

CITY OF OAKLAND
PUBLIC ETHICS COMMISSION
One Frank Ogawa Plaza (City Hall)
Special Commission Meeting
Friday, August 25, 2023
Hearing Room 4
3:00 p.m.



Commissioners: Ryan Micik (Chair), Charlotte Hill (Vice-Chair), Alea Gage, Arvon J. Perteet, Vincent Steele, and Francis Upton IV.

Commission Staff: Nicolas Heidorn, Executive Director; Suzanne Doran, Lead Analyst; Chris Gonzales, Commission Assistant; Jelani Killings, Ethics Analyst; Ana Lara-Franco, Commission Analyst; Simon Russell, Enforcement Chief.

City Attorney Staff: Trish Shafie, Deputy City Attorney

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

1. Roll Call and Determination of Quorum.

The meeting was called to order at 3:01 p.m.

Members present: Micik, Hill, Gage, Perteet, Steele and Upton IV.

Perteet arrived at 3:11 pm and Gage at 3:21 p.m.

Staff present: Nicolas Heidorn, Suzanne Doran, Jelani Killings, Ana Lara-Franco, Chris Gonzales, Simon Russell.

City Attorney Staff: Trish Shafie, Deputy City Attorney

2. Staff and Commission Announcements.

Executive Director Nicolas Heidorn announced the September Recess for the PEC regular meeting.

3. Open Forum.

Public Speakers: Gene Hazzard

A full recording of public comments is available in the meeting video. Video recordings are posted on the meeting webpage, which may be found at www.oaklandca.gov/pec.

ACTION ITEMS

4. Public Ethics Commission Retreat.

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The Commission convened for its annual retreat to conduct team development, assess Commission accomplishments, and current context, participate in strategic visioning, and identify key opportunities and priorities for 2023-2025. There was discussion and decisions were made as group regarding overall PEC direction, goals activities and priorities.

Welcome, Goals, Icebreaker

Executive Director Heidorn welcomed commissioners, staff, and guests to the retreat. Director Heidorn explained that the goal of the retreat was to identify agency priorities over the next 18 months to 2 years that go beyond the PEC's routine core services. He explained that he did not anticipate any votes being taken at the retreat on program priorities, but that staff would memorialize non-enforcement program priorities in a roadmap which would be brought before the Commission in October.

Chair Micik led commissioners, staff, and guests in an icebreaker exercise where participants shared something interesting about themselves and a proposed new slogan for the PEC.

Non-Enforcement Program Area Overview.

A. Lead/Collaborate – Executive/Policy Projects & Priorities

Director Heidorn provided an overview of current and potential executive and policy projects over the next 2 years and led participants in activities and discussion to share their thoughts and preferences for program priorities.

B. Disclose/Illuminate – Disclosure Projects & Priorities

Lead Analyst Suzanne Doran provided an overview of current and potential disclosure program projects, challenges and opportunities over the next 2 years and led participants in activities and discussion to share their thoughts and preferences for program priorities.

C. Educate/Engage – Public Outreach Priorities

Ethics Analyst Jelani Killings and Vice Chair Charlotte Hill led a discussion to identify public outreach goals and conducted an exercise to develop an outreach plan to communicate the Commission's need for additional enforcement resources. Vice Chair Hill recommended that commissioners commit to doing one outreach activity per quarter.

5:54 p.m. – Micik called for a recess.

6:21 p.m. – The meeting returned from recess.

Ad Hoc Subcommittees Review.

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Chair Micik provided an overview of the reason for creating ad hoc subcommittees and requested that, as part of the formation of an ad hoc committee, the following questions should be addressed: 1) What is the specific goal of the committee? 2) What is the expected deliverable and in what time period? and 3) What level of staff versus commissioner work is expected?

Vice Chair Hill recommended that the Measure W Equity and Outreach Subcommittee be disbanded and that an Outreach Subcommittee, focused on implementing the outreach priorities discussed at this meeting, be created in its place. Chair Micik stated that the Measure W Equity and Outreach Subcommittee would sunset with this meeting. He also formed a new ad hoc subcommittee, the Public Outreach 2023 Commissioner Recruitment, Enforcement Resources, Ethics Complaints and Campaign Finance subcommittee. He designated Vice Chair Hill as the chair of that subcommittee with Commissioners Gage and Steele as additional subcommittee members.

Commissioner Upton recommended that the Transparency and Public Records Subcommittee continue and that its focus be on developing a long-term vision statement for government transparency in Oakland and short-term next steps to make progress towards that goal.

Detect/Deter/Prosecute - Enforcement Program Overview, Content of Monthly Enforcement Reports, Enforcement Case Prioritization.

Enforcement Chief Simon Russell explained how information is provided on the monthly Enforcement Reports, what information is contained in enforcement reports in other jurisdictions, and led a discussion with commissioners as to what type of information they may wish to see in monthly reports.

Enforcement Chief Russell explained the factors that the Enforcement Program uses to prioritize its caseload and led an exercise where commissioners selected which of several hypothetical enforcement matters to prioritize for investigation in an environment of limited enforcement resources.

Wrap-Up.

Chair Micik thanked retreat participants.

Public Speakers: Gail Wallace, Gene Hazzard, Lynda Johnston, and David Shor.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

5. Future Meeting Business.

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Chair Micik announced the September Recess for the PEC regular meeting. The next regular PEC meeting will be held on October 11, 2023.

The meeting adjourned at 7:51 p.m.