

102117 - School Board Election - Question of Disclosure of Conflict of Interest

date:
subject:

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Denver school board

The Denver school board election is exciting. It's officially non-partisan, but often there is mention of political affiliation. Link to recent story: <https://www.chalkbeat.org/posts/co/2017/09/01/its-official-ten-candidates-in-the-running-for-denver-school-board/>. Julie Banuelos (female, Hispanic, lesbian) is the candidate Andrea supports for the at-large seat mentioned early in the story.

I am not aware of other Greens in the race. Green voters might be inclined to vote for candidates who are backed by the teachers' union, but the union is not supporting the candidate that Andrea is supporting.

The Denver Greens endorsed Julie, the candidate that Andrea is working for. Not a surprise, since Julie is a member of the Denver Greens. I don't think Andrea had to twist any arms to get the local chapter to support one of their own members in the local school board election.

Our objection is that Andrea pushed the state party to endorse a candidate in the race, and although Andrea disclosed that she herself was the campaign manager she did not tell us she would be paid. The initial campaign reports of contributions and expenditures were submitted this past week, and they show that Andrea has been paid nearly \$5,000 so far to manage the campaign. Andrea has been promoting her candidate on GPCO social media. I don't have information on whether the promotions involved spending state funds (like paying \$5 to "boost" a message on Facebook to reach additional people).

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The reason given for statewide endorsement of a local candidate was that Julie would get needed exposure from campaigning while at the Green Party booth at a Denver extravaganza called the People's Fair which was held in June.

We aren't claiming that other Green candidates (if there are any, which I doubt) are being hurt by

Andrea's support for Julie. We are claiming that Andrea failed to disclose TO US that she has a financial interest in the candidate she pushed us to endorse and whom she is now promoting using state party resources. Personally, I wonder why the Green Party is publicly endorsing anyone in a non-partisan election.

I don't know if the state party resources involve any actual dollars. I do notice in the expenditure report that Julie seems to be paying \$29 per month for Nation Builder. I heard from an acquaintance of mine who ran for Fort Collins city council that Nation Builder cost her \$400 for a campaign of less than two months. Julie has been running since about May. Is Julie paying \$29 per month because she is splitting the cost of the state party's Nation Builder? I don't expect we will be able to get details of exactly what money GPCO is providing, if any. But the Colorado Green Party name and the Colorado Green Party social media accounts have been harnessed to promote a local political campaign that is putting money into Andrea's pocket. It looks sleazy. Government bodies usually have rules against this kind of self-dealing.

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Judy