions of Section 91001, subdivision (c), which requires the Commission to consider whether or not a violation is inadvertent, negligent or deliberate, and the presence or absence of good faith, in applying remedies and sanctions.

The typical administrative penalty for failing to timely file a preelection campaign statement has been in the middle of the penalty range, depending on the circumstances.

Other similar cases regarding a failure to file pre-election statements that have been recently approved by the Commission include:

In the Matter of Brian Goldberg, FPPC No. 09/639 had a similar fact pattern; the failure to file a second pre-election campaign statement by a candidate for a local school board. Respondent cooperated fully with filing obligations. The commission approved settlement of this case, with a \$2,500 penalty for this violation, on October 14, 2010.

In the Matter of Maria T. Santillan, Committee to Re-Elect Maria T. Santillan & Raul Beas case, FPPC Case No. 02/222, had a similar fact pattern; both of the required pre-election statements were filed two weeks after the election. The commission approved settlement of this case in June 18, 2009, and the agreed upon penalty for each of these violations was \$2,500.

The public harm inherent in this type of violation, where pertinent information is not disclosed by the committee, is that the public is deprived of a means to discover the identity of contributors, the amounts contributed, and the nature of the committee's campaign expenses. In this case, Respondents failed to timely file required pre-election reports, which were due before the election. Respondents' violations of the Act were deliberate at worst and negligent at best. Respondents have no prior enforcement history. In addition, Respondents assert that they unintentionally violated the Act and had no intention to conceal the information but instead were unaware of the required preelection campaign statements.

PROPOSED PENALTY

After consideration of the factors of Regulation 18361.5, including whether the behavior in question was inadvertent, negligent or deliberate and the Respondent's patter of behavior, as well as consideration of penalties in prior enforcement actions, the imposition of a penalty of Two Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$2,500) per count, for a total of Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000) is recommended.