



Legislation Text

File #: 33159, **Version:** 1

Fiscal Note

Funding of \$8,613 is available in the 2014 adopted City operating budget, which has appropriated \$1,200,000 in funding for the Contingent Reserve. The current uncommitted balance of the Contingent Reserve is 1,170,000, which would be reduced to \$1,161,387.13 upon the adoption of this budget amendment. There is no net impact on the tax levy. The adopted operating budget of Miscellaneous Appropriations will be amended to increase authorized expenditures by \$8,612.97 for market analysis, as follows:

\$8,612.97 GN01-54905-971000 (Miscellaneous Appropriations)

Title

Amending the 2014 adopted City Operating Budget to appropriate \$8,612.97 to Miscellaneous Appropriations for the purpose of returning unspent grant funds to the Joyce Foundation.

Body

WHEREAS, on March 20, 2007, the Madison Common Council adopted Resolution #05772 creating a Blue Ribbon Committee on Clean Elections to investigate and make recommendations on the need and possibility for public financing for municipal elections for alderperson, mayor, and municipal judge; and

WHEREAS, the committee met from 7/11/07 - 8/18/09 and was composed of Professor Ken Mayer (chair), former Governor Tony Earl, former Madison Mayor Joel Skornicka, former Alders Judy Olson and Judy Bowser, attorney Madelyn Leopold, and Common Cause board member Bill Kraus; and

WHEREAS, state law controls campaign finance rules for municipalities and prohibits Wisconsin municipalities from establishing a public funding program for local elections. Despite the committee's early recognition that a public funding program would not be possible without state enabling legislation, the committee opted to continue its review of city election history in order to leave a record for future decision makers, should a public funding program become viable in the future; and

WHEREAS, to that end, the committee sought information and input from a wide variety of groups and sources, produced a comprehensive and publicly available database on Madison elections from 2001 - 2007, and invited elections officials from Seattle, Portland, and Albuquerque to participate in a panel discussion of their cities' experiences with public financing of local elections; and

WHEREAS, the committee found that Madison's municipal elections remain competitive, grass roots efforts that do not require substantial campaign spending; while mayoral elections have seen record levels of spending, the committee concluded that these spending levels are a sign of healthy competitiveness, rather than an indication that elected officials are beholden to campaign contributors or special interests; and

WHEREAS, the committee recommended that Madison does not need, and even if state enabling legislation were passed, should not adopt, a public funding program for Common Council, Municipal Judge, or Mayoral elections; and

WHEREAS, the Joyce Foundation awarded \$16,188 to the City of Madison to fund the committee's work, including hiring a research assistant and reimbursing panelists for travel expenses; and

WHEREAS, the committee spent only \$7,575.03 of these funds;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Council amend the 2014 adopted City Operating Budget to appropriate from the Contingent Reserve funding of \$8,612.97 to return unspent grant funds to the Joyce Foundation.