



Public Ethics Commission | CITY OF OAKLAND

Item 6 - Engagement Report

Ryan Micik, Chair
Francis Upton IV, Vice Chair
Alea Gage
Charlotte Hill
Vincent Steele
Karun Tilak

Nicolas Heidorn, Executive Director

TO: Public Ethics Commission
FROM: Alex Van Buskirk, Lead Analyst, Compliance and Disclosure
Jelani Killings, Lead Analyst, Education and Engagement
Suzanne Doran, Program Manager
DATE: March 27, 2024
RE: Disclosure and Engagement Monthly Report for the April 10, 2024,
Regular PEC Meeting

This memorandum provides a summary of major accomplishments in the Public Ethics Commission's (PEC or Commission) Disclosure and Engagement program activities since the last regular meeting. Commission staff disclosure activities focus on improving online tools for public access to local campaign finance and other disclosure data, enhancing compliance with disclosure rules, and conducting data analysis for PEC projects and programs as required. Engagement activities include training and resources provided to the regulated community, as well as general outreach to Oakland residents to raise awareness of the Commission's role and services and to provide opportunities for dialogue between the Commission and community members.

Compliance with Disclosure Requirements

Commission staff conducts filing officer duties as required by state and local law and aims to help candidates, lobbyists and City officials submit required disclosure reports and ensure residents can easily access campaign finance, lobbyist, and ethics-related data and information.

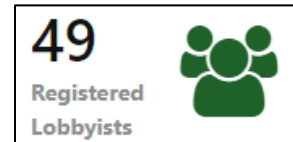
Campaign Finance Disclosure – A special election to fill the vacancy in the office of City Auditor was held on March 5, 2024. In an election year, there are four major filing deadlines for campaign statements: two semi-annual statements and two pre-election statements. The special election added additional pre-election deadlines for candidates on the March ballot. During January and February there were three campaign statement deadlines: two pre-election deadlines on January 25 and February 22 for candidates on the March special election ballot and the semi-annual statement deadline for all registered committees on January 31, 2024.

Commission staff was able to connect with select non-filer committees for the January 31 deadline and is engaged in ongoing discussions to ensure voluntary compliance with filing requirements.

Campaign statements are available to view and download at the PEC's [Public Portal for Campaign Finance Disclosure](#).

Campaign finance data, graphs, and visualizations are available via Commission-sponsored apps [Show Me the Money](#), [OpenDisclosure](#), [Oakland's Open Data portal](#), and links on the Public Ethics Commission website.

Lobbyist Registration Program – The Oakland Lobbyist Registration Act (LRA) requires any person that qualifies as a lobbyist to register annually with the Commission before conducting any lobbying activity. Registration renewals were due January 31. To date, 49 lobbyists have registered with the City of Oakland for 2024.



In November 2023, the Oakland City Council adopted amendments to the Lobbyist Registration Act including a new annual lobbyist registration fee as well as a requirement that lobbyists take an online training provided by the Commission. To date, 31 lobbyists have taken the online training provided by the Commission. To date, the Commission has received new annual lobbyist registration fees from over half of the registered lobbyists. Commission staff is monitoring online training and new fee payment activity to ensure voluntary compliance by registered lobbyists before the first quarter filing deadline.



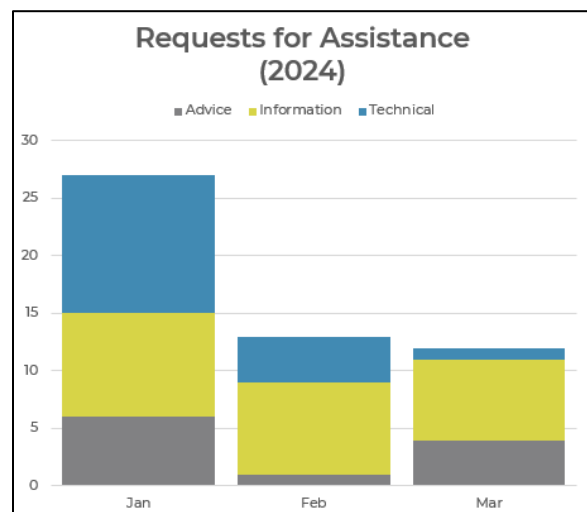
The LRA also requires lobbyists to submit quarterly reports disclosing their lobbying activities to ensure that the public knows who is trying to influence City decisions. January 31 was the deadline for quarterly lobbyist activity reports covering the period from October 1 through December 31, 2023. 68 reports were filed. Commission staff was able to connect with non-filer lobbyists and is engaged in ongoing discussions to ensure voluntary compliance with filing requirements.

An up-to-date list of registered lobbyists and lobbyist activity reports with links to view and download individual reports is available at the PEC's [Lobbyist Dashboard and Data](#) webpage.

Advice and Engagement

The Commission's Engagement program seeks to ensure Oakland public servants, candidates for office, lobbyists, and City contractors understand and comply with City campaign finance, ethics, and transparency laws.

Advice and Technical Assistance – Between January 2024 and March 2024, Commission staff responded to 52 requests for information, advice or assistance regarding campaign finance, ethics, Sunshine law, or lobbyist issues (12 requests in March 2024).



New Employee Orientation – Staff continues to make presentations at the City’s monthly New Employee Orientation (NEO) providing new employees with an introduction to the PEC and overview of the Government Ethics Act (GEA). In the month of March, Staff trained 60 new employees on GEA provisions. Employees required to file Form 700 were also assigned the PEC’s mandatory online Government Ethics Training for Form 700 Filers.

Ethics Training for Form 700 Filers – On March 19, PEC staff conducted a live Government Ethics Training for Form 700 Filers via Zoom. The training was hosted by the Department of Human Resources (HR) and served as an alternative for employees that have not completed the PEC’s online training. A total of 23 employees attended the training.

Oakland Campaign Reform Act Guide – Commission staff updated the PEC’s comprehensive guide to the Oakland Campaign Reform Act, designed to assist the regulated community in complying with local campaign finance laws. The guide provides a summary of the Oakland Campaign Reform Act provisions and was updated to reflect the recent changes from Measure W including new contribution limits and independent expenditure disclosure requirements.

Political Activity Advisory – In March, Commission staff issued a city-wide advisory regarding the rules for campaign activity by City officials and staff to ensure that they are aware of the laws that apply to public servants who are engaging in campaign- or ballot measure-related work.

Online Engagement

Social Media – Commission staff has continued producing monthly social media content highlighting the Commission’s upcoming meetings, the updated Lobbyist Registration Act Guide, and the upcoming candidate and treasurer training with the FPPC.

