

**STATE OF MINNESOTA
CAMPAIGN FINANCE AND PUBLIC DISCLOSURE BOARD**

**PRIMA FACIE
DETERMINATION**

IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPLAINT OF LUKE MIELKE REGARDING THE WE LOVE MINNEAPOLIS PAC

On June 12, 2025, the Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board received a complaint submitted by Luke Mielke regarding the We Love Minneapolis PAC, Board registration number 41379. The We Love Minneapolis PAC is an independent expenditure political committee.¹ The complaint states that We Love Minneapolis is a Minnesota nonprofit corporation that is organized as a social welfare organization under section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code.

The complaint alleges that the We Love Minneapolis PAC violated Minnesota Statutes section 10A.121, subdivision 2, which prohibits approved expenditures and other types of contributions to local candidates by an independent expenditure political committee. The complaint alleges, and Board records confirm, that Andrew Minck is the We Love Minneapolis PAC's deputy treasurer. The complaint alleges that Mr. Minck is also the treasurer of Jacob Frey for Our City, the campaign committee of a local candidate, Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey.² A campaign committee for a local candidate does not register with the Board. The complaint includes a copy of the first page of the Jacob Frey for Our City committee's 2024 annual report, filed by Mr. Minck with the City of Minneapolis on January 31, 2025. The complaint alleges that Mr. Minck is thereby Mayor Frey's agent and that various expenditures made by the We Love Minneapolis PAC in 2025 were approved expenditures.

The complaint states that during the Minneapolis DFL's precinct caucuses held on April 8, 2025, attendees selected delegates to attend the Minneapolis DFL's citywide convention to be held July 19-20, 2025. The complaint says that the DFL endorsement for mayor will be decided at the citywide convention. The complaint asserts the We Love Minneapolis PAC "made significant expenditures urging voters to attend the April 8 DFL Caucus and become delegates." The complaint alleges that "The expenditures by We Love Minneapolis PAC, falsely labelled as 'independent expenditures', directly benefited the Jacob Frey for Our City Candidate Committee."

Flyer distributed at February 15 event

The complaint includes photographs of a two-sided flyer that We Love Minneapolis allegedly distributed at an event on February 15, 2025, labeled exhibit 8. The flyer states that it was

¹ cfb.mn.gov/reports-and-data/viewers/campaign-finance/political-committee-fund/41379/

² minneapolis.maplight.com/public/campaign-finance-report/478

“Prepared and paid for by We Love Minneapolis, 501(c)(4), WeLoveMPLS.org.”³ The flyer includes the following text:

Did you know that less than 32% of Minneapolis voters took part in our last city election?

But well before the November election, a tiny group chooses which candidates will earn the party endorsement. Why does the endorsement matter? The candidate with the DFL endorsement won the general election 95% of the time over the last decade. **The good news is you can be part of this process.**

If you want your values represented in city government, participating in the endorsement process is an important first step. It all starts with your neighborhood Precinct Caucus on April 8 at 7:00pm.

The flyer encourages individuals to “Attend your caucus”, “Bring a friend”, and “Sign up to be a delegate”, and states that “we need political leaders who share our vision.” The flyer describes We Love Minneapolis as follows:

We are Minneapolis residents and business owners who, like many of you, have become more concerned in recent years about the direction our City Council has been heading. We believe everyone in this city deserves safety, affordability and opportunity – and effective city government.

The flyer does not include the name or photograph of any local candidate. The flyer refers to the Minneapolis City Council and to the need for “effective city government”, but does not explicitly refer to the office of mayor.

Candidate-specific flyers distributed by door-to-door canvassers

The complaint includes photographs of a two-sided flyer that the We Love Minneapolis PAC allegedly distributed via door-to-door canvassers prior to the April 8 precinct caucuses, labeled exhibit 9. The flyer includes a disclaimer stating that it is an independent expenditure paid for by the We Love Minneapolis PAC. The flyer states that “We Love Minneapolis Supports Candidates” who will accomplish various policy goals described within the flyer. The flyer states “Support Marques Jones for City Council at your local DFL Precinct Caucus”, “SUPPORT MARQUES JONES FOR CITY COUNCIL BY CAUCUSING ON APRIL 8 AT 7PM”, and “SUPPORT MARQUES JONES ON APRIL 8”. The flyer encourages individuals to “Attend your caucus”, “Bring a friend”, and “Sign up to be a delegate”, and provides a specific precinct caucus location.

³ The flyer was allegedly distributed prior to the We Love Minneapolis PAC registering with the Board on March 12, 2025.

The flyer does not include the name or photograph of any local candidate other than Mr. Jones. The flyer refers to the campaign of Mr. Jones for Minneapolis City Council and does not refer to the office of mayor.

Multicandidate mailer

The complaint includes photographs of a two-sided mailer that the We Love Minneapolis PAC allegedly distributed prior to the April 8 precinct caucuses, labeled exhibit 10. The mailer includes a disclaimer stating that it is an independent expenditure paid for by the We Love Minneapolis PAC. The mailer states that “We Love Minneapolis Supports Candidates” who will accomplish various policy goals described within the mailer. The mailer encourages individuals to:

Make a plan to caucus and change Minneapolis for the better.

1 Attend your caucus

Participating in the endorsement process is an important first step to having your values represented in city government – and it all starts with these neighborhood caucuses.

2 Bring a friend

Often, only a few hundred people per ward participate in their caucuses. That means every person counts, so invite a friend, neighbor, or family member to join you in shaping the future of our city.

3 Sign up to be a delegate

As a delegate, you’ll have a say in the final endorsement process, helping you determine the future leadership of our community. It’s simple to sign up – [just]⁴ raise your hand at your precinct caucus.

The photographs included in the complaint do not depict the entirety of one side of the mailer, but the photographs show that the mailer includes the names and photographs of at least three local candidates for the Minneapolis City Council, including Mr. Jones, Anndrea Young, and Michael Rainville. The mailer does not appear to include the name or photograph of Mayor Frey or any other candidate for mayor in Minneapolis. The mailer refers to the campaigns of candidates for the Minneapolis City Council, “city government”, “the future leadership of our community”, and changing “Minneapolis for the better”, but does not explicitly refer to the office of mayor.

Mailers that do not identify any local candidate

The complaint includes a photograph of one side of a mailer that the We Love Minneapolis PAC allegedly distributed prior to the April 8 precinct caucuses, labeled exhibit 11. The mailer includes a disclaimer stating that it is an independent expenditure paid for by the We Love

⁴ This word is illegible within the photograph included in the complaint.

Minneapolis PAC. The mailer states: “Only 32% of voters participated in the last Minneapolis election. But Minneapolis needs leaders who work for us 100% of the time. Your first chance to participate is at the Precinct Caucus on April 8th.” The mailer does not include the name or photograph of any local candidate, and while it refers to “leaders” it does not explicitly refer to any specific office, including the office of mayor.

The complaint includes photographs of what appears to be a multisided mailer that the We Love Minneapolis PAC allegedly distributed prior to the April 8 precinct caucuses, labeled exhibit 12. The mailer states “Real representation for Minneapolis starts with raising your hand at your DFL precinct caucus.” The mailer includes much of the same text as the multicandidate mailer, encouraging individuals to attend their caucus, bring a friend, and sign up to be a delegate. The mailer states “Learn more and find your recommended candidates inside” but the photographs included in the complaint do not appear to depict the entirety of the mailer. The portions of the mailer depicted in the complaint do not include the name or photograph of any local candidate, and despite referring to “candidates” do not explicitly refer to any specific office, including the office of mayor. The complaint states that the mailer includes a disclaimer stating that it is an independent expenditure paid for by the We Love Minneapolis PAC, but the disclaimer is not depicted within the photographs included in the complaint.

We Love Minneapolis caucus webpage

Most of the materials depicted in the complaint that were allegedly distributed by We Love Minneapolis or the We Love Minneapolis PAC include a quick response (QR) code that directs to a We Love Minneapolis webpage.⁵ The webpage states:

While many of us cast our ballots in November, there’s a contest going on long before we go vote that will have an enormous impact on who wins a seat on the city council.

Every election cycle, there’s an endorsing process, where often only a few hundred people per ward participate. These participants choose which candidate will receive their party’s endorsement. The good news? It’s a process where **anyone can participate.**

Did you know that over the past three election cycles, the candidate with the DFL endorsement won 95% of the time? Having the party endorsement gives those candidates a huge advantage in a city like Minneapolis, where nearly 80% of voters are Democrats. In addition to carrying their party’s seal of approval, It helps them gain endorsements and financial support from other organizations and individuals.

This year’s Minneapolis DFL endorsement process starts at 7:00pm in your neighborhood on April 8th with Precinct Caucuses. If you want your values represented in city government, showing up to Caucus is the most important thing you can do. Sign up, and we’ll teach you how to do it!

⁵ welovempls.org/caucus

The webpage includes a form that viewers may use to “Commit to Caucus”, “Host a Caucus House Party”, or “Volunteer with US”. The webpage does not include the name or photograph of any local candidate. The webpage refers to the election for seats on the Minneapolis City Council and to “city government”, but does not explicitly refer to the office of mayor.

Email regarding We Love Minneapolis allegedly forwarded to Mayor Frey

The complaint includes a copy of an email with an attached slideshow and evidence that the email was forwarded to Mayor Frey. The complaint alleges that the email was forwarded by Dana Swindler. The complaint does not explain the relationship between Mr. Swindler and We Love Minneapolis or the We Love Minneapolis PAC. The email states:

Our city stands at a crossroads. The upcoming city council election will determine whether Minneapolis returns to a business-friendly environment with practical solutions to our challenges. Several friends recently introduced me to We Love Minneapolis (WLM), led by Jim Rubin of Mint Properties. Jim and WLM developed a strategic plan (See the attached PowerPoint) to support moderate candidates in eight (8) key city council wards currently held by Democratic Socialist Aligned (DSA) individuals who have been the most divisive members on the current city council. These 5 seats are the most vulnerable of the council seats and the opportunity to beat them is during the April caucuses and May DFL convention. Given that in Minneapolis, 95% of DFL-endorsed candidates win their elections, the time for us to make an impact is NOW.

The email says “The entire City Council is up for re-election, creating a rare opportunity for change” and “We need help supporting moderate candidates in the most strategic races (City Council Wards : 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12) and we need to act NOW”.

The slideshow that was allegedly attached to the email states that the full-time staff of We Love Minneapolis includes “Joe Radinovich – best campaign strategist in MN” and “Nico Woods – best campaign organizer in MN”. The slideshow says that We Love Minneapolis will “Help preferred candidates to get the DFL caucus endorsement” and “Prevent DSA supported candidates from getting the DFL endorsement”. Neither the email nor the slideshow includes the name or photograph of Mayor Frey or any other candidate for mayor in Minneapolis, or explicitly refer to the office of mayor.

Determination

Minnesota Statutes section 10A.121, subdivision 2, provides that an independent expenditure political committee is subject to a civil penalty if it:

(1) makes a contribution to a candidate, local candidate, party unit, political committee, or political fund other than an independent expenditure political committee, an independent expenditure political fund, ballot question political committee, or ballot question political fund; or

(2) makes an approved expenditure.

Minnesota Statutes section 10A.01, subdivision 9, provides that the term “expenditure” includes “a purchase or payment of money or anything of value, or an advance of credit, made or incurred for the purpose of influencing the nomination or election of a candidate or a local candidate. . . .”

Minnesota Statutes section 10A.01, subdivision 4, provides that:

"Approved expenditure" means an expenditure made on behalf of a candidate or a local candidate by an entity other than the candidate's principal campaign committee or the local candidate, if the expenditure is made with the authorization or expressed or implied consent of, or in cooperation or in concert with, or at the request or suggestion of the candidate or local candidate, the candidate's principal campaign committee, or the candidate's or local candidate's agent. An approved expenditure is a contribution to that candidate or local candidate.

Minnesota Statutes sections 10A.175 through 10A.177 define and regulate coordinated expenditures, which are a particular type of approved expenditure. Those statutes do not directly apply to expenditures that only involve local candidates.⁶ However, the principles articulated within those statutes may be helpful in determining whether an expenditure involving a local candidate is an approved expenditure. Minnesota Statutes section 10A.175, subdivision 3, defines the term “candidate” to include the candidate’s principal campaign committee and the candidate’s agent, and Minnesota Statutes section 10A.175, subdivision 2, defines the term “agent” to mean “a person serving during an election segment as a candidate's chairperson, deputy chairperson, treasurer, deputy treasurer, or any other person whose actions are coordinated.” Minnesota Statutes section 10A.176, subdivision 3, provides that:

An expenditure is a coordinated expenditure if the expenditure is made on or after January 1 of the year the office will appear on the ballot by a spender that:

(1) is not a party unit; and

(2) is an association, political committee, political fund, independent expenditure political committee, or independent expenditure political fund, in which the candidate was a chairperson, deputy chairperson, treasurer, or deputy treasurer on or after January 1 of the year the office will appear on the ballot.

The complaint alleges and provides evidence that Mr. Minck is both Mayor Frey’s agent and the deputy treasurer of the We Love Minneapolis PAC. The complaint alleges that the We Love Minneapolis PAC made expenditures that benefited the Jacob Frey for Our City Candidate Committee. However, the complaint does not allege or include evidence that the We Love

⁶ See Minn. Stat. §§ [10A.01](#), [subd. 10](#), [10A.175](#), [subd. 3](#) (defining the term “candidate” in a manner that does not include local candidates, as defined by [Minn. Stat. § 10A.01, subd. 10d](#)).

Minneapolis PAC made expenditures that named or otherwise identified Mayor Frey or any other candidate for mayor in Minneapolis.

In order for an expenditure involving a communication referring to local candidates to be “made on behalf of . . . a local candidate” within the meaning of Minnesota Statutes section 10A.01, subdivision 4, the communication must at least refer to that local candidate or to one or more of that candidate’s opponents. While expenditures supporting certain candidates for Minneapolis City Council may benefit Mayor Frey by encouraging like-minded individuals to participate in the DFL endorsement process, that does not mean that the expenditures were made on behalf of Mayor Frey, or show that the expenditures were made in coordination with a local candidate who is not referenced on any of the material provided with the complaint. Therefore, the complaint does not state a prima facie violation of Minnesota Statutes section 10A.121.

Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes section 10A.022, subdivision 3, this prima facie determination is made by the Board chair and not by any vote of the entire Board. The complaint is dismissed without prejudice.



Faris Rashid, Chair
Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board

Date: June 24, 2025