

ABQ ethics board rules against anti-abortion group

Written by By Andy Lyman NM Political Report
Friday, 20 November 2015 07:25

ALBUQUERQUE – The City of Albuquerque’s Board of Ethics ruled unanimously that an anti-abortion group broke city election rules when the group sent mailers in opposition of a City Council candidate.

The board issued a \$1,000 fine and a public reprimand.

Protest ABQ sent fliers depicting graphic scenes purportedly from abortions in an attempt sway voters in District 6 from voting for Pat Davis, who won the race. Davis, the Executive Director of the political group ProgressNow New Mexico*, previously worked on a campaign against a ballot initiative in Albuquerque that would have banned late-term abortions.

Alex Curtas, an employee of ProgressNow New Mexico, filed a complaint against Protest ABQ and it’s founders Bud and Tara Shaver arguing they should have registered as a Measure Finance Committee. The city charter requires groups that take part in certain political activity to register as a measured finance committee, or MFC. These are similar to PACs in other races..

A complaint against ProgressNow New Mexico was dismissed.

NM Political Report previously reported that the Shavers and Protest ABQ did not register as an MFC because they didn’t view their work as all out political.

“I didn’t really think of that because it’s not like we’re telling people to vote for someone else,” Tara Shaver previously told *NM Political Report*. “This is what you’ll get if you vote for him.”

The Shavers nor their attorney could be reached for comment. When they respond, this story will be update.

The board questioned the Shavers’ attorney about how much money was spent for the mailers

ABQ ethics board rules against anti-abortion group

Written by By Andy Lyman NM Political Report
Friday, 20 November 2015 07:25

in question. According to the city charter, any action that results in an expense over \$250 would require official registration as an MFC.

The Shavers' lawyer argued there is no proof that the couple spent more than \$250 and it was Curtas' burden to prove otherwise.

Curtas, who filed the complaint in his capacity as a private citizen, told *NM Political Report* he is pleased with the outcome and that the board ultimately agreed with him.

"This shows that the process works," Curtas said.

The *Albuquerque Journal* reported that the Shavers plan to appeal the board's decision.

** ProgressNow New Mexico helps find funding for NM Political Report but has no editorial input on this or any other story.*