PUBLIC MATCHING FUNDS: AN INTRODUCTION

The City of Tucson's Public Matching Funds program was approved by the voters and went into effect in 1987. The City Clerk serves as the Campaign Finance Administrator, and the program is governed by the City Charter Chapter XVI and the Campaign Finance Administration Rules and Regulations, in conjunction with Arizona Revised Statutes Title 16.

The purpose of the program is to provide the average citizen a voice in the municipal elective process and the opportunity to run for office. It serves to level the playing field by reducing the excessive fundraising advantage of incumbents and therefore encourages fair competition for public office. The program reduces the influence of large contributors and special interest groups and increases the value of smaller contributions. It enables candidates to focus less on fundraising and devote a greater portion of their time dealing with important issues. The increased reporting requirements also improve the public disclosure of contributions and expenditures.

According to the provisions, any candidate for mayor or city council who desires to participate may sign a contract with the city. When a candidate has signed a contract and met the eligibility requirements, the candidate is entitled to receive one dollar ($1) for each dollar received during the campaign period from any individual. A candidate's personal monies and contributions from political committees, partnerships, corporations or other groups eligible to make contributions will not be matched by public funds. In exchange for public matching funds, the candidate agrees to abide by limitations on the candidate's use of personal monies, limitations on campaign expenditures, and limitations on the use of all contributions as specified in the City Charter.

Public Matching Funds candidates are required to file matching funds request reports and to complete two audits. All reports must be filed using the City of Tucson's campaign finance reporting portal. The City Clerk's Office will provide a manual and will walk the candidate and treasurer through the software and reporting process at a mutually agreeable time.

Note: ***The City Charter and the Campaign Finance Administration Rules and Regulations contain more detailed information and are required reading for candidates interested in signing a contract.***

STEP 1 INDIVIDUAL BECOMES A CANDIDATE WHEN THE FIRST OF ANY OF THE FOLLOWING EVENTS OCCUR:

- Individual receives contributions or makes expenditures or gives consent to another person to receive contributions or make expenditures, on behalf of that individual in connection with the candidate's nomination, election, or retention for any public office; or
- Individual publicly or formally declares candidacy for a specified election; or
- Individual circulates or files nomination papers for a specified election; or

Note: For purposes of A.R.S. § 38-296, a public matching funds candidate is only deemed to have offered himself or herself for nomination or election to a salaried local, state or federal office on the filing of a nomination paper pursuant to A.R.S. § 16-311(A).

STEP 2 SIGN CAMPAIGN CONTRACT WITHIN THIRTY (30) DAYS:

- Individual must sign campaign contract within thirty (30) days after becoming a candidate for public matching funds.

STEP 3 ESTABLISH ELIGIBILITY:

- Candidate files a Statement to Establish Eligibility to receive public funding. Mayoral candidates must receive three hundred (300) contributions of ten dollars ($10) or more and Council candidates must receive two hundred (200) contributions of ten dollars ($10) or more, from individual City of Tucson residents.

STEP 4 AUDIT FOR COMPLIANCE AND ELIGIBILITY:

- Within approximately fourteen (14) days of filing a statement to establish eligibility, an audit of the candidate's campaign records will be conducted, and an opinion will be issued by the Campaign Finance Administrator stating whether the candidate is in compliance with provisions. The Campaign Finance Administrator makes the final determination.
- The Campaign Finance Administrator will notify the candidate when eligibility is verified, and the candidate may receive public funds.

STEP 5 REQUEST PUBLIC FUNDS

- Candidates may request public matching funds as frequently as once each calendar week.

STEP 6 FILE CAMPAIGN FINANCE REPORTS AS REQUIRED

- Public Matching Funds candidates must file all required campaign finance reports, including matching funds request reports, in accordance with the applicable filing deadlines and requirements.

STEP 7 POST ELECTION AUDIT

- Provide any additional campaign financial records requested to the Campaign Finance Administrator for post election audit. Any hardcopy records will be returned when the

audit is completed. All financial records must be kept for two (2) years following the last day of the campaign period.

STEP 8 DISBURSE UNEXPENDED FUNDS AND TERMINATE COMMITTEE

- Disburse all unexpended contributions according to State Law and Campaign Finance Rules and Regulations. Unexpended public matching funds are returned to the City up to the amount that was provided to the candidate by the fund.
- File a Termination Statement and reports dissolving the committee.

STEP 9 FINANCIAL RECORDS - KEEP FOR TWO (2) YEARS

- All financial records must be retained by the candidate for two (2) years after the end of the campaign period.