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Commissioners: Francis Upton IV (Chair), Tanya Bayeva (Vice-Chair), Alea Gage, Ryan Micik, Vincent Steele, and Karun Tilak.

Commission Staff in attendance: Suzanne Doran, Executive Director; Tovah Ackerman, Enforcement Chief; and Jelani Killings, Ethics Analyst.

Legal Counsel: Oliver Luby, Deputy City Attorney

PUBLIC ETHICS COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

PRELIMINARY ITEMS

1. Roll Call and Determination of Quorum.

The meeting was called to order at 6:30p.m.

Members present: Chair Upton, Vice Chair Bayeva, Micik, Steele, and Tilak.

Members absent: Gage.

Staff present: Suzanne Doran, Executive Director; Tovah Ackerman, Enforcement Chief; Jelani Killings, Ethics Analyst.

Legal Counsel: Oliver Luby.

2. Staff and Commission Announcements.

Chair Upton announced Suzanne Doran had been selected as the Executive Director of the PEC starting September 13, 2025.

The November 26, 2025, Regular PEC Meeting will be cancelled, and a special meeting will be scheduled on November 19, 2025, at 6:30pm. In addition, a Special Meeting is being set for December 10, 2025, to allow for selection and appointment of two Commissioners.

Chair Upton congratulated Commissioner Gage on the birth of her new baby.

Commissioner Upton also commented on the current situation with the federal government.

Public Comment: None.



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3. Open Forum.

Public Comment: Gene Hazzard; Assata Olugbala.

ACTION ITEM

4. Approval of Commission Meeting Draft Minutes.

a. May 21, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes

Micik moved, and Bayeva seconded, to adopt the May 21, 2025, regular meeting minutes.

Ayes: Bayeva, Micik, Steele, Tilak.

Noes: None.

Abstain: Upton.

Absent: Gage.

Vote: 4-0.

Motion passed.

Public Comment: Gene Hazzard; Assata Olugbala.

b. June 25, 2025, Special Meeting Minutes

Tilak moved, and Upton seconded, to adopt the June 25, 2025, special meeting minutes.

Ayes: Upton, Bayeva, Micik, Steele, Tilak.

Noes: None.

Abstain: None.

Absent: Gage.

Vote: 5-0.



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Motion passed.

Public Comment: None.

5. Act Postponement of Democracy Dollars Program for 2026 Election Cycle.

Executive Director Doran presented, and the Commission discussed, a staff recommendation to postpone the distribution and use of the Democracy Dollars vouchers for the November 2026 election.

Micik moved, and Steele seconded, to adopt the staff recommendation regarding the postponement of distribution and use of the Democracy Dollars vouchers for the November 2026 election.

Ayes: Upton, Bayeva, Micik, Steele, Tilak.

Noes: None.

Abstain: None.

Absent: Gage.

Vote: 5-0.

Motion passed.

Public Comment: Gene Hazzard; Assata Olugbala.

6. In the Matter of Mike Hutchinson, Mike Hutchinson for School Board 2016 (PEC # 17-09(a))

On April 10, 2017, PEC staff opened a proactive complaint alleging that Mike Hutchinson failed to file campaign statements for the 2016 election cycle in violation of the Oakland Campaign Reform Act. Enforcement Chief Tovah Ackerman presented, and the Commission discussed, a finding of probable cause to believe that the violations listed were committed by Mike Hutchinson and Mike Hutchinson for School Board 2016 and to refer this matter to an administrative hearing.

Bayeva moved, and Steele seconded, to adopt the staff recommendations.



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Ayes: Upton, Bayeva, Micik, Steele, Tilak.

Noes: None.

Absent: Gage.

Vote: 5-0.

Motion passed.

Public Comment: Gene Hazzard; Assata Olugbala.

7. In 2025 Case Closure Plan.

- In the Matter of Joel Velasquez for Oakland School Board 2022 et. al (PEC # 24-09.04).
- In the Matter of Wing Loo and Hugo Barron (PEC # 18-18).

PEC staff are working to close cases according to a seven-point rubric to address a severe complaint backlog. Enforcement Chief Tovah Ackerman presented, and the Commission discussed, staff recommendations to close cases PEC #24-09.04 and PEC #18-18 in line with the plan criteria.

Tilak moved, and Upton seconded, to adopt the staff recommendations.

Ayes: Upton, Bayeva, Micik, Steele, Tilak.

Noes: None.

Absent: Gage.

Vote: 5-0.

Motion passed.

Public Comment: Gene Hazzard.

INFORMATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS



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8. Commissioner Recruitment

Ethics Analyst Jelani Killings presented, and the Commission discussed, recruitment to fill two Commission-appointed vacancies that will occur in January 2026.

Public Comment: Gene Hazzard; Assata Olugbala, Elizabeth LeJoy.

9. Enforcement Program Report

Enforcement Chief Tovah Ackerman reported on, and Commissioners discussed, a summary of the Commission's enforcement process, caseload, enforcement-related litigation, and case closures or dismissals.

Public Comment: Gene Hazzard, Layla Williams.

Commissioner Steele requested a recess due to disruption by meeting attendees. The Chair announced there would be a recess from 8:41pm to 8:51pm. The meeting reconvened at 8:51pm.

10. Executive Director Report

Executive Director Suzanne Doran provided updates, and the Commission discussed, overall priorities and PEC activities, such as budget, staffing, and PEC legislative and policy initiatives since the last Commission meeting.

Public Comment: None.

11. Reports on Subcommittees and Commissioner Assignments.

a. Revenue Options Ad Hoc Subcommittee

Commissioner Upton noted the subcommittee would be terminating in the coming months based on the one-year time limit for ad hoc subcommittees. Next steps for discussion of revenue options and details of closing the subcommittee were discussed.



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b. Democracy Dollars Engagement Ad Hoc Subcommittee

Commissioner Tilak noted the Subcommittee hasn't met since the last meeting. Tilak noted the subcommittee would be meeting again before the end of the year. Staff is working with Local Policy Lab to get input from various stakeholders, which will be shared with the subcommittee.

c. Executive Director Recruitment Ad Hoc Subcommittee

The Subcommittee selected Interim Director Suzanne Doran to serve as Executive Director. Having completed its objectives, the subcommittee will be closed.

Chair Upton created the Commissioner Recruitment Ad Hoc Subcommittee to review and interview Commissioner applicants to be submitted to the full Commission. Commissioners Upton, Steele, and Bayeva agreed to be part of the Subcommittee.

Public Comment: Gene Hazzard; Assata Olugbala.

INFORMATION ITEM

12. Future Meeting Business.

No items proposed.

Public Comment: None.

The meeting adjourned at 9:13 p.m.