



New York City Campaign Finance Board

100 Church Street, 12th Floor, New York, NY 10007
212.409.1800 | www.nycffb.info

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Via C-Access
December 15, 2015

Geneva A. Johnson
Johnson 2013



Dear Geneva Johnson:

Please find attached the New York City Campaign Finance Board's ("CFB" or "Board") Final Audit Report for the 2013 campaign of Pamela Johnson (the "Campaign"). CFB staff prepared the report based on a review of the Campaign's financial disclosure statements and documentation submitted by the Campaign.

This report incorporates the Board's final determination of June 24, 2015 (attached). The report concludes that the Campaign demonstrated substantial compliance with the Campaign Finance Act (the "Act") and the Board Rules (the "Rules"), with exceptions as detailed in the report.

As detailed in the attached Final Board Determination, the Campaign must repay the qualified expenditure deficit of \$2,656.60.

The full amount owed must be paid no later than January 15, 2016. Please send a check in the amount of \$2,656.60, payable to the "New York City Election Campaign Finance Fund," to: New York City Campaign Finance Board, 100 Church Street, 12th Floor, New York, NY 10007.

If the CFB is not in receipt of the full amount owed by January 15, 2016, the Candidate's name and the amount owed will be posted on the CFB's website. The CFB may also initiate a civil action to compel payment. In addition, the Candidate will not be eligible to receive public funds for any future election until the full amount is paid. Further information regarding liability for this debt can be found in the attached Final Board Determination.

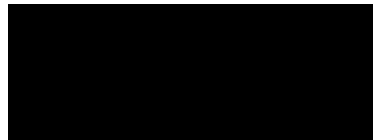
The Campaign may challenge a public funds determination in a petition for Board reconsideration within thirty days of the date of the Final Audit Report as set forth in Board Rule 5-02(a). However, the Board will not consider the petition unless the Campaign submits new information

and/or documentation and shows good cause for its previous failure to provide this information or documentation. To submit a petition, please call the Legal Unit at 212-409-1800.

The January 15, 2014 disclosure statement (#16) was the last disclosure statement the Campaign was required to file with the CFB for the 2013 elections. The Campaign is required to maintain its records for six years after the election, and the CFB may require the Campaign to demonstrate ongoing compliance. *See* Rules 3-02(b)(3), 4-01(a), and 4-03. In addition, please contact the New York State Board of Elections for information concerning its filing requirements.

The CFB appreciates the Campaign's cooperation during the 2013 election cycle. Please contact the Audit Unit at 212-409-1800 or AuditMail@nyccfb.info with any questions about the enclosed report.

Sincerely,



Jonnathon Kline, CFE
Director of Auditing and Accounting

signature on original

c: Pamela Johnson


Johnson 2013


Attachments



EC2013 Final Audit Report

Johnson 2013

December 2015

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RESULTS IN BRIEF

The results of the New York City Campaign Finance Board’s (“CFB” or “Board”) review of the reporting and documentation of the 2013 campaign of Pamela Johnson (the “Campaign”) indicate findings of non-compliance with the Campaign Finance Act (the “Act”) and Board Rules (the “Rules”) as detailed below:

Expenditure Findings

Campaigns participating in the Campaign Finance Program are required to comply with the spending limit. All campaigns are required to properly disclose and document expenditures and disburse funds in accordance with the Act and Rules. Findings in this section relate to the Campaign’s failure to comply with the Act and Rules related to its spending.

- The Campaign made expenditures that were not in furtherance of the Campaign, some of which were converted to a personal use (see Finding #1).

Public Matching Funds Findings

The CFB matches contributions from individual New York City residents at a \$6-to-\$1 rate, up to \$1,050 per contributor. The CFB performs reviews to ensure that the correct amount of public funds was received by the Campaign and that public funds were spent in accordance with the Act and Rules. Findings in this section relate to whether any additional public funds are due, or any return of public funds by the Campaign is necessary.

- The Campaign did not document qualified expenditures equal to the amount of public funds it received (see Finding #2).

BACKGROUND

The Campaign Finance Act of 1988, which changed the way election campaigns are financed in New York City, created the voluntary Campaign Finance Program. The Program increases the information available to the public about elections and candidates' campaign finances, and reduces the potential for actual or perceived corruption by matching up to \$175 of contributions from individual New York City residents. In exchange, candidates agree to strict spending limits. Those who receive funds are required to spend the money for purposes that advance their campaign.

The CFB is the nonpartisan, independent city agency that administers the Campaign Finance Program for elections to the five offices covered by the Act: Mayor, Public Advocate, Comptroller, Borough President, and City Council member. All candidates are required to disclose all campaign activity to the CFB. This information is made available via the CFB's online searchable database, increasing the information available to the public about candidates for office and their campaign finances.

All candidates must adhere to strict contribution limits and are banned from accepting contributions from corporations, partnerships, and limited liability companies. Additionally, participating candidates are prohibited from accepting contributions from unregistered political committees. Campaigns must register with the CFB, and must file periodic disclosure statements reporting all financial activity. The CFB reviews these statements after they are filed and provides feedback to the campaigns.

The table below provides detailed information about the Campaign:

Name: Pamela Johnson	Contribution Limit:
ID: 1525	\$2,750
Office Sought: City Council	
District: 12	Expenditure Limit:
	2010–2012: N/A
Committee Name: Johnson 2013	2013 Primary: \$168,000
Classification: Participant	2013 General: N/A
Certification Date: May 31, 2013	
	Public Funds:
Ballot Status: Primary	Received: \$35,430.00
Primary Election Date: September 10, 2013	Returned: \$1,356.00
Party: Democratic	
	Campaign Finance Summary
	http://bit.ly/1yRZJQ7

SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

Pursuant to Admin. Code § 3-710(1), the CFB conducted this audit to determine whether the Campaign complied with the Act and Rules. Specifically, we evaluated whether the Campaign:

1. Accurately reported financial transactions and maintained adequate books and records.
2. Adhered to contribution limits and prohibitions.
3. Disbursed funds in accordance with the Act and Rules.
4. Complied with expenditure limits.
5. Received the correct amount of public funds, or whether additional funds are due to the Campaign or must be returned.

Prior to the election, we performed preliminary reviews of the Campaign's compliance with the Act and Rules. We evaluated the eligibility of each contribution for which the Campaign claimed matching funds, based on the Campaign's reporting and supporting documentation. We also determined the Candidate's eligibility for public funds by ensuring the Candidate was on the ballot for an election, was opposed by another candidate on the ballot, and met the two-part threshold for receiving public funds. Based on various criteria, we also selected the Campaign for an onsite review, and visited the Campaign's location to observe its activity and review its recordkeeping. After the election, we performed an audit of all financial disclosure statements submitted for the election (see summary of activity reported in these statements at Appendix #1).

To verify that the Campaign accurately reported and documented all financial transactions, we requested all of the Campaign's bank statements and reconciled the financial activity on the bank statements to the financial activity reported on the Campaign's disclosure statements. We identified unreported, misreported, and duplicate disbursements, as well as reported disbursements that did not appear on the Campaign's bank statements. We also calculated debit and credit variances by comparing the total reported debits and credits to the total debits and credits amounts appearing on the bank statements. Because the Campaign reported that more than 10% of the dollar amount of its total contributions were in the form of cash contributions, we compared the total cash contributions reported to the total of cash deposits on itemized deposit slips.

As part of our reconciliation of reported activity to the bank statements the Campaign provided, we determined whether the Campaign properly disclosed all bank accounts. We also determined if the Campaign filed disclosure statements timely and reported required activity daily during the two weeks before the election. Finally, we reviewed the Campaign's reporting to ensure it disclosed required information related to contribution and expenditure transactions, such as intermediaries and subcontractors.

To determine if the Campaign adhered to contribution limits and prohibitions, we conducted a comprehensive review of the financial transactions reported in the Campaign's disclosure statements. Based on the Campaign's reported contributions, we assessed the total amount contributed by any one source and determined if it exceeded the applicable limit. We also determined if any of the contribution sources were prohibited. We reviewed literature and other documentation to determine if the Campaign accounted for joint activity with other campaigns.

To ensure that the Campaign disbursed funds in accordance with the Act and Rules, we reviewed the Campaign's reported expenditures and obtained documentation to assess whether funds were spent in furtherance of the Candidate's nomination or election. We also reviewed information from the New York State Board of Elections and the Federal Election Commission to determine if the Candidate had other political committees active during the 2013 election cycle. We determined if the Campaign properly disclosed these committees, and considered all relevant expenditures made by such committees in the assessment of the Campaign's total expenditures.

We requested records necessary to verify that the Campaign's disbursement of public funds was in accordance with the Act and Rules. Our review ensured that the Campaign maintained and submitted sufficiently detailed records for expenditures made in the election year that furthered the Candidate's nomination and election, or "qualified expenditures" for which public funds may be used. We specifically omitted expenditures made by the Campaign that are not qualified as defined by the Campaign Finance Act § 3-704.

We also reviewed the Campaign's activity to ensure that it complied with the applicable expenditure limits. We reviewed reporting and documentation to ensure that all expenditures—including those not reported, or misreported—were attributed to the period in which the good or service was received, used, or rendered. We also reviewed expenditures made after the election to determine if they were for routine activities involving nominal costs associated with winding up a campaign and responding to the post-election audit.

To ensure that the Campaign received the correct amount of public funds, and to determine if the Campaign must return public funds or was due additional public funds, we reviewed the Campaign's eligibility for public matching funds, and ensured that all contributions claimed for match by the Campaign were in compliance with the Act and Rules. We determined if the Campaign's activity subsequent to the pre-election reviews affected its eligibility for payment. We also compared the amount of valid matching claims to the amount of public funds paid pre-election and determined if the Campaign was overpaid, or if it had sufficient matching claims, qualified expenditures, and outstanding liabilities to receive a post-election payment. As part of this review, we identified any deductions from public funds required under Rule 5-01(n).

We determined if the Campaign met its mandatory training requirement based on records of training attendance kept throughout the 2013 election cycle. Finally, we determined if the Campaign submitted timely responses to post-election audit requests sent by the CFB.

Following an election, campaigns may only make limited winding up expenditures and are not going concerns. Because the activity occurring after the post-election audit is extremely limited,

the audit focused on substantive testing of the entire universe of past transactions. The results of the substantive testing served to establish the existence and efficacy of internal controls. The CFB also publishes and provides to all campaigns guidance regarding best practices for internal controls.

To determine if contributors were prohibited sources, we compared them to entities listed in the New York State Department of State's Corporation/Business Entity Database. Because this was the only source of such information, because it was neither practical nor cost effective to test the completeness of the information, and because candidates could provide information to dispute the Department of State data, we did not perform data reliability testing. To determine if reported addresses were residential or commercially zoned within New York City, we compared them to a database of addresses maintained by the New York City Department of Finance. Because this was the only source of such data available, because it was not cost effective to test the completeness of the information, and because campaigns had the opportunity to dispute residential/commercial designations by providing documentation, we did not perform data reliability testing.

In the course of our reviews, we determined that during the 2013 election cycle a programming error affected C-SMART, the application created and maintained by the CFB for campaigns to disclose their activity. Although the error was subsequently fixed, we determined that certain specific data had been inadvertently deleted when campaigns amended their disclosure statements and was not subsequently restored after the error was corrected. We were able to identify these instances and did not cite exceptions that were the result of the missing data or recommend violations to the Board. The possibility exists, however, that we were unable to identify all data deleted as a result of this error.

The CFB's Special Compliance Unit investigated any complaints filed against the Campaign that alleged a specific violation of the Act or Rules. The Campaign was sent a copy of all formal complaints made against it, as well as relevant informal complaints, and was given an opportunity to submit a response.

The Campaign was provided with a preliminary draft of this audit report and was asked to provide a response to the findings. The Campaign responded, and the CFB evaluated any additional documentation provided and/or amendments to reporting made by the Campaign in response. The Campaign was subsequently informed of its obligation to repay public funds, and was given the opportunity to respond. The Campaign responded and the CFB evaluated any additional information provided by the Campaign. CFB staff recommended that the Board determine that the Campaign must repay public funds. The Campaign chose to contest the CFB staff recommendations. The Campaign appeared before the Board on June 24, 2015. The Board's determinations are summarized as a part of each Finding in the Audit Results section. The finding numbers and exhibit numbers, as well as the number of transactions included in the findings, may have changed from the Draft Audit Report to the Final Audit Report.

AUDIT RESULTS

Expenditure Findings

1. Expenditures – Not In Furtherance of the Campaign

Campaigns may only spend campaign funds for items that further the candidate’s election. Campaigns must keep detailed records to demonstrate that campaign funds were used only for those purposes. *See* Admin. Code §§ 3-703(1)(d), (g); Rule 4-01. The law gives examples of the types of expenditures that are presumed to be campaign-related, although in certain circumstances expenditures of the types listed as appropriate may be questioned. Among the relevant factors are: the quality of the documentation submitted; the timing and necessity of the expenditure; the amount of the expenditure and/or all expenditures of a specific type in relation to the Campaign’s total expenditures; and whether the expenditure is duplicative of other spending. The law also prohibits the conversion of campaign funds to personal use which is unrelated to a political campaign, and provides examples of expenditures that are not in furtherance of a campaign. *See* New York State Election Law §14-130; Admin. Code §§ 3-702(21), 3-703, and 3-710(2)(c); Rules 1-03(a), and 5-03(e), and Advisory Opinion No. 2007-3 (March 7, 2007). Expenditures not demonstrated to be in furtherance of the candidate’s election are considered “non-campaign related.”

The Campaign reported the expenditure listed below which—based on the reporting and/or documentation—is non-campaign related:

PAYEE	STATEMENT/ SCHEDULE/ TRANSACTION	PURPOSE CODE	INVOICE DATE	DATE PAID	AMOUNT	NOTE
Brand Stories	9/F/R0000246	PROFL	05/31/13	06/06/13	\$72.10	(1)

(1) Documentation provided by the Campaign indicates this expenditure was for makeup.

Previously Provided Recommendation

This finding was identified as a result of the Campaign’s response to the Draft Audit Report dated October 15, 2014.

Campaign’s Response

In response to the Notice of Alleged Violations and Recommended Penalties, the Campaign stated that the expenditure to Brand Stories was for a photo shoot “and the pictures from that photo shoot was used for the campaign JOHNSON 2013.” The Campaign stated that the “Make-

up is used for Political Campaign photos to give the candidate a more polished photograph.” The Campaign provided sample campaign materials bearing the Candidate’s photograph. However, pursuant to Admin. Code §3-702(21)(b)(1)(3), expenditures for clothing, haircuts and other personal grooming are considered expenditures not in furtherance of the Campaign and converted to a personal use.

Board Action

The Board has taken no further action on this matter other than to make this a part of the Candidate’s record with the Board.

Public Matching Funds Findings

2. Qualified Expenditure Documentation

Public funds may only be used for “qualified” expenditures by a candidate’s principal committee to further the candidate’s nomination or election during the calendar year in which the election is held. Expenditures that are not considered qualified include, but are not limited to, undocumented or unreported expenditures, payments to the candidate or the candidate’s relatives, payments in cash, contributions to other candidates, gifts, expenditures for petition defense or litigation, and advances except individual purchases of more than \$250. *See* Admin. Code § 3-704; Rule 1-08(g). Participants must return public funds, or may be limited in the amount of public funds they are eligible to receive post-election if they have not documented sufficient qualified expenditures. *See* Admin. Code § 3-710(2)(b); Rule 5-03(d).

Campaigns are required to obtain and maintain contemporaneous records that enable the CFB to verify that expenditures were qualified. *See* Admin. Code § 3-703(1)(d), (g); Rule 4-01. These records may include cancelled checks (front and back) and bills for goods or services. Bills must include the date the vendor was hired or the date the goods or services were received, the vendor’s name and address, a detailed description of the goods or services, and the amount.

The Rules provide guidance for situations where contemporaneous records are either missing or incomplete. *See* Rule 4-01(a). First, a campaign must attempt to obtain a duplicate or more complete record from the vendor. If that is not possible, a campaign may modify an existing record or create a new record which must clearly identify the record as modified or recreated. In addition, any modified or recreated record must be accompanied by a notarized statement explaining the reason for and circumstances surrounding the record. The statement must be from a campaign representative who has firsthand knowledge of the recreated document and must explain why the original document is not available or insufficient. Upon review of the non-contemporaneous record and statement, the CFB may still find the records are not sufficient to adequately document the transaction.

The Campaign received \$34,074.00¹ in public funds for the 2013 elections. Previously, CFB staff requested documentation to demonstrate that public funds were used for qualified expenditures. Based on all the records submitted, the Campaign has provided sufficient documentation for \$31,417.40 in qualified expenditures.

If the Campaign does not document an additional \$2,656.60 as qualified, the Campaign must repay this amount to the Public Fund.

Previously Provided Recommendation

Any transaction marked with a “Q” is considered a qualified expenditure and no additional documentation or information is required. Transactions marked “NQ” cannot be qualified, for reasons such as a payment to a family member or a payment made in cash, and additional documentation will not make them qualified. If the Campaign disagrees, it must provide an explanation and documentation. All other transactions are marked with a code that explains what is missing or inadequate. The Code Key is located at the end of the list.

The list of transactions is sorted by amount, starting with the largest expenditures (disbursements followed by outstanding liabilities and advances greater than \$250, if applicable). If a transaction has more than one code, the Campaign must address all codes before that expenditure may be considered qualified. The Campaign must provide explanations and/or documentation where requested (copies of bills, detailed invoices, consulting agreements, work contracts, credit card statements, cancelled checks, etc., or recreated/modified records along with the required statements, as instructed above). In some cases, the Campaign may find it useful to supplement an invoice or other documentation already provided with evidence of work performed and/or a more detailed description of tasks performed or products received. In addition, the Campaign may need to submit amended disclosure statements to correct errors in its reporting of expenditures.

The Campaign must return a copy of the Qualified Expenditure Sample (included in the Draft Audit Report) with its response. All documents submitted to the CFB must be labeled with the corresponding Transaction IDs.

Campaign’s Response

In response to the Draft Audit Report and Notice of Alleged Violations and Recommended Penalties, the Campaign provided additional expenditure documentation, which reduced the amount of the Campaign’s repayment obligation.

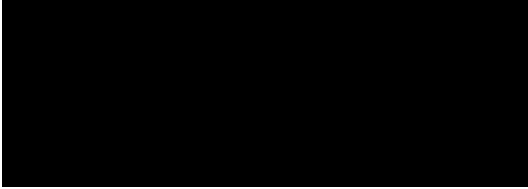
Board Action

The Board determined that the Campaign must repay \$2,656.60 to the Public Fund (\$34,074.00 in public funds received less \$31,417.40 in documented qualified expenditures.).

¹ The Campaign received \$35,430 in public funds and repaid \$1,356, for a net public funds payment of \$34,074.

We performed this audit in accordance with the audit responsibilities of the CFB as set forth in Admin. Code § 3-710. We limited our review to the areas specified in this report's audit scope.

Respectfully submitted,



Jonnathon Kline, CFE

Director of Auditing and Accounting

signature on original

Date: December 15, 2015

Staff: Suda Chapman

Jennifer Jones

**New York City Campaign Finance Board
Campaign Finance Information System
Transaction Summary Report
Appendix 1**

Candidate: Johnson, Pamela A (ID:1525-P)**Office:** 5 (City Council)**Election:** 2013

1. Opening cash balance (All committees)		\$0.00
2. Total itemized monetary contributions (Sch ABC)		\$5,965.00
3. Total unitemized monetary contributions		\$0.00
4. Total in-kind contributions (Sch D)		\$0.00
5. Total unitemized in-kind contributions		\$0.00
6. Total other receipts (Sch E - excluding CFB payments)		\$0.00
7. Total unitemized other receipts		\$0.00
8. Total itemized expenditures (Sch F)		\$45,436.07
Expenditure payments	\$45,436.07	
Advance repayments	\$0.00	
9. Total unitemized expenditures		\$0.00
10. Total transfers-In (Sch G)		\$0.00
Type 1	\$0.00	
Type 2a	\$0.00	
Type 2b	\$0.00	
11. Total transfers-out (Sch H)		\$0.00
Type 1	\$0.00	
Type 2a	\$0.00	
Type 2b	\$0.00	
12. Total loans received (Sch I)		\$0.00
13. Total loan repayments (Sch J)		\$0.00
14. Total loans forgiven (Sch K)		\$0.00
15. Total liabilities forgiven (Sch K)		\$0.00
16. Total expenditures refunded (Sch L)		\$4,050.34
17. Total receipts adjustment (Sch M - excluding CFB repayments)		\$0.00
18. Total outstanding liabilities (Sch N - last statement submitted)		\$0.00
Outstanding Bills	\$0.00	
Outstanding Advances	\$0.00	
19. Total advanced amount (Sch X)		\$0.00
20. Net public fund payments from CFB		\$34,074.00
Total public funds payment	\$35,430.00	
Total public funds returned	(\$1,356.00)	
21. Total Valid Matchable Claims		\$5,905.00
22. Total Invalid Matchable Claims		N/A
23. Total Amount of Penalties Assessed		N/A
24. Total Amount of Penalty Payments		\$0.00
25. Total Amount of Penalties Withheld		\$0.00