

## PUBLIC FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE

The subcommittee recommends the following for Greenburgh Town Elections:

➤ **Voluntary local campaign finance reforms should be adopted that include increased disclosure of campaign contributions, lower contribution limits, limited restrictions on the source of contributions, and mandatory debate provisions**

State law preempts mandatory local campaign contribution regulation. Therefore, compliance must be voluntary. The subcommittee recommends the following voluntary reforms be pursued:

- Disclosure by participating candidates should be more frequent and more descriptive than state law requires, and include the contributor's name, residence, business address, and name of employer.
- To avoid any appearance of corruption or undue influence, while not substantially disadvantaging participants, participating candidates should limit individual contributions for each election-- the primary election and the general election. Currently, approximately \$1000 is permitted for each election.
- Participating candidates should pledge not to accept "interested" contributions (such as from developers doing business before the town's boards).
- Participating candidates should be required to participate in a minimum number of debates held using League of Women Voters' debate guidelines.

➤ **Participants in local campaign reform measures should be given significantly increased cable access time as an incentive to participate, as recommended by the cable subcommittee**

- Incentives are generally offered to encourage candidates to voluntarily participate.
- Cable access, as proposed by the cable subcommittee, should be used it as the primary or sole incentive for candidate participation at the present time.
- To date, the subcommittee has not identified a desire by town residents to partially or wholly finance the campaigns of local candidates with taxpayer funds. Therefore, the proposed cable access incentive is a reasonable alternative.

➤ **A Fair Campaign Practices Commission should be created**

The members should be nominated and appointed in a manner that assures the commission will be non-partisan or bipartisan. The commission should ensure participating candidates comply with any local reform measures adopted and equitably receive any incentives offered.

➤ **Additional public comment should be solicited regarding possible support for the following taxpayer-financed incentives which are currently not recommended by the subcommittee:**

- Matching funds: participating candidates could receive a 2-1 match for contributions of \$100 or less; the actual ratio and the threshold amount would have to be established.
- Block grants: participating candidates could receive a lump sum contribution from the town of 25-50 percent of any spending limit imposed; the actual percentage would have to be established.
- Free or reduced-cost services (other than cable television): the cost of a certain number of candidates' mailings could be reimbursed, local voter guides with free space for each candidate could be provided, etc., or
- A mix of any/all of the above