

**FINAL
MINUTES
SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE COMMISSION
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2006**

1. Roll Call

Present: D'Orio, Ganong, Javendal, Khan, Thomsen, Duncan

Absent: Carroll

Staff: Lieberman

Other: Jacqueline Bucholz, City Clerk; Robert Zweben, City Attorney

2. Approval of minutes. Ganong moved to approve the minutes, Javandel seconded. Minutes were approved 5-0-1 (with D'Orio abstaining)

The Commission welcomed Matteo D'Orio, the new student commissioner. The Commission moved the order of items on the agenda to address Item 4(b) Campaign Finance Reform first, since the City Clerk and City Attorney were present to provide information.

3. Opening Public Forum. There were no members of the public who wished to speak.

4. Old Business

- a. Campaign Finance Reform: Javandel asked the City Attorney if she needed to recuse herself from the discussion because her husband was on City Council. The City Attorney said that she did not need to recuse herself.

Ms. Bucholz, the City Clerk, described the current process. She noted that in the current election, 1 Council candidate had signed the volunteer pledge and 2 School Board candidates had signed. She noted that the law was already complex and requested that any changes not add to the already complicated filings and not make the process more restrictive. She noted that some do and some don't like the restrictions on money coming from outside of Albany. Ganong noted that she did like knowing where the money was coming from.

Mr. Zweben, the City Attorney, described the history of the Act, and how it arose from the feeling that too much money was being spent during the cardroom debate. He stated that Ladbrooke spent \$200,000 and that the anti-cardroom side spend \$85,000. He also discussed the large sums of money spent by Mike Brodsky and Bruce Mast in the 1990s. He commented that given the size of Albany, the \$6100 limit and the overall format of the Act seemed appropriate and has worked relatively well since it began. He also noted that it was a very complicated area of law, and that usually Campaign Finance Reform is intended just to address corruption, not the actual amounts of money spent. In fact, the total spending cannot be restricted in a mandatory way. Additionally, the voluntary restriction does not apply to a Measure or Initiative. He mentioned the

Center for Governmental Studies (310) 470-6590 as a resource for more information on Campaign Finance Reform.

Javandel discussed other resources that candidates use, including mobilizing people and using lots of volunteers. Duncan asked what types of campaign finance rules other surrounding communities have. Javandel noted that the issue was whether the current policy was a wise policy or not. Thomsen mentioned that the intent of the voluntary limit was to create a level playing field for candidates. Duncan asked if the policy was useful to preserve a minority voice. The Commission discussed what the appropriate ceiling might be for an average campaign, and noted that other than Council Member Lieber's concerns, they were not clear what other Council Member concerns might be. They asked for further clarification regarding specific Council concerns in the Act. Zweben noted that the Commission could request more specificity about each Council members particular concerns.

Javandel made the following motion, seconded by Ganong:

The Social and Economic Justice Commission will not modify the Campaign Finance Reform ordinance until the new City Council is seated. If the new City Council wants the Commission to continue to pursue modifications they should sent the issue back to the Commission with clarification as to their individual concerns.

Motion passed unanimously.

Francesco Papilia, a current candidate for City Council, noted that he did not want to sign the voluntary limits due to concerns about outside influence and the use of donated "intangibles" in campaigning, such as time and expertise.

- b. Cable Casting: The Commission reviewed the revised cable-casting policy and the revisions suggested by Ganong, and by Mr. Chuck Siegal of the Ad Hoc Cable TV committee. They accepted both suggestions. They requested clarification that the DVD or VHS copies of the meetings be available at the library for check-out and also be available for purchase at City Hall.

Javandel moved, seconded by Ganong:

The SEJC moves to recommend the policy to City Council, as amended.

Motion passed unanimously.

- c. Key Route/Solano: Lieberman updated the Commission on the Council action regarding fixing the irrigation on the Key Route medians

5. New Business

- a. Waterfront Planning: Questions for consultants: Three commissioners submitted written questions for the sub-committee that will be interviewing waterfront planning consultants. The Commission discussed the difficulty of not hearing the responses to their questions if the interviews were not public:

Moved by Duncan, seconded by Thomsen:

Questions concerning consultant qualifications should be answered as a matter of public record and competing candidates should be asked to exclude themselves from each other's interviews.

Motion passed unanimously

- b. Discuss Name of Commission: Deferred to next meeting

6. Public Forum: No member of the public chose to speak.

7. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 10:00 p.m. The next Commission meeting will be October 11, 2006.