

Placer GOP committee's finances again under scrutiny

By Torey Van Oot, Sacramento Bee

For the second time in two years, the Placer County Republican Central Committee is facing investigators' questions about its financial practices.

The state Fair Political Practices Commission is examining a complaint that key committee members used donors' money to benefit themselves.

A critic of the committee's actions says she's been questioned by the FBI.

Lawmakers have gotten involved, pressing for more information about the committee's ties to Headquarters Partnership, a financial entity used to pay the committee's rent. They say the financial concerns have clouded the party's local operations for more than a year and created deep divisions within the GOP.

"I know many people on that committee who are good servants to the cause, but there are some there that are not really playing above board," said Republican Sen. Doug LaMalfa of Richvale. "A lot of funny stuff (is) going on with where the money's going or how many hands it's going through before a check actually gets cut."

The Placer County arm of the state Republican Party is an elected board that can raise and spend funds to mobilize voters and elect GOP candidates.

The controversy began with the committee's decision in 2007 to pay rent on Roseville office space through a private entity called Headquarters Partnership.

Its partners were Tom Hudson, then committee chairman, and George Park, then first vice chair of the committee, according to minutes of a March meeting that year.

Read the whole story