

Educating REALTOR® Associations on Election Activity

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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®



matthew broderick

reese witherspoon

election



What we are going to cover

- Some basic terms for fundraising and IE activity
- How to talk to reporters about RPAC
- To boldly go beyond: Independent Expenditures, Issues and the media.

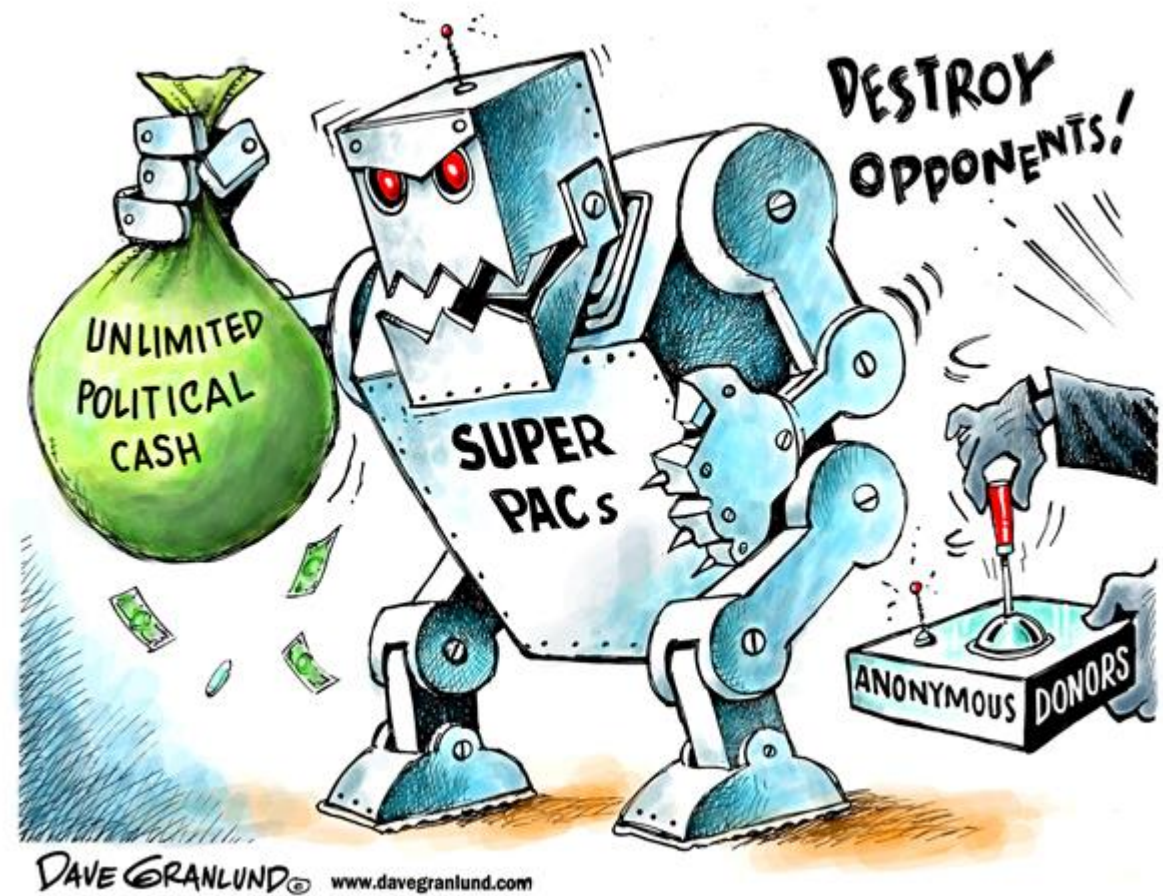
ELECTION TERMS

Political Action Committee (PAC)

- Solicitation of voluntary parties from a specific class (members, immediate family, employees)
- Been around since the 1940's (RPAC – 1969)
- Donations limited and the amounts given to candidates is limited. (\$5,000 in, \$5,000 out).

Super PAC's

- Created for candidates in 2010 by SCOTUS decision *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*.
- Only used for independent expenditure activity.
- No coordination or communication with the candidate for IE's.
- Can raise unlimited amounts of \$ and spend unlimited amounts on money on candidates.



ELECTION TERMS

“Dark Money”

- Refers to political spending meant to influence the decision of a voter, where the donor is not disclosed and the source of the money is unknown.
- Generally refers to funds spent by a political nonprofit or a super PAC.
 - 501(c) “groups”



Hard vs. Soft Dollars



- Personal funds
- Can be contributed to federal PACs & candidates
- Regulated by FEC
- **RPAC**

- Corporate funds
- Can't be contributed to federal PACs or candidates
- **Political Advocacy Fund, Corporate Ally Program**



Answering RPAC Questions

Kalamazoo

Kalamazoo city commission campaigns net more than \$63K in contributions

Updated Oct 31, 2019; Posted Oct 30, 2019



Eight candidates are running for the Kalamazoo City Commission in November 2019 (MLive file photos).



17
shares

Advertisement

An advertisement for E*TRADE. It features a dark purple background with a large green '\$0' in the center. Below the '\$0' is the word 'COMMISSIONS.' in green, and 'GET UP TO \$600' in white. At the bottom, the E*TRADE logo is displayed in white. There is a small 'Advertisement' label at the top and a close button icon in the top right corner.

He received \$1,500 from Comm PAC, \$1,000 from the Michigan Laborers' PAC, \$750 from Southwest Michigan First PAC, \$500 from Realtors PAC of Michigan.

THE TOP THREE MEDIA QUESTIONS FOR RPAC

- Why are you supporting candidate X?
 - Seems easy, but you need to be ready.
 - Work with the staff/members to be able to articulate why your association is supporting any candidate. (3 to 5 bullet points).
- Where does the money come from?
 - Voluntary contributions from our members (if RPAC).
 - Donors disclosed and contributions disclosed (state law).
- How are decisions about candidates made?
 - Be prepared to describe in general how your committee process works.
 - Beware of the “do all members support giving to this candidate” question. The “Admiral Ackbar” question
 - Rely on the process your committee uses to make decisions.
- BONUS – Who answers these questions? Have a plan in place.



Answering Independent Expenditure Questions



THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

Friday, July 3, 2020 Spokane, Washington Est. May 19, 1883

Washington Idaho WA Government

NEWS - SPOKANE

Realtors buying voice in Spokane elections

Sun., July 21, 2019



Realtors are pouring an unprecedented amount of money into Spokane primary campaigns.

The Washington Association of Realtors has thrown substantial support behind mayoral candidate Nadine Woodward and three fresh faces vying for seats on the City Council.

The impetus behind the spike in campaign activity is addressing “a crisis with housing availability and affordability,” according to Tom Hormel, chair of the WA Realtors PAC and a member of the Spokane Association of Realtors’ government affairs committee.

“That’s why we’re playing big this year,” Hormel said. “We took an opportunity to change the face of the City Council to help get us out of this crisis.”

But unlike Stuckart, Woodward has benefited from \$93,632.35 spent on her behalf by the Washington Association of Realtors. The association’s independent expenditures in support of Woodward include \$40,900 for online ads on July 10 and \$21,732.12 on campaign mailers on July 12, with more marketing yet to come.

The Federal Election Commission defines an “independent expenditure” as one that pays for advertising that “expressly advocates the election or defeat of a clearly identified candidate and which is not made in coordination with any candidate or his or her campaign or political party.”

Stuckart has not reported any independent expenditures on his behalf.



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NEWS > COLUMN

Shawn Vestal: Realtors and other rich interests are pouring money into funds to back Nadine Woodward and other Spokane candidates

UPDATED: Fri., Sept. 20, 2019

Twitter

Facebook

Email

Reddit

Every so often there is an effort to reform campaign finance laws – nationally, statewide or municipally – meant to level the playing field, root out real and perceived corruption, and reduce the outsized influence of big money on elections.


And every time, big money finds its way back in. The money flowing into this year's city elections simply reinforces it: campaign speech is for sale, and special interests, big business and the very wealthy buy an ever-bigger share with each new political season.

Almost two years after a new city law, pressed by City Council President Ben Stuckart, put caps on individual contributions to candidates, coalitions of Realtors, developers, builders and bankers are pouring money into independent political action committees supporting mayoral candidate Nadine Woodward, who is running against Stuckart, and Cindy Wendle, who is running against Breean Beggs for City Council president.

One PAC alone – the state Realtors association – is spending more than any single candidate. Such PACs, which are required to operate independently of the candidates they support, can spend as much as they want and this year, they want to spend a lot.

Woodward and Stuckart are raising about the same amount in direct



By Shawn Vestal 
shawnv@spokesman.com
 (509) 459-5431



Shawn Vestal (Dan Pelle / The Spokesman-Review)

Tom Hormel, chairman of the Washington Realtors PAC and a member of the Spokane Association of Realtors' government affairs committee, said his organization decided to go big in this year's city race because of the top-to-bottom housing crisis, including but not limited to homelessness, and a desire for a more politically balanced City Council. He said that the group prioritizes private property rights and efforts to make it easier for developers to fulfill housing needs, but isn't in support of "unchecked" growth.

As for my larger concern – the influence of unlimited spending on politics – he reminded me that we live in a post-Citizens United reality.

"We can have that debate in a different time about whether it's right or wrong, but right now, the Supreme Court says it's right," he said.

The court did say it's legal. Is that the same as right? When the new municipal campaign finance law was passed, the most frequent political donation in Spokane was \$50. One would guess it hasn't risen much.

Do donors with \$50 to contribute deserve 100 or even 1,000 times less free speech than the deep pockets?

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INDEPENDENT EXPENDITURES

“THE RULES”

—
The first rule of “IE Club”
is...

We don't talk about IE's
until it is time that we can
legally talk about IE's.



INDEPENDENT EXPENDITURES

“THE RULES”

—

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We **don't** talk about IE's until it is time that we can legally talk about IE's.





IE COMMUNICATIONS

- To the Public and the Members
 - When the IE “activity” is released and out of the control of the campaign.
- Examples
 - Mail is provided to the post office
 - Field program is “in the field.”
 - Digital ads are online and available.
- NEVER TALK ABOUT ACTIVITY THAT HAS NOT HAPPENED.

INDEPENDENT EXPENDITURES

“THE RULES”

—

The third rule of “IE Club” is...

Remember your rules for
RPAC media questions....
That’s your starting point.

- Why are you supporting candidate X?
- Where does the money come from?
- How are decisions about candidates made?



INDEPENDENT EXPENDITURES “THE RULES”

—
The forth rule of “IE Club” is...

The money may come
“globally”, but the decisions to
support are made “locally”.





IE COMMUNICATIONS

- Depending on your state law, disclosures on campaign materials may list the names of:
 - Local and/or State Associations
 - Other political originations
 - RPAC (State)
 - NAR
- The “dreaded” question: Why is outside money influencing our local election?



Elect **BRIAN ATNIP**

For Newton County Land Surveyor
A Reputation for Responsible Decisions



YOU ARE BRIAN'S TOP PRIORITY

Brian Atnip will serve and protect the interests of the citizens of Newton County, maintaining our important surveys and land records in the county courthouse.

Why Brian Is the Best Choice for Surveyor:

- He is a lifelong South Missouri resident
- Brian knows the value of hard work from growing up on a farm
- He has 26 years of surveying experience
- Brian has been registered as a land surveyor for 12 years
- As a business owner, Brian provides 400 surveys a year



For a professional who looks out for us, elect
Brian Atnip for Newton County Land Surveyor on August 4

Paid for by the National Association of REALTORS® Fund. John Pierpoint, Treasurer. 430 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60611.



**For a professional who looks out for us, elect
Brian Atnip for Newton County Land Surveyor on August 4**

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Stephan will serve with humility, lead by example, and manage with experience.



Stephan Marshall has earned the right to serve you on the city council. As a businessman, homeowner, volunteer, and active community organizer, Stephan has always put our needs first. As your council representative, he will:

- **Keep San Bruno Safe** – by managing pedestrian traffic growth
- **Enhance Senior Services** – by offering a suite of new services to help improve our seniors' quality of life
- **Advocate for Youth Services** – to ensure the \$50 million recreation center at San Bruno Park is finished on schedule

**Let's support a man of character
and commitment.
Elect Stephan Marshall
for San Bruno City Council**



The San Mateo County Association of REALTORS®
850 Woodside Way
San Mateo, CA 94401

Ad paid for by National Association of REALTORS® Fund.
Not authorized by a candidate or a committee controlled by a candidate.

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 - Local and/or State Associations
 - Other political originations
 - RPAC (State)
 - NAR
- The “dreaded” question: Why is outside money influencing our local election?
- **The answer...**
 - **Candidate choices are made at the local/state levels.**
 - **NAR has funds available for this activity.**
 - **These funds are provided by REALTORS, both locally and nationally, to protect private property rights and to ensure homeownership.**

INDEPENDENT EXPENDITURES “THE RULES”

—
The fifth rule of “IE
Club” is...

You need to have a plan
to let your members
know!



INDEPENDENT EXPENDITURES

“THE RULES”

—

The sixth rule of “IE Club” is...

If you get a call about a federal IE candidate, give it to NAR. If NAR gets a call about a state or local IE candidate, NAR will give it to you.



IF THE PRESS CALLS NAR ABOUT A LOCAL/STATE CANDIDATE...

- Independent expenditures and ballot initiative efforts are conducted at the request of state and local associations who have identified a candidate or issue of concern or importance to their community.
- These expenditures are reported and publicly disclosed in accordance with state and local law (as applicable).
- NAR also does not discuss campaign strategy, including where the campaign materials will appear (mail, TV, radio, etc.) or how much money is being spent.
- Further questions should be referred back to the state or local association making the request.

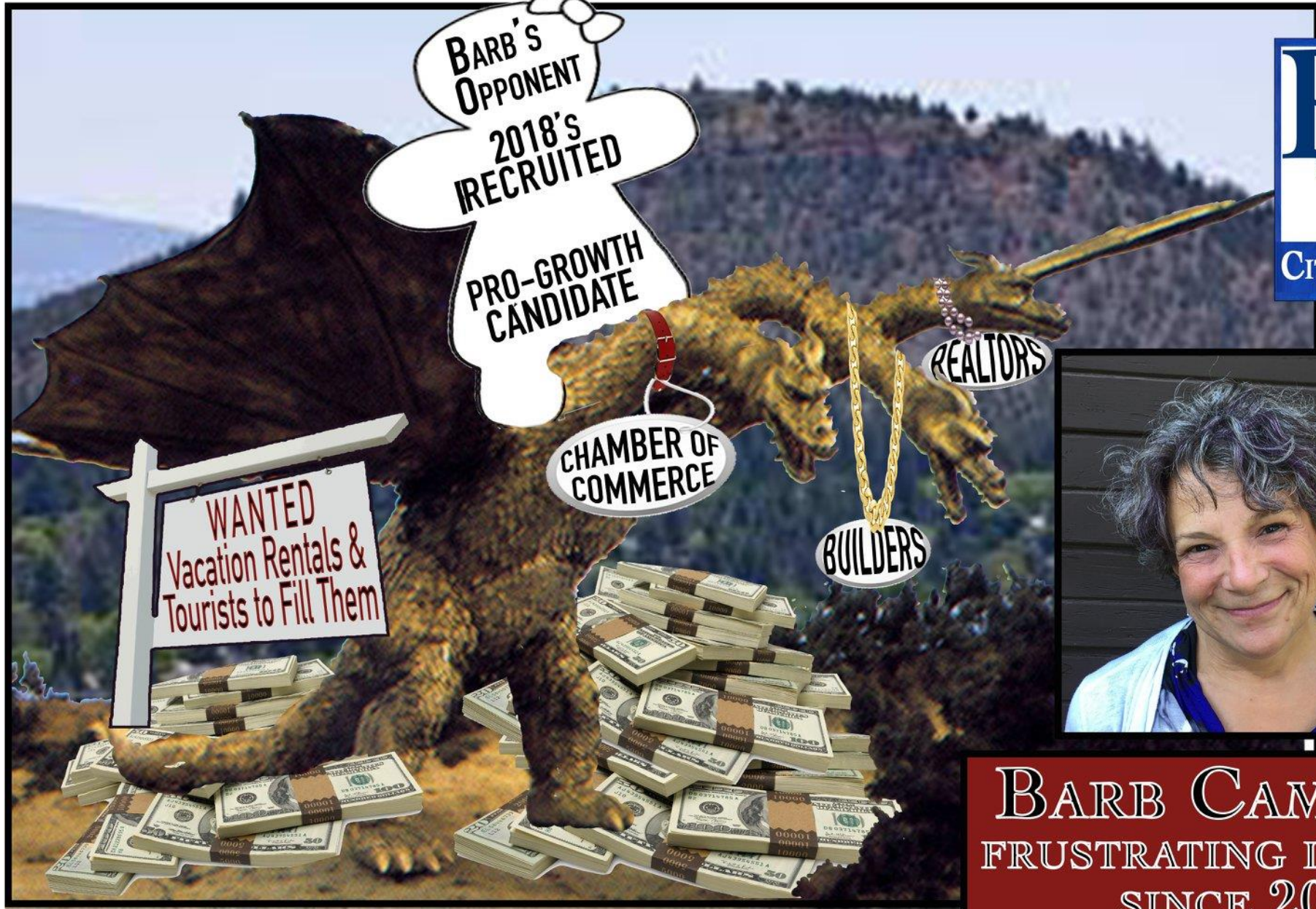


INDEPENDENT EXPENDITURES “THE RULES”

—
The seventh rule of “IE Club” is...

You, your members, your association,
nor NAR have done anything wrong
by engaging in the electoral process.





RE-ELECT!
BARB
FOR **BEND**
CITY COUNCIL SEAT 6



BARB CAMPBELL,
FRUSTRATING LOBBYISTS
SINCE 2014.

INDEPENDENT EXPENDITURES

“THE RULES”

The eight and final rule of “IE Club” is...

If it’s your first time at “IE Club”, you **MUST** make sure you ask for help when you need it.



**KEEP
CALM
AND
ASK FOR
HELP**

Answering Issue Campaign Questions



I VOTE

#REALTORParty

Issue Campaigns

- Ballot Initiatives(voting) or legislative outreach (CFA Member driven).
- From a press perspective, much easier to deal with than candidates.
- Remember your members have the right to voice their opinions in support, or opposition, to issues.

Questions???

THANK YOU.



NARdotRealtor



nar.realtor

