

# Item 9 - Disclosure Report



Arvon J. Perteet, Chair  
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Whitney Barazoto, Executive Director

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TO: Public Ethics Commission  
FROM: Suzanne Doran, Lead Analyst  
Jelani Killings, Ethics Analyst  
Whitney Barazoto, Executive Director  
DATE: May 27, 2022  
RE: Disclosure and Engagement Monthly Report for the June 8, 2022, Meeting

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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 monthly 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

**Campaign finance disclosure** – During the months of April and May, Commission staff conducted proactive compliance reviews of contributions to 2022 candidates and audited campaign websites for required disclaimers. PEC staff noted any reported contributions in excess of contribution limits or by possible contractors and made requests to candidates for follow-up so they could review and forfeit any questionable contributions to the City expeditiously prior to the election. PEC staff also contacted contractors to alert them of the law and possible violations. Results of the completed review will be reported in future updates.

A Special Election has been scheduled for June 7, 2022, to consider a ballot measure that would extend the Library Services Retention and Enhancement Act. The first pre-election deadline for committees with activity related to the June 7 Special Elections was April 28 and the second pre-election deadline is May 26. Campaign statements are available to view and download at the PEC's [Public Portal for Campaign Finance Disclosure](#).

**Lobbyist disclosure** – The Oakland Lobbyist Registration Act (LRA) requires lobbyists to submit quarterly reports disclosing their lobbying activities to ensure that the public knows who is trying to influence City decisions.

## Item 9 - Disclosure Report

April 30 was the deadline for quarterly lobbyist activity reports covering the period from January 1 through March 31, 2022. Lobbyists reported 357 contacts with Oakland public officials during the first quarter. Client payments to lobbyists totaled \$221,000.

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.

CLIENT NAME	BUSINESS INTEREST	PAYMENTS TO LOBBYISTS
The Michaels Organization	Real Estate, Rental and Leasing	\$45,350
PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP	Other Services (except Public Administration)	\$22,500
Verizon	Information/technology	\$22,500
Vistra Corporate Services Company	Utilities	\$20,000
Becker Boards	Real Estate, Rental and Leasing	\$15,000
Schnitzer Steel	Manufacturing/industrial	\$15,000
Gaehwiler Construction	Construction	\$15,000
Equity and General Trade Association	Non-profit/advocacy organization	\$10,500
Marshall Retail Group	Retail Trade	\$10,500
IKE Smart City	Information/technology	\$9,000
Amazon	Merchandise/retail	\$9,000
Lehigh-Hanson	Construction	\$9,000

Top ten lobbyist clients by total payments. Only voluntarily disclosed payments are included. SOURCE: <https://data.oaklandca.gov/City-Government/Lobbyist-Clients/ss9a-d595>.

### Illuminating Disclosure Data

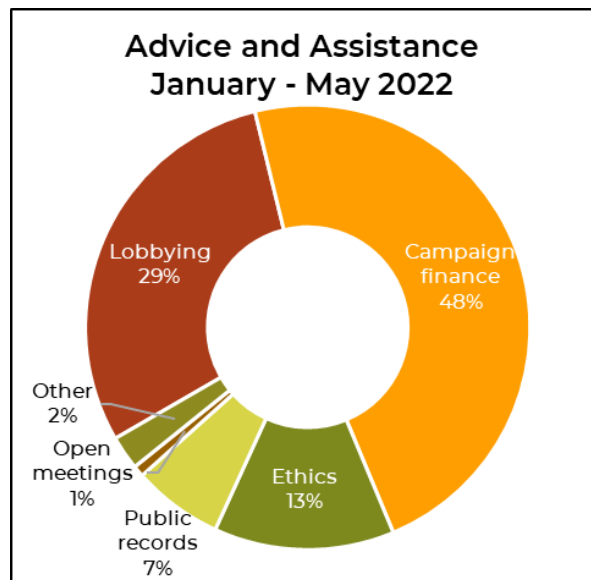
In April and May, staff began updates, maintenance tasks, and quality assurance checks to the Commission's online tools for local campaign finance information ahead of the 2022 election season. Existing PEC projects focusing on local campaign finance data include the Open Disclosure website, the Show Me the Money contribution mapping app, as well as data analysis of trends provided in reports to the Commission.

### Advice and Engagement

**Advice and Technical Assistance** – In April and May, Commission staff responded to 32 requests for information, advice or assistance regarding campaign finance, ethics, Sunshine law, or lobbyist issues, for a total of 136 requests in 2022.

**Candidates and Campaigns** – In April, staff issued an advisory regarding rules specific to ballot measure committees to inform treasurers and committees about state and local disclosure requirements. The monthly advisory sent in May focused on awareness of contribution limits and restrictions.

**Candidate and Treasurer Training** – In April, staff updated the PEC's candidate and treasurer training page with links to an on-demand recording of the live training and supplemental materials. In addition, campaign treasurers who complete the training and pass a post-training quiz will be posted on the Commission website as a resource for candidates.



## Item 9 - Disclosure Report

**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 April and May, staff trained a total of 82 new employees on GEA provisions.

**Ethics Onboarding and Exit Process** – In April, a joint notice from the PEC and Human Resources Department was sent to department SPOCs and directors advising them to notice their Form 700 filers of the upcoming filing deadline and ethics training requirement. Over 300 staff registered for training within a week of the notice and approximately 350 completed the training so far this year.

Ethics requirements during employee onboarding and offboarding have been incorporated into the NeoGov platform to ensure all employees are properly notified and department SPOC’s are aware of employee compliance. Currently, 900 City employees are designated as Form 700 filers. Each department has been directed to review staff members’ status under the Conflict of Interest Code to ensure all staff are designated correctly in the City’s personnel database. The database designation enables more effective noticing and tracking of Form 700 and ethics training compliance going forward.

In May, PEC staff pulled the survey responses from its online Government Ethics Training for Form 700 Filers. Overall, 619 employees and City officials completed the training survey. Eighty-eight percent of respondents indicated that their knowledge increased because of the training. After taking the training, 93 percent of respondents indicated that they understood their obligations under the Government Ethics Act and know who to contact if they need further assistance. Staff will continue to analyze feedback from training participants to continue improvement of education resources.

Commission staff continues to work with senior HR staff to standardize employee exit processes with the City’s employment platform so that employees leaving the City of Oakland are consistently advised of post-employment restrictions and Form 700 requirements.

### **Online Engagement**

**Website** – In preparation for the 2022 election season, Commission staff reviewed and updated over 15 pages of online content including educational resources for campaign finance, disclosure, and candidates and treasurers. In addition, service pages were updated using new features to make multi-step processes, such as filing campaign forms or submitting a complaint, easier for website users to navigate.

**Social Media** – Each month Commission staff post social media content to highlight specific PEC policy areas, activities, or client-groups. In April and May, our posts highlighted upcoming campaign finance and lobbyist disclosure deadlines, disclosure data resources, and training resources for candidates and treasurers.