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New Haven mayoral candidate Kerekes qualifies for election funds

Published: Monday, August 08, 2011

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NEW HAVEN — Jeffery Kerekes, a Democrat who is challenging Mayor John DeStefano Jr. for his job, announced recently that he has collected enough donations to qualify for the city’s clean elections program.

Democracy Fund candidates must collect 200 donations between \$10 and \$340 to qualify.

Kerekes, who also is collecting signatures to force a Democratic mayoral primary in September, said he planned to file the paperwork for the Democracy Fund Thursday.

DeStefano has participated in the Democracy Fund in past years, but opted not to this year.

Two other Democratic mayoral challengers, former Aldermen Anthony Dawson and Robert Lee, have signed contracts with the Democracy Fund and are seeking to collect the required 200 donations.

Candidates who participate in the Democracy Fund program sign a contract and agree to certain rules, including not accepting contributions from businesses and political action committees. Contributions cannot exceed \$340.

By contrast, state statute allows up to \$1,000 for individual contributions.

Those who qualify for the program can secure matching funds and a \$17,000 grant if certain conditions are met.

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