

from: Harry Hempy <harryhempy@gmail.com>
to: accreditation@gp.org
Andrea Mérida <andreamerida@gmail.com>,
Judy Harrington <judyh@inbox.com>,
Kevin Alumbaugh
cc: <kevin@evergreenschoolofmusic.com>,
Michael Haughey <mhaughey@earthlink.net>

GPUS Accreditation Committee:

The Appeal for Intervention in the Conduct of the GPCO Steering Committee, filed by the Caucus to Restore Green Values to the Green Party of Colorado (RGV) on June 13, 2017, contains a list of 15 complaints of actions by Andrea Mérida Cuéllar, a current co-chair of the Green Party of Colorado (GPCO).

At the 2017 GPCO Annual Meeting, held on August 12, RGV became aware of financially irresponsible actions and violations of GPCO bylaws regarding financial reporting by Ms. Mérida.

This is an addendum to the RGV appeal, adding **financial irresponsibility** to the list of complaints.

Bylaws violations:

1. GPCO Bylaws section 5.5 requires the GPCO Treasurer to present a balance report at each state meeting. **No Treasurer's Report was presented** at the 2017 GPCO Annual Meeting, despite several calls by the membership for a report. Ms. Mérida, acting as GPCO Co-chair and GPCO Treasurer, stated in the meeting that a Treasurer's Report is "not necessary". Ms. Mérida promised to submit a Treasurer's Report right after the meeting but, to date, has not done so.
2. The original RGV complaint, dated June 13, 2017, noted that GPCO had been operating without a treasurer since October 2016 when Tom Hall resigned as treasurer. The GPCO Secretary called for nominations for treasurer, to be elected by Council, per GPCO Bylaws section 5.8. There was at least one qualified nominee but Ms. Mérida, also acting as Council Facilitator, never facilitated the treasurer election. Instead, she **appointed herself to be treasurer** without notifying Council she had done so.

Non-disclosure of Financial Interests:

Ms. Mérida is the campaign manager on the committee to elect Julie Banuelos to the Denver Public School board (BANUELOS 4 EDUCATION). She disclosed this fact on May 12, 2017 when she proposed that GPCO endorse Julie's candidacy for a non-partisan office. The proposal was adopted. Subsequently, Ms. Mérida has posted Julie's campaign publicity on GPCO website, Facebook and Twitter accounts. Julie's campaign was provided with GPCO's table space at the People's Fair in Denver in June (\$300 paid by GPCO). The GPCO website (<http://coloradogreenparty.org/greens-endorse-julie-banuelos-for-denver-school-board-at-large/>) solicits funds for BANUELOS 4 EDUCATION, using this link: [please consider donating](#) at

<https://banuelos4education.nationbuilder.com/donate>.

The problem is that Ms. Mérida has personal financial interests in the Banuelos campaign that appear to be undisclosed to GPCO. Ms. Mérida failed to disclose to the GPCO that she was on the BANUELOS 4 EDUCATION payroll when she proposed that the GPCO endorse Julie. Ms. Mérida was first paid for “Consultant & Professional Services” by the Banuelos campaign on April 9, 2017. Over half of all money contributed to Julie's campaign has ended up in Ms. Mérida's bank account.

Source: CO Secretary of State REPORT OF CONTRIBUTIONS AND EXPENDITURES - OCTOBER 17, 2017 at <https://tracer.sos.colorado.gov/PublicSite/SearchPages/FilingDetail.aspx?FilingID=228842>. The BANUELOS 4 EDUCATION campaign committee has raised \$7762.00 in monetary contributions as of October 17, 2017. \$5657.92 has been expended for Consultant and Professional Services: \$4257.92 to Ms. Mérida and \$1400.00 to Carina Banuelos-Harrison.

Ms. Mérida, to the best of our knowledge, has not revealed her monetary interest in the Banuelos campaign to GPCO members. This is a hidden conflict of interest.

These actions raise concerns about financial accountability and responsibility in the Green Party of Colorado, going forward.

The committee should be advised Ms. Mérida has a history of unauthorized expenditures and undisclosed income from candidate campaigns. In 2011 Ms. Mérida was on the Denver Public School board. Ms. Mérida overspent her \$5000 allowance as a school board member by some \$8000. It is not clear whether she ever paid back the school district. (See <http://www.denverpost.com/2011/09/01/editorial-andrea-meridas-expenses-show-fuzzy-dps-policies/>)

As with the current Julie Banuelos campaign, Ms. Mérida failed to disclose she was on Andrew Romanoff's payroll in 2010 in his campaign for U.S. Senate against Michael Bennet, former DPS Superintendent. Michael Booth reported in the Denver Post on July 22, 2010 that, “Andrew Romanoff's Democratic Senate campaign has been paying Denver school board member Andrea Merida thousands of dollars in consulting fees while she has attacked the former administration of Sen. Michael Bennet in board meetings and other forums.” When asked why she did not disclose she is a paid Romanoff staffer, Bloom quotes Ms. Merida as saying, “It's immaterial to disclose it.” (See <http://www.denverpost.com/2010/07/22/dps-board-member-merida-on-romanoff-campaigns-payroll/>)

Please add **financial irresponsibility** to the RGV complaint.

Sincerely,

Judy Harrington, Harry Hempy, Michael Haughey and Kevin Alumbaugh, representing the Caucus to Restore Green Values in Colorado