

# Campaign expense totals are detailed

By Joanna Mallazowski staff writer

The sums of money that top Farmington Hills City Council election candidates spent on their campaigns are as varied as the total votes cast for each candidate.

Third-term councilman Joe Alkateeb outstripped all others in spending with a total of \$11,030. All but one of the four political newcomers spent less than \$1,000 and filed expense waivers with the Oakland County elections clerk.

Successful candidates Jean Fox, Terry Sever and Aldo Vagnozzi filed financial statements as did unsuccessful incumbent candidate Joan Dudley. Newcomer Raymond Cassar

also filed a financial statement, though he spent less than \$2,000.

Surprising himself with an \$11,000 election tab, Alkateeb financed his campaign with individual contributions and the help of one fundraiser from which more than \$2,000 was raised, according to election finance reports filed with the Oakland County elections clerk.

Sever, on the other hand, spent the least of the top candidates with a total \$2,100, more than \$1,000 of which he said he contributed himself.

FOX AND Vagnozzi contributors were detailed in the pre-campaign expense report. A listing of Alkateeb's and Sever's contributors was unavailable at the pre-campaign re-

porting time in October because their reports were filed late. Dudley filed a waiver at that time because she had spent less than \$1,000.

Alkateeb said he spent more than \$3,200 of his own money. But he also received direct contributions ranging from \$50 to \$300. Contributors included some well-known individuals involved in the building, architectural planning, engineering and development industry.

Among Alkateeb's contributors were Stuart Frankel (\$300), Harold Beznos (\$300), Jerome Schostak (\$300), Novi-based Rhea Realty Co. (\$300), Leonard Siegal (\$100), family members of the Farmington Hills-based Janna Construction Co. (two \$200 contributions) and Southfield attorney James Ginn, who represents many area developers (\$100).

Among those who contributed at Alkateeb's fundraiser were former city clerk Floyd Cairns, planning commissioners Jeri Van Houten and Vince Valvona, one-time council candidate Andrew Hallw, Alkateeb campaign treasurer Harold Wolkind and Earl Klein of West Bloomfield.

Though Alkateeb admits he didn't expect to spend what he did, printing took the biggest bite. Alkateeb's printing bills topped \$4,600. He said he mailed 40,000 pieces of literature, 35,000 letters and another 8,000 letters to senior adults.

THE TOP vote-getter also spent \$2,800 on mailing (postage) and \$900 on political signs. But what really surprised Alkateeb was the \$2,600 he spent on his victory party at Glunopolis restaurant. "I thought I would spend a total \$8,000. But I had no idea my victory party would get as expensive as it did," Alkateeb said.

Eight contributors are listed on Sever's campaign expense report. Those contributing to Sever's campaign, most with contributions ranging from \$15-\$100, included Bill

Bowman of Thompson-Brown Realtors, Farmington Hills, and Robert McConnell, chairman of the Farmington Hills Economic Development Corporation.

But Sever maintained that he did not solicit financing for his campaign. "It's my cost. I preferred to finance the campaign myself. I didn't solicit funds."

Sever said he entered the campaign with the attitude that "if I got in without major people offering to me give (financial) support, no one could really ask me for favors. I don't really want to owe anyone anything," he said.

As with all other candidates, Sever's expenses were for mailing, voting list labels, advertising and printing. But as the owner of TL Printing in Farmington Hills, Sever said he printed his own materials. The cash contribution to his campaign covered the cost of printing materials, including paper, Sever said.

THE SECOND greatest campaign spender was newly elected councilman Aldo Vagnozzi who spent \$5,600 and placed fourth for a two-year term. Vagnozzi contributed \$1,000 of his own money and his wife, Lois,

contributed another \$960. He also had two fundraisers.

It was with Vagnozzi and second-place finisher Jean Fox that the campaign took on a somewhat partisan flavor. Vagnozzi received financial help from Democratic leaders, political organizations and supporters. The same holds true for Fox, but on the Republican side of the fence.

Among Vagnozzi's more well-known contributors were state Attorney General Frank Kelley's office holder expense fund, Secretary of State Richard Austin, the committee to re-elect U.S. Rep. William Ford of Taylor, and the (David) Bonior (of Mount Clemens) for Congress committee. Each man is a Democrat.

Fox's contributors included Oakland County commissioner (15th District) David Moffit, Oakland County commissioner (27th District) Jack McDonald and state Rep. Mat Dunaskis.

Expenses in the Fox and Vagnozzi campaigns were devoted to printing, mailing and voting lists. Unlike Fox, Sever and Dudley, Vagnozzi spent about \$400 on political signs.

Fox's post-election finance report shows \$7,150 for cumulative campaign expenses. But she said she actually spent just over \$3,000 on her

campaign because \$3,700 of the \$7,150 represented repayment of a personal loan.

DUDLEY, WHO fell short of moving last-place finisher Vagnozzi out of the way for the fourth council seat, spent \$2,300, with an in-kind personal contribution of almost \$600.

Like Sever, Dudley had no fundraisers but accepted direct and indirect contributions from 31 contributors. Contributions ranged \$25-\$250. Contributors included former city attorney Derk Beckerling, current city attorney Martin Testasecca, Farmington Community Library director Beverly Pappal and library employee Barbara Mann.

Other contributors included zoning board of appeals member Massie Kurzaja, planning commissioner Mary Avery, food distributor Paul Inman and William Bowman of Thompson-Brown Realtors, Farmington Hills. Gary Joana of the Janna Construction Co., Farmington Hills, also contributed.

As with other candidates, Dudley's expense included postage, printing, mailing and telephone lists.

## Cost of running theme of debate

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campaign fund-raiser," Fox said, outlining the reason for opening a campaign account with her own money.

Unsuccessful incumbent Joan Dudley and third-place victor Terry Sever were close in the amount spent in their campaigns, according to campaign finance reports.

SEVER REPORTED \$2,154 in expenses and Dudley, \$2,394. Like Fox, Dudley and Sever did not use political signs, which are considered expensive.

Both Sever and Dudley also expressed concern about the amount spent in the election.

"The thing that scares me the most is that a group of people with the ability to raise money by having a foot in the door politically... can be elected," Sever said. "Those people could put together a network that could consistently raise \$15,000 and put their people in."

The second-term candidate, who won his first four-year term, is convinced that the amount of money spent "had a major impact on who won."

Incumbents, Sever continued, should naturally spend less because they are known and have received publicity during their tenure on council. "Over \$5,000 is excessive. Most campaigns 2-3 years ago ran about \$2,000-\$3,000."

Like Fox, Dudley is concerned that reports of big spending will

stifle other residents' interest in seeking council election. "I'm very concerned now, certainly those who don't have contacts and personal finances are going to be out of the running," Dudley said.

But, Dudley continued, it's incumbent on voters to take notice of what candidates are spending, where they are getting their money and to speak up. "I would wish the voters would be discerning enough not to buy an election. I think the voters should raise their eyebrows."

*'You're talking about spending more for a two-year term than I'm being paid. I'm not complaining. But if there's a better way, I'd like to find it.'*

—Aldo Vagnozzi councilman

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