

After city council win, Soria campaign treasury ends year in the black

By John
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District 1 Fresno City Council Member Esmeralda Soria

It obviously goes without saying that it's good to win. Just ask newly elected Fresno City Council Member Esmeralda Soria.

The District 1 representative, who officially took her seat last month, received around \$63,000 in campaign contributions — after Election Day. That was enough cash to retire her campaign debt, pay off the remainder of the money she loaned to her campaign, and to get a nest egg of around \$55,000 for her reelection, should she pursue

that four years from now.

Even better for Soria, she got several after-election contributions from people or companies that had given to her opponent, Cary Catalano.

Granville Homes and some of its leadership, including Darius and Farid Assemi, for instance, contributed around \$20,000 total after the election.

“After the campaign ended, I wanted to make sure it was clear as the representative of District 1 that I intended to represent everyone,” Soria said. “I reached out to those who did not previously support me. I was then able to present my plans and passion for District 1, demonstrating I would work in partnership. That resulted in new support for my work to be done in District 1.”

For the entire campaign, Soria raised around \$301,000 and had \$11,000-plus in non-monetary contributions for a total of \$312,000..

As Soria successfully closed out the money part of her campaign, Catalano found himself in a familiar place for candidates that lose elections — with a campaign loan he made to himself that will almost certainly go unpaid. That means Catalano will have to eat the money loss.

“If you’re not willing to invest in something you believe in, you have to ask yourself if this is something you want to do,” Catalano said, adding he knew the risks of the loan from the start.

“I’m OK as I possibly can be forgiving that (loan),” he said.

Still, it could have been worse for Catalano.

Even though he lost the election last November, he still managed to get around \$8,000 in after-election contributions, and owners of two radio stations — KJWL (FM, 99.3) and KFPT (AM 790) — made non-monetary contributions for more than \$12,000 in commercials that ran for Catalano.

In total, Catalano raised around \$213,000, plus an additional \$19,000 in non-monetary contributions and a \$24,000 self-loan for a total raised of around \$237,000.

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