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Campaign finance reports show candidates' support

Bernero late, Wood raises just over \$9,000 in latest reporting period

by Neal McNamara – City Pulse

The latest campaign finance filings were due Friday, though some candidates in the election were late in filing their reports — most notably Mayor Virg Bernero, who had not filed his report as of Tuesday.

Mayoral candidate Carol Wood raised \$9,107 since the last filing report at the beginning of September, bringing her total contributions this year to just over \$46,000.

Some of Wood's largest contributions in this period came from employees of the Boji Group, owners of the Boji Tower. Wood received three \$1,000 donations from two employees and one Boji family member. Most of Wood's donations, however, came in \$15 to \$25 increments.

Bernero campaign manager Patrick McAlvey said a computer glitch has kept the campaign from filing.

Wood said she didn't see any strategic reason for Bernero holding back on the filing, and expressed surprise that he not yet done so.

"I'm assuming he's trying to figure out what belongs in his 527 account and what belongs in campaign finance account," she said, referring to the recent public outcry over Bernero's 527 account, which is a special fund candidates can set up to receive unlimited contributions. Bernero has said that he uses the 527, which raised just under \$200,000 since he started it in 2005, to "move the city forward," for community events and for staff appreciation.

As of the last campaign filing on Sept. 3, Bernero had a balance of \$125,235, and had raised \$46,560 between the primary election on Aug. 4 and the filing the beginning of September.

Second Ward Councilwoman Sandy Allen, who is known for not put much effort into fundraising, had raised \$3,725 as of Friday. Some notable contributors include \$2,000 from the UAW Region 1-C, \$300 from local developer Joel Ferguson, \$250 from Lansing School Board member Jack Davis, \$100 from At-Large Councilman Brian Jeffries and \$25 from at-large candidate Harold Leeman.

Allen's challenger, Tina Houghton, was among the candidates that did not submit a campaign finance statement as of Friday. However, the previous filings show that she raised \$860 in the lead up to the primary, and had spent all but \$3.17 of it.

In the At-Large race, of the candidates who filed reports, At-Large Councilwoman Kathie Dunbar had raised the most money, \$5,704. The Lansing Regional Chamber was Dunbar's biggest contributor during this period, giving her \$2,500. Davis gave Dunbar \$1,000, the Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 333 gave \$500. Other notable donors include Bernero campaign treasurer Joe McDonald, \$100, Fourth Ward Councilman Tim Kaltenbach, \$100, and local PR guru Kelly Rossman-McKinney, \$150.

At-Large candidate Rina Risper raised \$2,252, including \$100 from former Lansing Mayor Tony Benavides, and \$50 from Ingham County Commissioner Brian McGrain. At-Large candidate Harold Leeman raised \$1,236, gaining support from the Committee to Reelect Gene Wrigglesworth, the Ingham County sheriff, \$50, Ingham County Circuit Court Judge James Giddings, \$25, Davis, \$250, and John Demmer, CEO of the Demmer Corp., \$100.

The fourth at-large candidate, incumbent Brian Jeffries, did not raise any money during the reporting period, but spent money he had raised previously. He has about \$2,500 left in his account.

Fourth Ward candidate Jessica Yorke is running virtually unopposed, but still has raised \$3,270, according to the latest filing. The Lansing Regional Chamber gave \$2,000, Davis, \$250, the Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 333 union, \$500, and Rossman- McKinney, \$100.

In the Lansing School Board race, Myra Ford and Ted O'Dell had not submitted campaign filings, though O'Dell did opt out of filing, pledging not to raise more than \$1,000.

Rodriguez raised a walloping \$8,698, to incumbent Amy Hodgins' \$331, though she financed some big-ticket campaign activities through in-kind contributions from herself.

Rodriguez' contributors include Ingham County Commissioner Debbie DeLeon, \$50, School Board President Hugh Clarke, \$120, school board member Charles Ford, \$200, Davis, \$500, and Lansing schools Chief Academic Officer Julie Lemond, \$100.

Some of Hodgins' donation included \$100 from Jerry Swartz, the president of Lansing teachers' union, and \$50 from the union's vice president, Patti Seidl.

Correction: Due to a reporting error, a previous version of this story should have stated that At-Large Councilman Brian Jeffries submitted his campaign finance reports last Friday, Oct. 23.