

## MINUTES

New Haven Democracy Fund Board

Special Meeting

August 16, 2007

Present: Maria Lamberto (chair), Caleb Kleppner, Stephen H. Kovel, Lori Kozlowski; Kevin Diadamo (not yet approved by Board of Aldermen), Robert Wechsler (Administrator); one member of news media and three members of DeStefano campaign also attended.

Call to order and unanimous approval of July 25 minutes.

Public comments were requested, but none were offered.

Discussion of candidate contracts, the fact that they do not specify application to either the primary or general elections, and therefore may be considered to apply to both. Agreement that should be placed on list of Ordinance changes to be discussed, especially with respect to what if change in committee or treasurer between primary and general elections.

Discussion of public financing grant to the DeStefano campaign. Agreement that it was given prematurely; it should have been given only after an opposing candidate successfully petitioned to be on the Democratic primary ballot. With respect to a grant for the general election, there has to be a finding that there is a contested election. This means either that a general election candidate must raise or spend at least \$5,000, or that the fund-raising and expenditures of both the DeStefano and Newton campaigns be deemed to have been done for the general election, since there is no primary. Because the next topic for discussion was to involve how to regard the fund-raising and expenditures, it was agreed to table this discussion until after the next topic was discussed.

Discussion of whether to match the Newton contributions and, if so, whether they be considered contributions to a primary or general election campaign. The Administrator explained the benefits of deeming the contributions to and expenditures by both Democratic campaigns as for the general election: the campaigns would not have to file papers and qualify for the general election, and there would be no question about whether there was a contested election, meaning that the DeStefano campaign would be now due the \$15,000 public financing grant it had already, prematurely received.

Maria Lamberto expressed concern about spending public funds to match contributions raised for and used in the primary as if they were raised for and used in the general election. She was also concerned that there was no evidence of a contested general election, because we did not know whether either the Republican or Green party candidate's had yet raised or spent \$5,000. Since the Newton campaign had not yet officially contested the general election, she did not feel that the DeStefano grant should be given on this basis. She felt uncomfortable making a decision without all the information.

The Administrator said that if the Board were to determine that, since there was no primary, all monies raised and spent were for the general election, then the general election would be contested and no further information would be required.

Members of the DeStefano campaign pointed out that, according to the new state election laws, contributions given to a primary campaign roll over into the general election campaign, and if there is no primary, the aggregates (for example, the contribution limits) also roll over and apply to the entire election cycle. They also pointed out that a candidate committee and campaign are alive until a committee closes its books, which can be done as late as December, so that officially the Newton campaign is contesting the general election, no matter how the Board determines its past fund-raising and expenditures.

Lamberto asked if anyone wanted to make a motion, and no one responded. It was therefore decided that these issues would be raised again at next week's meeting.

Lamberto asked Stephen Kovel to look into payment of the Administrator.

Meeting adjourned.