

# City kicks in over 1/3 of District 6 campaign costs

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spent \$1,073,667, hundreds of thousands of dollars less than what it cost this year in the five districts where candidates took public money.

As candidates have become savvier about making the most of public financing, and the size of the field has grown in some races, the impact of public financing on the city's general fund has grown apace. In this year's five supervisorial races, half of the 44 candidates on the ballots qualified for matching funds.

Rob Arnow, campaign coordinator for Voter

Owned Elections, which led the 2005 drive to expand public financing to the mayoral campaign, said not to worry, even though it might appear that the inflationary nature of public campaign funding is cause for alarm.

"It's a very small price to pay for vastly improved government," he said, "to ensure that all candidates have enough money to get their messages out without owing favors to special interests. Contributors get a payback," he concluded.

"I am impressed," said Rich DeLeon, a retired professor of political science at San Francisco State, "that the winner (Kim) received the most public

financing and the least PAC money. In general, and on principle, I support public financing of campaigns because it lowers the entry barriers that would otherwise discourage many worthy potential candidates from running, widens the voter's field of choice and dilutes the influence of PAC money and other private funding.

"I think the city's limited and conditional public financing law does a lot to strengthen citizen participation and local 'small-d' democracy. In the old days under at-large elections, a nonincumbent candidate for the Board of Supervisors had virtually no chance of winning a seat without raising a minimum of \$250,000 and attracting a minimum 100,000 votes."

Although Prop O had called for a \$143,000 overall spending limit for any supervisorial candidate to qualify for matching funds — which by formula would have included \$89,000 of taxpayer money — the Ethics Commission has the discretion to raise that ceiling in \$10,000 increments in attempting to keep the playing field level. Were a candidate, for instance, to find himself or herself battling a free-spending Whitman-type rival, the commissioners would be likely to approve a request to loosen the restraints.

For instance, in District 6 this year, the money raised by PACs supporting Sparks was a game changer. The executive director of the Human Rights Commission ultimately raised \$175,751 through PACs.

"I don't know where it all came from," Sparks told The Extra, pointing out that PACs are required to be operated separately from the campaigns they support.

In response to the PAC funding, the Ethics Commission raised the spending limit for Kim and Walker.

"Sparks raised the limit for Jane and me," said Walker, who nonetheless came in under the original limit, with \$72,346 of public funds as of Oct. 16. Kim, however, was at \$90,817 in public funding at that point, already almost \$2,000 more than the original cap.

Sparks and Walker each got almost \$10,000 in PAC money from the California Nurses Association, which Walker said may ultimately have worked to Kim's advantage, by splitting the labor vote. ■

## DISTRICT 6 CANDIDATES' CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS AND COSTS

The 14 candidates spent a total of \$1,058,318 on their combined campaigns through Oct. 16, according to their disclosures filed at the S.F. Ethics Commission. Final disclosure does not have to be filed until Jan. 31, 2011, so the cost per vote could increase.

Candidate	Raised	City contribution	PAC Exp	Total	Total votes	Cost per vote
Jane Kim	\$95,876	\$90,817	\$21,932	\$208,625	8,865	\$24
Debra Walker	\$62,023	\$72,346	\$149,819	\$284,188	7,528	\$38
Theresa Sparks	\$75,185	\$75,777	\$175,751	\$326,713	4,334	\$75
Matt Drake	\$13,673	0	0	\$13,673	1,200	\$11
James Keys	\$15,482	\$40,025	\$232	\$55,739	1,148	\$49
Glendon Hyde	\$17,803	0	0	\$17,803	839	\$21
Elaine Zamora	\$25,055	\$50,999	0	\$76,054	746	\$102
Dean Clark	\$5,596	0	0	\$5,596	713	\$8
Jim Meko	\$16,380	\$44,164	0	\$60,544	498	\$122
George Vazhappally	\$2,747	0	0	\$2,747	284	\$10
h. brown	<\$1,000*	0	0	<\$1,000	205	NA
Matt Ashe	<\$1,000*	0	0	<\$1,000	191	NA
George Davis	<\$1,000*	0	0	<\$1,000	160	NA
Nate Payne	\$3,636	0	0	\$3,636	150	\$24
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$333,456</b>	<b>\$382,675</b>	<b>\$347,734</b>	<b>\$1,058,318</b>		

\* Candidates filed a one-page disclosure that they raised and spent less than \$1,000 on their campaigns.  
Source: San Francisco Ethics Commission

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