Starting in the Middle of an Election Cycle

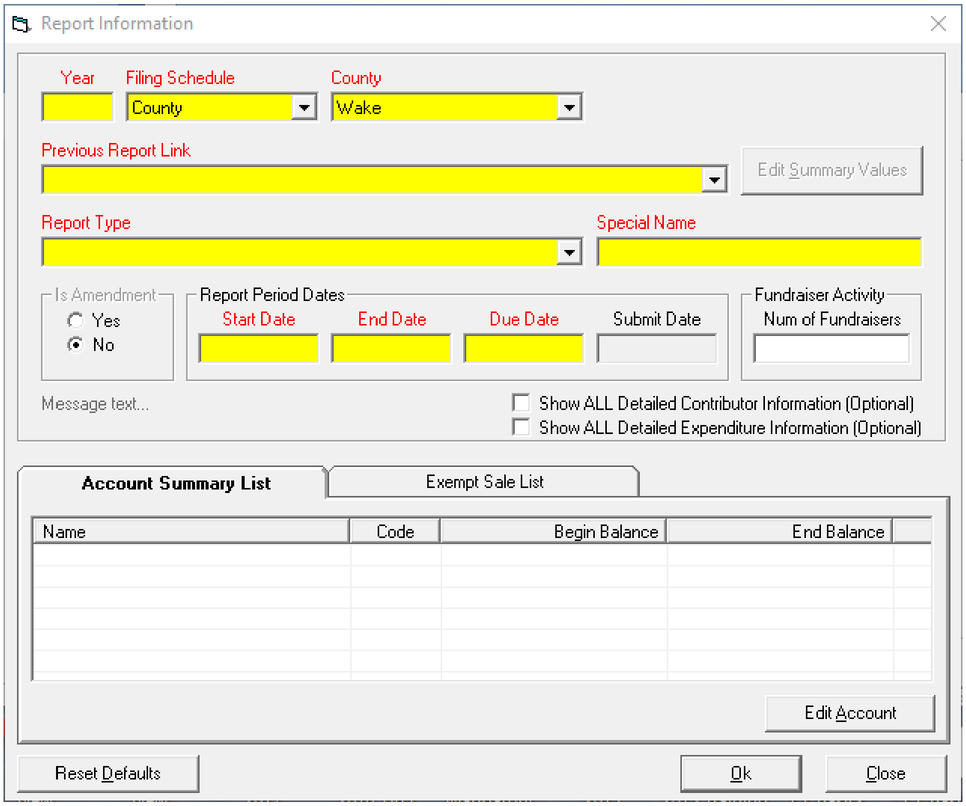
Committees are required to file Campaign Finance disclosure reports once the committee has exceeded $10,000.00 in receipts or disbursements. A committee could potentially file the first couple of reports manually, exceed the maximum limits, and then have to file all remaining reports electronically.

When a committee starts to use the software in the middle of an election cycle they do not have the benefit of having prior records and reports in the software. Reports must include election cycle totals for the full cycle, not just for the period that the committee is a mandatory electronic filer. Similarly, you must have access to any prior contributions received, as sum to date totals must accrue through an entire election (Primary or General).

Ideally, if you believe that the committee will exceed $10,000.00 in receipt or disbursements, the easiest way to show a full accounting would be to use the software from the start of the election cycle. For county candidates running in 2018 for a four-year term office the election cycle started on 01/01/2015.

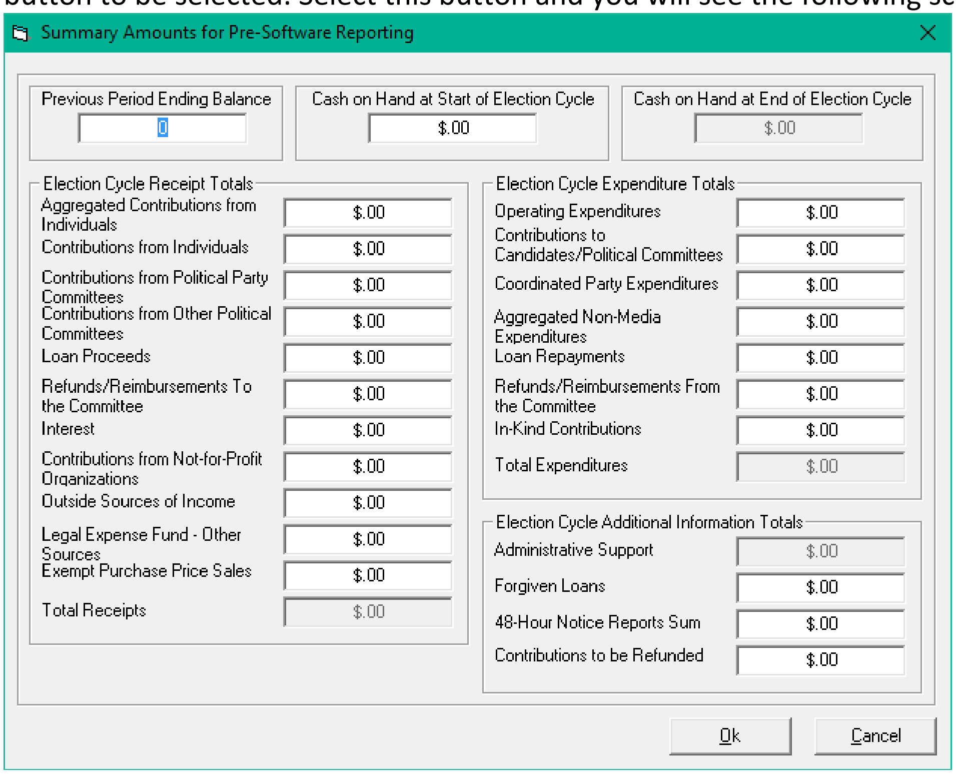
The following process will assist with starting to use software part way through the election cycle. For our example, the term of office is four years, and the last election was in 2014. The election cycle will start on 01/01/15. This committee filed all reports for 2015, 2016 and 2017 manually, and is going to start using the software with the 2018 First Quarter Report.

The first step would be to create the 2018 First Quarter Report and manually add the ending balance from the last report.
Go to Reporting – Report Information.
Select the button Create Disclosure Report. You will see the following screen:



Enter a year of 2018. The Filing Schedule and County should be populated from the information entered in Org Setup.

Under Previous Report Link select [No Previous Report]. This will allow the Edit Summary Values button to be selected. Select this button and you will see the following screen:

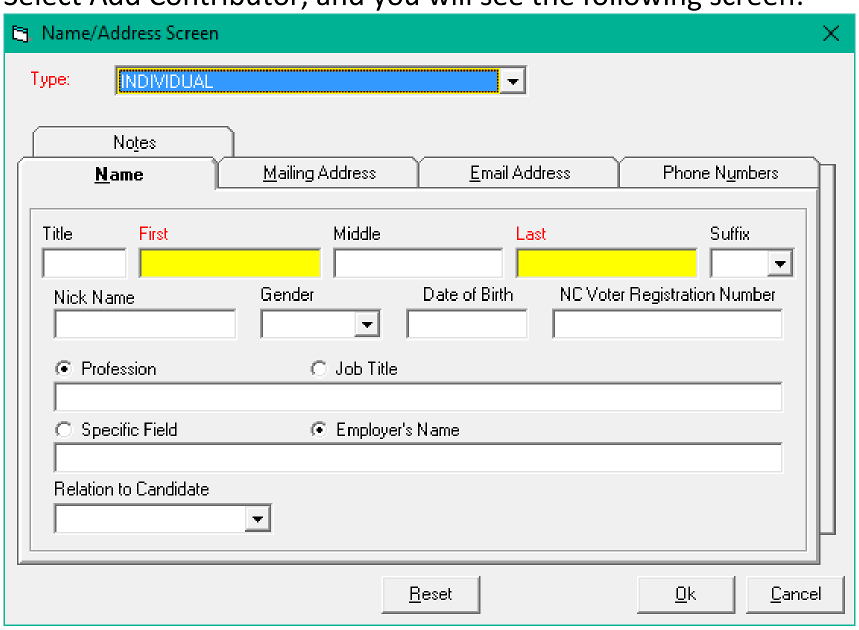


You can now add an accumulation of the totals shown on reports up to this point, as well as a balance.

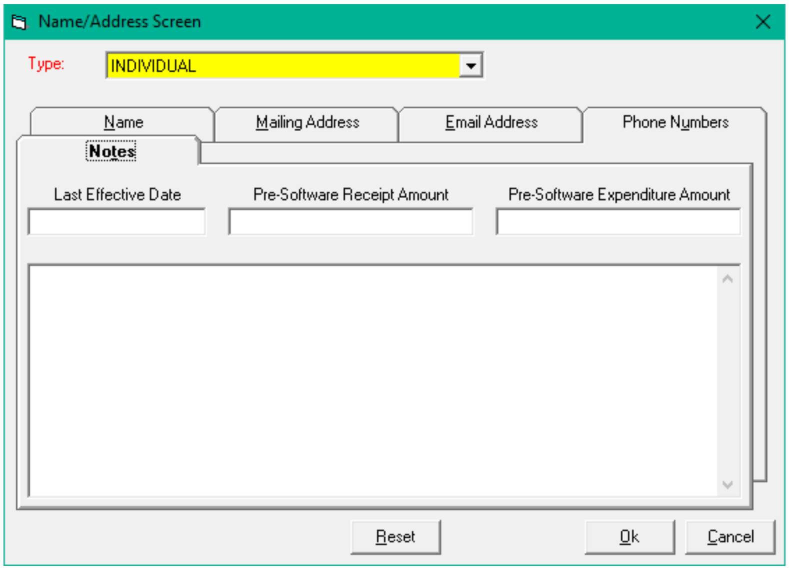
Remember, you will enter totals based on your Election Cycle. For County candidates running in 2018 for a four-year term office the election cycle started on 01/01/2015.

NOTE: You are only entering totals up to the day before the start date on the report you are creating. For example, I am completing a 2018 First Quarter Plus Report. My Election Cycle started on 01/01/15 so I am entering an accumulation of the totals from 01/01/15 through 12/31/17. When I add my 2018 transactions my election cycle to date totals will automatically be increased with the 2018 amounts. The previous period ending balance will be the end balance on the last report filed. The cash on hand at start of election cycle will be the beginning balance that was listed on the first report filed in 2015.

Once your report has been created, and previous totals and balances entered, you are ready to start entering transactions. When you enter a contribution from an individual that has already given during the current election period you will need to add the previous amount they gave. For example, Jane Smith gave $1,000.00 on 06/30/15, and gave another $500.00 on 01/01/18. Create a name entry for Jane Smith (as detailed in the section Entering Basic Transactions). Select Add Contributor, and you will see the following screen:



Enter the name, occupation information and mailing address for the individual. Now select the Notes tab, and the following screen will be shown:



Enter the last effective date, which will be the last date that a contribution was received from this individual. Enter the Pre-Software Receipt Amount for the election period. Select OK. This will then add the amount you entered to any new amount, and the sum to date total will be correct.

The same process should be used for expenses.