

Anti-eviction group amends expenses

By Heather MacDonald - Oakland Tribune Staff Writer

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OAKLAND -- Just Cause Oakland spent nearly \$108,000 in a successful effort to pass an anti-eviction ballot measure two years ago, far more than the group originally reported.

Amended campaign finance reports filed Monday with the Oakland city clerk detail dozens of previously undisclosed expenditures, including the design and postage for five direct-mail pieces touting Measure EE, which narrowly passed in November 2002.

Campaign coordinator Adam Gold said mistakes made by volunteers were to blame for the omissions and apologized. However, Gold and other group officials again rejected claims that illegal funds were used in the campaign, as alleged in a complaint to the city's Public Ethics Commission lodged by a landlord group.

The failure to disclose the expenditures for nearly two years means Just Cause faces possible fines from the Public Ethics Commission and the state Fair Political Practices Commission.

Holly Fincke, a member of the Measure EE advisory committee, said the landlord's complaint, which alleged money from People United for a Better Oakland was improperly used to fund the campaign, called the Rental Housing Association of Northern Alameda County "sore losers."

"This is fundamentally about sour grapes," Finke said.

However, Wayne Rowland, association president, said the issue was Just Cause's failure to follow the law in submitting its campaign reports. The organization has sued to overturn Measure EE.

"The only thing we've asked them to do is what they were supposed to do for the public before the election," Rowland said. "They wouldn't have corrected the record if we hadn't filed the complaint."

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