CITY OF OAKLAND
PUBLIC ETHICS COMMISSION
Regular Commission Meeting
One Frank Ogawa Plaza (City Hall)
Hearing Room 2
Wednesday, November 18, 2026
6:30 p.m.

This meeting will be streamed live online at KTOP | City of Oakland, CA and via Zoom.
See the instructions at the end of the agenda for how to participate in-person or remotely.

Commissioners:
Francis Upton IV (Chair) | Karun Tilak (Vice-Chair) | Luke Apfeld | Tanya Bayeva | L. Lawrence Brandon | Angi Fisher | Ryan Micik

Commission Staff to attend:
Suzanne Doran, Executive Director | Tovah Ackerman, Enforcement Chief | Carina Lieu, Program Manager | Jelani Killings, Senior Ethics Analyst | Bhawna Chowdhary, Ethics Analyst

Legal Counsel:
Oliver Luby, Deputy City Attorney

PUBLIC ETHICS COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

PRELIMINARY ITEMS

1. **Roll Call and Determination of Quorum.**

2. **Staff and Commission Announcements.**

3. **Open Forum.**
   - Open forum is a time for a member of the public to comment on any matter within the jurisdiction of the Public Ethics Commission (PEC) that is not otherwise included in tonight's agenda. Read the Commission's ***Core Values for Inclusive Engagement (Adopted May 6, 2019)*** on our website.
   - Under the Sunshine Ordinance, the Commission cannot discuss the substance of any public comment made that does not pertain to an item listed on the agenda.
   - The Commission urges members of the public not to make complaints or ask the Commission to investigate alleged legal violations at public meetings since public disclosure of such complaints or requests may undermine any subsequent investigation undertaken. Contact staff at ethicscommission@oaklandca.gov for assistance in filing a complaint.

ACTION ITEMS

4. **Approval of Commission Meeting Minutes.**
   a. **Commission Meeting Draft Minutes for July 15, 2026, Regular Meeting.** (Attachment: July 15, 2026, Regular Meeting Minutes)
   b. **Commission Meeting Draft Minutes for August 14, 2026, Special Meeting.** (Attachment: August 14, 2026, Special Meeting Minutes)
   c. **Commission Meeting Draft Minutes for September 16, 2026, Regular Meeting.** (Attachment: September 16, 2026, Regular Meeting Minutes)
   d. **Commission Meeting Draft Minutes for October 28, 2026, Special Meeting.** (Attachment: October 28, 2026, Special Meeting Minutes)

5. **Public Ethics Commission Regular Meeting Schedule 2027.** The Commission will review the proposed schedule of regular Commission meetings in 2027. (Attachment: 2027 PEC Meeting Schedule)

6. **Proposed Settlement Agreement: In the Matter of OAKPAC, et al. (PEC Case No. 22-09.02)**. On March 21, 2022, the PEC opened an investigation into allegations that OAKPAC, a general purpose committee formed by the Oakland Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce, was used as a pass-through to route contributions to Oaklanders for Responsible Leadership, Opposing Desley Brooks for Oakland City Council 2018 ("ORL"), a committee primarily formed to oppose Desley Brooks in the November 2018 Oakland City Council District 6 election. The investigation found that donors wishing to keep their names out of the public record until after the election were given the option of contributing to OAKPAC, which then passed corresponding amounts to ORL under its own name, so that the true donors never appeared on ORL's pre-election campaign finance reports or on the face of its ads. Neither OAKPAC nor ORL reported these transactions as intermediary contributions as required by law. Sixteen intermediary contributions, totaling $89,800, were reported as direct contributions from OAKPAC. Respondents have agreed to settle this matter, with the individual Respondents settling on a "no contest" basis with respect to liability. **Accordingly, Enforcement Staff recommends that the Commission approve the stipulation and impose a financial penalty in the amount of $42,000**. (Attachment: Stipulation and Exhibits)

7. **Proposed Closures with Warning Letters: In the Matters of Erik Logan (PEC Case No. 26-19), Mark Tortorich (PEC Case No. 26-20), and Ken Jones (PEC Case No. 26-21).** Between May 2025 and August 2026, PEC opened three separate proactive investigations into Respondents' failure to file an annual Form 700 (Statement of Economic Interests) covering 2024 by the legally mandated deadline of April 1, 2025. Each respondent has since met their 2024 filing obligations. **Accordingly, Enforcement staff recommends that the Commission close PEC Case Nos. 26-19, 26-20, and 26-21 with warning letters.** (Attachment: Staff Memo)

INFORMATION ITEMS

8. **Executive Director Report.** This report provides updates regarding departmental programs and operations, such as budget, staffing, and PEC legislative and policy initiatives since the last Commission meeting. Specific programs updates, such as public records mediations, disclosure, and engagement, are included as attachments. (Attachment: Executive Director Report dated November 4; Engagement & Compliance Program Report dated November 4, 2026; Mediation Program Report dated November 4, 2026).

9. **Enforcement Program Report.** This report provides updates regarding Enforcement Division programs and operations such as caseload, enforcement-related litigation, and complaint dismissals since the last Commission meeting. (Attachment: Enforcement Report dated November 4, 2026).

10. **Reports on Subcommittees and Other Commissioner Assignments.** The Commission Chair may appoint individual commissioners to perform specific tasks or functions by serving on standing or ad hoc committees (Public Ethics Commission Operations Policies, Article V). Current Standing and Ad-hoc Subcommittee assignments are posted on the Commission website. Commissioners may discuss subcommittee assignments, create a new subcommittee, or report on work done in subcommittees since the Commission's last regular meeting. Commissioners may also provide updates on assignments, efforts, and initiatives they undertake to support the Commission's work.
    a. **Transparency Ad Hoc Subcommittee** (ad hoc, created March 18, 2026) - Upton IV (Chair), Apfeld, Fisher (Attachment: September 10, 2026 Minutes)

b. **Democracy Dollars Pilot Ad Hoc Subcommittee** (ad hoc, created May 7, 2026) - Micik (Chair), Bayeva, Brandon
c. **Recruitment Ad Hoc Subcommittee Appointments**

CLOSED SESSION: This is a personnel-related matter authorized to occur in closed session pursuant to Government Code Section 54957(b).

11. **PUBLIC EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION**
Title: Executive Director
The Commission will meet in closed session to discuss the Executive Director's performance.

ACTION ITEM

12. **Executive Director Compensation and Management Leave.** The Commission will consider and may approve increasing the Executive Director's compensation and will consider and may approve awarding the Executive Director management leave.

INFORMATION ITEM

13. **Future Meeting Business.** Commissioners and staff may propose topics for action or discussion at future Commission meetings.

The meeting will adjourn upon the completion of the Commission's business.

Should you have questions or concerns regarding this agenda, or wish to review any agenda- related materials, please contact the Public Ethics Commission at ethicscommission@oaklandca.gov or visit our webpage at www.oaklandca.gov/pec.

Suzanne Doran

11/06/2026

Approved for Distribution Date

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

In addition to attending in-person, the following options for public viewing and participation are available:

Livestream Online

Go to the City of Oakland's KTOP livestream page here: https://www.oaklandca.gov/services/ktop-tv10-program-schedule click on "View"

Video Conferencing Access

To access this meeting using Zoom, use the Zoom Meeting link: **https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89169308829** . You will then be prompted to enter the following information:

- Name: This field is required to be entered; however, if you wish to remain anonymous, you may type "Public" in the name field.
- Email Address: This field is required to be entered; however, if you wish to remain anonymous, you may type "Public@public.com" in the email field.

Follow the on-screen prompts to join the meeting. You may be asked to download the Zoom application.

Audio Conferencing Access

To access this meeting by phone, do the following:

- Telephone: Dial (for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location): US: +1 669 900 6833 or +1 669 444 9171 or +1 719 359 4580 or +1 253 205 0468 or +1 253 215 8782 or +1 346 248 7799 or +1 360 209 5623 or +1 386 347 5053 or +1 507 473 4847 or +1 564 217 2000 or +1 646 931 3860 or +1 689 278 1000 or +1 929 205 6099 or +1 301 715 8592 or +1 305 224 1968 or +1 309 205 3325 or +1 312 626 6799 Webinar ID: 891 6930 8829
- International numbers available: https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kc69Y2Mnzf

Public Comment

A member of the public may speak on any item listed on the agenda either in-person or remotely. Speakers are generally limited to three minutes per item, although the Chair may adjust the time based on the number of speakers.

Members of the public may also submit written comments in advance of the meeting to **EthicsPublicComment@oaklandca.gov**. Please indicate the agenda item # you are commenting on in the subject line of the email. All written public comments received at least 24 hours prior to the meeting will be posted on the meeting webpage prior to the meeting as part of the public record and provided at the meeting with agenda materials.

The purpose of Public Comment is for Commissioners to hear from members of the public. After the close of each Public Comment period, the Commission may address questions or concerns that were raised during the public comment period.

Remote Public Comment

Ensure you are in a quiet location. Before you speak, mute the sound of any equipment around you, including television, radio, or computer. It is especially important that you reduce the volume of your computer speaker if you are watching via the Zoom link, to prevent feedback and echo when you speak.

Zoom

- If you connect to the meeting via Zoom, use the **raise hand button** to indicate that you want to speak on an item and to be added to the public comment queue.
- It is your turn to speak when Zoom displays, “The host has unmuted you.”
- When you hear PEC staff say, “Welcome Caller,” you are encouraged to state your name clearly. As soon as you begin speaking you will have three minutes to provide your public comment (six minutes if you are on the line with an interpreter).
- Once your three minutes have expired, PEC staff will mute you. Zoom will display, “You’re muted.”
- Attendees who want to speak during other public comment periods may stay on the line

and listen for the next public comment opportunity and should press the raise hand button to enter the public comment queue again.

Telephone Audio Conferencing

- If you connect to the meeting via telephone, dial *9 to raise your hand to indicate that you want to speak on an item and to be added to the public comment queue.
- When the system message says, "You're unmuted," this is your turn to speak.
- When you hear the PEC staff say, "Welcome Caller," you are encouraged to state your name clearly. As soon as you begin speaking you will have three minutes to provide your public comment (six minutes if you are on the line with an interpreter).
- Once your three minutes have expired, PEC staff will mute you. You will hear, "You're muted."
- Attendees who want to speak during other public comment periods may stay on the line and listen for the next public comment opportunity and should dial *9 to raise their hands to enter the public comment queue again.

Language Access

Do you need an ASL, Cantonese, Mandarin or Spanish interpreter or other assistance to participate? Please email ethicscommission@oaklandca.gov or call (510) 238-3593 Or 711 (for Relay Service) five business days in advance.

¿Necesita un intérprete en español, cantonés o mandarín, u otra ayuda para participar? Por favor envíe un correo electrónico a ethicscommission@oaklandca.gov o llame al (510) 238-3593 al 711 para servicio de retransmisión (Relay service) por lo menos cinco días antes de la reunión. Gracias.

你需要手語, 西班牙語, 粵語或國語翻譯服務嗎？請在會議五天前電 郵 ethicscommission@oaklandca.gov or 或致電 (510) 238-3593 或711 (電話傳達服務) 。

Quý vị cần một thông dịch viên Ngôn ngữ KýhiệuMỹ (American Sign Language, ASL), tiếng Quảng Đông, tiếng Quan Thoại hay tiếng Tây Ban Nha hoặc bất kỳ sự hỗ trợ nào khác để

thamgia hay không? Xin vui lòng gửi
email đến địa chỉ ethicscommission@oaklandca.gov or hoặc gọi đến số (510) 238-3593 hoặc 711 (với Dịch vụ Tiếp âm) trước đó năm ngày.

 This meeting location is wheelchair accessible.

CITY OF OAKLAND
PUBLIC ETHICS COMMISSION
Regular Commission Meeting
One Frank Ogawa Plaza (City Hall)
Hearing Room 2
Wednesday, July 15, 2026
6:30 p.m.

DRAFT

Commissioners:
Francis Upton IV (Chair) | Karun Tilak (Vice-Chair) | Luke Apfeld | Tanya Bayeva | L. Lawrence Brandon | Angi Fisher | Ryan Micik

Commission Staff in Attendance:
Suzanne Doran, Executive Director | Tovah Ackerman, Enforcement Chief | 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 6:35 p.m.

Members present: Chair Francis Upton IV, Vice-Chair Karun Tilak, Luke Apfeld, and Angi Fisher.

Members excused: Tanya Bayeva, L. Lawrence Brandon, and Ryan Micik.

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

Legal Counsel: Oliver Luby, Deputy City Attorney.

2. Staff and Commission Announcements.

Chair Upton announced that members of the public can now participate in meetings remotely via Zoom.

Executive Director Doran introduced Dillon Bezehertny, who joins the PEC July 18th as a new Ethics Investigator as well as summer Management Intern Katherine Stein.

3. Open Forum.

Chair Upton provided an overview of the rules for public comment during PEC meetings and how to participate via Zoom or phone.

Public Comment: Gene Hazzard.

ACTION ITEMS

4. Approval of Commission Meeting Draft Minutes for May 20, 2026, Regular Meeting.

CITY OF OAKLAND
PUBLIC ETHICS COMMISSION
Regular Commission Meeting
One Frank Ogawa Plaza (City Hall)
Hearing Room 2
Wednesday, July 15, 2026
6:30 p.m.

DRAFT

Tilak moved, and Apfeld seconded to adopt the May 20, 2026, regular meeting minutes.

Public Comment: Gene Hazzard.

Ayes: Tilak, Apfeld, Fisher, Upton.

Noes: None.

Abstentions: None

Vote: 4-0.

Motion passed.

Chair Upton requested the order of the agenda be modified by moving Item 6 – Guest Presentation – Ethical Climate Survey after Item 4 as a courtesy to the guest speaker.

6. GUEST PRESENTATION - Ethical Climate Survey

City Auditor Michael Houston presented the results of the Ethical Climate Survey. The Office of the City Auditor surveyed City employees in late 2025 and early 2026. Developed by the Institute for Local Government, the survey assesses the agency's ethical climate and decision-making capacity at both organizational and individual levels.

Public Comment: Gene Hazzard.

5. Case Closure Plan.

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 the staff's recommendation to close the following cases:

- In the Matter of David Silver (PEC # 19-16). Staff recommends that the Commission close PEC Case No. 19-16 with no further action.
- In the Matter of Tyfahra Milele and the Oakland Police Commission (PEC # 23-01). Staff recommends that the Commission close PEC Case No. 23-01 with no further action.
- In the Matter of Ronnie Turner (PEC # 24-13). Staff recommends that the Commission close PEC Case No. 24-13 with no further action.

Apfeld moved, and Upton seconded, to adopt the staff's recommendation.

Public Comment: Gene Hazzard.

Ayes: Tilak, Apfeld, Fisher, Upton.

CITY OF OAKLAND
PUBLIC ETHICS COMMISSION
Regular Commission Meeting
One Frank Ogawa Plaza (City Hall)
Hearing Room 2
Wednesday, July 15, 2026
6:30 p.m.

DRAFT

Noes: None.

Abstentions: None.

Vote: 4-0.

Motion passed.

INFORMATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

7. Limited Public Financing Program Overview and 2026 Guide.

Senior Ethics Analyst Jelani Killings provided an overview of upcoming activities to implement the Limited Public Financing Program for the November election and presented the updated Limited Public Financing Act Guide. Mr. Killings shared that the Commission must hold a special meeting in August to determine whether the allotted LPF funds will be adequate to provide the maximum amount of funds to potentially eligible candidates, and to decide on a process for disbursement of available funds on a pro rata or another equitable basis.

Public Comment: Gene Hazzard.

8. Enforcement Report.

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

Public Comment: Gene Hazzard.

9. Executive Director Report.

Executive Director Suzanne Doran reported on overall priorities and PEC activities, such as budget, staffing, and PEC legislative and policy initiatives, since the last Commission meeting, as well as specific program updates included as attachments.

Public Comment: Gene Hazzard.

10. Reports on Subcommittees and Commissioner Assignments.

Chair Upton provided an update on the Transparency Ad-Hoc Subcommittee.

Public Comment: Gene Hazzard.

11. Future Meeting Business.

Commissioner Apfeld requested future discussion on establishing an Enforcement Subcommittee.

Public Comment: None.

CITY OF OAKLAND
PUBLIC ETHICS COMMISSION
Regular Commission Meeting
One Frank Ogawa Plaza (City Hall)
Hearing Room 2
Wednesday, July 15, 2026
6:30 p.m.

DRAFT

The meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

CITY OF OAKLAND
PUBLIC ETHICS COMMISSION
Special Commission Meeting
One Frank Ogawa Plaza (City Hall)
Hearing Room 2
Friday, August 14, 2026
6:30 p.m.

DRAFT

Commissioners:
Francis Upton IV (Chair) | Karun Tilak (Vice-Chair) | Luke Apfeld | Tanya Bayeva | L. Lawrence Brandon | Angi Fisher | Ryan Micik

Commission Staff in Attendance:
Jelani Killings, Senior Ethics Analyst | Carina Lieu, Program Manager | Bhawna Chowdhary, Ethics Analyst

Legal Counsel:
Oliver Luby, Deputy City Attorney

PUBLIC ETHICS COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

PRELIMINARY ITEMS

1. Roll Call and Determination of Quorum.

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

Members present: Chair Francis Upton IV, Luke Apfeld, Angi Fisher, Tanya Bayeva, L. Lawrence Brandon, and Ryan Micik.

Members excused: Vice-Chair Karun Tilak

Staff present: Jelani Killings, Senior Ethics Analyst; Carina Lieu, Program Manager; Bhawna Chowdhary, Ethics Analyst.

Legal Counsel: Oliver Luby, Deputy City Attorney.

2. Staff and Commission Announcements.

Chair Upton announced that members of the public can now participate in meetings remotely via Zoom.

Senior Ethics Analyst Jelani Killings introduced Carina Lieu, who joined the PEC on July 27th as a new Program Manager.

3. Open Forum.

Chair Upton provided an overview of the rules for public comment during PEC meetings and how to participate via Zoom or phone.

Public Comment: Jesse Lucas.

ACTION ITEMS

CITY OF OAKLAND
PUBLIC ETHICS COMMISSION
Special Commission Meeting
One Frank Ogawa Plaza (City Hall)
Hearing Room 2
Friday, August 14, 2026
6:30 p.m.

DRAFT

4. Limited Public Financing Act Program 2026.

The Commission received and discussed a staff report regarding the available funds for the Limited Public Financing Program and how to distribute funds to candidates running for City Council district office in the November 2026 election.

Brandon moved, and Fisher seconded, to find that the amount of money in the election campaign fund is adequate to provide the maximum amount of funds allowable by law to each potentially eligible candidate.

Public Comment: None.

Ayes: Apfeld, Bayeva, Brandon, Fisher, Micik, Upton.

Noes: None.

Abstentions: None

Vote: 6-0.

Motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

CITY OF OAKLAND
PUBLIC ETHICS COMMISSION
Regular Commission Meeting
One Frank Ogawa Plaza (City Hall)
Hearing Room 2
Wednesday, September 16, 2026
6:30 p.m.

DRAFT

Commissioners:
Francis Upton IV (Chair) | Karun Tilak (Vice-Chair) | Luke Apfeld | Tanya Bayeva | L. Lawrence Brandon | Angi Fisher | Ryan Micik

Commission Staff to Attend:
Suzanne Doran, Executive Director | Tovah Ackerman, Enforcement Chief | Jelani Killings, Senior Ethics Analyst | Benjamin Mahrer, Ethics Investigator | Dillon Bezehertny, Ethics Investigator | Niels Thorsen, Ethics Analyst | Bhawna Chowdhary, 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 6:35 p.m.

Members present: Chair Francis Upton IV, Vice-Chair Karun Tilak, Angi Fisher, and Ryan Micik.

Members absent: Tanya Bayeva, L. Lawrence Brandon, and Luke Apfeld.

Chair Upton noted that Commissioner Apfeld requested to be excused due to travel for work and Commissioner Bayeva requested to be excused due to illness.

Staff present: Suzanne Doran, Tovah Ackerman, Jelani Killings, Carina Lieu, Bhawna Chowdhary, Niels Thorsen, Benjamin Mahrer, and Dillon Bezehertny.

Legal Counsel: Oliver Luby, Deputy City Attorney.

2. Staff and Commission Announcements.

Chair Upton announced that members of the public can now participate in meetings remotely via Zoom.

3. Open Forum.

Chair Upton provided an overview of the rules for public comment during PEC meetings and how to participate via Zoom or phone.

Public Comment: Assata Olugbala; Gene Hazzard.

CITY OF OAKLAND
PUBLIC ETHICS COMMISSION
Regular Commission Meeting
One Frank Ogawa Plaza (City Hall)
Hearing Room 2
Wednesday, September 16, 2026
6:30 p.m.

DRAFT

ACTION ITEMS

4. Approval of Commission Meeting Draft Minutes

a. Commission Meeting Draft Minutes for July 15, 2026, Regular Meeting.

Tilak moved, and Fisher seconded, to adopt the July 15, 2026, regular meeting minutes.

Public Comment: None.

Ayes: Tilak, Fisher, Upton.

Noes: None.

Abstentions: Micik.

Vote: 3-0-1.

Motion failed.

b. Commission Meeting Draft Minutes for August 14, 2026, Special Meeting.

Micik moved, and Fisher seconded, to adopt the August 14, 2026, special meeting minutes.

Public Comment: Gene Hazzard.

Ayes: Fisher, Micik, Upton.

Noes: None.

Abstentions: Tilak.

Vote: 3-0-1.

Motion failed.

5. Case No. 24-30: In the Matter of Unknown Respondent(s).

On September 24, 2024, PEC staff received a complaint alleging that eleven Oakland Polic Department (OPD) officers misused $12,000 of Measure Z funds to attend a police memorial in Washington, DC. Enforcement Chief Tovah Ackerman presented, and the Commission discussed, staff's recommendation to close the case and issue an advisory letter to OPD about the Government Ethics Act and misuse of city resources. Commissioners asked staff for more detail about the expenditures, City officials involved in approving the travel, and raised concerns about systemic issues that allowed Measure Z funds to be used for an unauthorized purpose,

Upton moved, and Tilak seconded, to direct staff to continue the investigation addressing the concerns raised by Commissioners in the discussion.

CITY OF OAKLAND
PUBLIC ETHICS COMMISSION
Regular Commission Meeting
One Frank Ogawa Plaza (City Hall)
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Wednesday, September 16, 2026
6:30 p.m.

DRAFT

Public Comment: Paula Hawthorne; Assata Olugbala; Gene Hazzard.

Ayes: Tilak, Fisher, Micik, Upton.

Noes: None.

Abstentions: None.

Vote: 4-0.

Motion passed.

6. Case No. 26-08: In the Matter of the Oakland Police Commission

On April 15, 2026, PEC staff received a complaint alleging that between September 20 and October 10, 2025, four Oakland Police Commission (OPC) members exchanged emails about the Militarized Equipment Ad Hoc Committee's recommendation on the Oakland Police Department's divestiture of a BearCat armored vehicle. Enforcement Chief Tovah Ackerman presented, and the Commission discussed, staff's recommendation to close PEC #26-08, finding that the four OPC members violated the ordinance, and issue an advisory letter directing the OPC to agendize the matter for an upcoming meeting.

Tilak moved, and Upton seconded, to adopt the staff's recommendation.

Public Comment: Assata Olugbala; Gene Hazzard; Rajni Mandal.

Ayes: Tilak, Fisher, Micik, Upton.

Noes: None.

Abstentions: None.

Vote: 4-0.

Motion passed.

7. Case Closure Plan.

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 the staff's recommendation to close the following cases:

a. **In the Matter of Trevelyon Jones (Former Captain, Police Department) (PEC # 22-26).** Staff recommended that the Commission close PEC Case No. 22-26 with no further action.

b. **In the Matter of Former Oakland Police Commissioner Regina Jackson et al. (PEC # 24-06).** Staff recommended that the Commission close PEC Case No. 24-06 with an advisory letter.

CITY OF OAKLAND
PUBLIC ETHICS COMMISSION
Regular Commission Meeting
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Hearing Room 2
Wednesday, September 16, 2026
6:30 p.m.

DRAFT

Micik moved, and Tilak seconded, to adopt the staff's recommendation.

Public Comment: Assata Olugbala; Gene Hazzard.

Ayes: Tilak, Fisher, Micik, Upton.

Noes: None.

Abstentions: None.

Vote: 4-0.

Motion passed.

INFORMATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

8. Commissioner Recruitment.

Senior Ethics Analyst Jelani Killings presented the Commission's 2026 recruitment materials and activities to fill a Commission-appointed seat with a term to start in January 2027. The vacancy announcement and application are being distributed widely via the Commission's website, email lists, social media, and other channels.

Public Comment: Assata Olugbala; Gene Hazzard.

9. Campaign Disclosure Tools Demo.

Ethics Analyst Niels Thorsen provided a demonstration of Open Disclosure, the online application visualizing campaign data for the 2026 election. Open Disclosure is a partnership between the Public Ethics Commission and Open Oakland and is now live at www.opendisclosure.io for the 2026 election. Thorsen introduced Mike Ubell, who leads the Open Oakland project team and answered Commissioner questions.

Public Comment: None.

10. Executive Director Report.

Executive Director Suzanne Doran reported on overall priorities and PEC activities, such as budget, staffing, and PEC legislative and policy initiatives, since the last Commission meeting, as well as specific program updates included as attachments.

Public Comment: None.

11. Enforcement Report.

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

Public Comment: None.

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PUBLIC ETHICS COMMISSION
Regular Commission Meeting
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6:30 p.m.

DRAFT

12. Reports on Subcommittees and Commissioner Assignments.

Chair Upton provided an update on the Transparency Ad-Hoc Subcommittee. Commissioner Micik provided an update on the Democracy Dollars Pilot Ad Hoc Subcommittee.

Public Comment: None.

13. Future Meeting Business.

Public Comment: None.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

CITY OF OAKLAND
PUBLIC ETHICS COMMISSION
Special Commission Meeting
One Frank Ogawa Plaza (City Hall)
Hearing Room 3
Wednesday, October 28, 2026
4:30 p.m.

DRAFT

Commissioners:
Francis Upton IV (Chair) | Karun Tilak (Vice-Chair) | Luke Apfeld | Tanya Bayeva | L. Lawrence Brandon | Angi Fisher | Ryan Micik

PUBLIC ETHICS COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

PRELIMINARY ITEMS

1. Roll Call and Determination of Quorum.

The meeting was called to order at 4:31 p.m.

Members present: Chair Francis Upton IV, Vice-Chair Karun Tilak, Luke Apfeld, Tanya Bayeva, and Ryan Micik.

Commissioner Micik arrived at 4:35.

Members absent: Angi Fisher and L. Lawrence Brandon.

Chair Upton noted that Commissioner Fisher requested to be excused due to travel.

Staff present: Suzanne Doran, Tovah Ackerman, Jelani Killings, Carina Lieu, Bhawna Chowdhary, Niels Thorsen, Melanie Newcomb, Teddy Teshome.

Legal Counsel: Oliver Luby, Deputy City Attorney.

2. Staff and Commission Announcements.

Chair Upton announced that members of the public can now participate in meetings remotely via Zoom.

3. Open Forum.

Chair Upton provided an overview of the rules for public comment during PEC meetings and how to participate via Zoom or phone.

Public Comment: None.

ACTION ITEMS

CITY OF OAKLAND
PUBLIC ETHICS COMMISSION
Special Commission Meeting
One Frank Ogawa Plaza (City Hall)
Hearing Room 3
Wednesday, October 28, 2026
4:30 p.m.

4. Public Ethics Commission Retreat: Review Program Area Work and Identify Key Projects for 2027.

The Commission convened to conduct a strategic planning retreat to support team development, review its 2025 annual report, assess its accomplishments and current context, engage in strategic visioning, and identify key opportunities and priorities for 2027-2029. Commissioners discussed and made decisions regarding the overall direction, goals, activities, and priorities of the PEC, with particular emphasis on current initiatives to be completed and items to be completed over the next one to three years. For each program area, Commission staff presented program goals and accomplishments, identified opportunities and challenges related to achieving Commission goals, and facilitated an open discussion with Commissioners to address challenges and determine next steps.

Public Comment: None.

As the session concluded, staff noted the commissioners' suggestions and recommendations regarding the 2027 goals.

Public Comment: None.

The meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

PUBLIC ETHICS COMMISSION
CITY OF OAKLAND

Francis Upton IV, Chair
Karun Tilak, Vice Chair
Luke Apfeld
Tanya Bayeva
L. Lawrence Brandon
Angi Fisher
Ryan Micik

Suzanne Doran, Executive Director

TO: Public Ethics Commission
FROM: Melanie Newcomb, Commission Assistant
DATE: November 6, 2026
RE: 2027 PEC Regular Meeting Schedule

Below is the confirmed schedule for regular Commission meetings in 2027. Unless otherwise specified, meetings occur on the third Wednesday of every other month. Commission meetings will be available via teleconference as posted on the meeting agenda, as well as available for future viewing online.

2027 REGULAR MEETING SCHEDULE OF THE PEC			
DATE	**TIME**	**ROOM**	**AGENDA POSTING DATE**
January 20, 2027	6:30 PM	Hearing Room 2	January 8, 2027
March 17, 2027	6:30 PM	Hearing Room 2	March 5, 2027
May 19, 2027	6:30 PM	Hearing Room 2	May 7, 2027
July 21, 2027	6:30 PM	Hearing Room 2	July 9, 2027
September 15, 2027	6:30 PM	Hearing Room 2	September 3, 2027
December 15, 2027	6:30 PM	Hearing Room 2	December 3, 2027

In addition to regular meetings, special meetings may be scheduled as needed.

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TEL: (510) 238-3593 | ETHICSCOMMISSION@OAKLANDCA.GOV

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Attorneys for Petitioner
City of Oakland Public Ethics Commission

BEFORE THE CITY OF OAKLAND

PUBLIC ETHICS COMMISSION

In the Matter of	Case No.: 22-09.02
OAKPAC; BARBARA LESLIE; and ROBERT ZACHARY WASSERMAN, Respondents.	**STIPULATION, DECISION AND ORDER**

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STIPULATION

Petitioner, the Enforcement Unit of the City of Oakland Public Ethics Commission, and Respondents OAKPAC, BARBARA LESLIE, and ROBERT ZACHARY WASSERMAN agree as follows:

1. This Stipulation will be submitted for consideration by the City of Oakland Public Ethics Commission (Commission) at its next meeting;
2. This Stipulation resolves all factual and legal issues raised in this matter and represents the final resolution to this matter without the necessity of holding an administrative hearing to determine the liability of, or penalties and/or other remedies to be imposed upon, Respondents;
3. Respondents knowingly and voluntarily waive all procedural rights under the Oakland City Charter, Oakland Municipal Code, the Public Ethics Commission Complaint Procedures, and all other sources of procedural rights applicable to this PEC enforcement action. These procedural rights include, but are not limited to, the right to personally appear at an administrative hearing held in this matter, to be represented by an attorney at their own expense, to confront all witnesses testifying at the hearing, to subpoena witnesses to testify at the hearing, and to have the matter judicially reviewed;
4. Respondents represent that they have accurately furnished to the Commission all discoverable information and documents that are relevant to the determination of a fair and comprehensive resolution to this matter;
5. Upon approval of this Stipulation and full performance of the terms outlined in this Stipulation, the Commission will take no future action against Respondents, including any officer, director, employee, or agent of Respondents, regarding the activities described in Exhibit #1 to this Stipulation, and this Stipulation shall constitute the complete resolution of all claims by the Commission against Respondents, including any officer, director, employee, or agent of Respondents, related to such activities and any associated alleged violations;

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6. If Respondents fail to comply with the terms of this Stipulation, then the Commission may reopen this matter and prosecute Respondents to the full extent permitted by law, except that the Statute of Limitations shall be waived for any violations that were not discoverable or actionable by the Commission due to non-compliance with any provision of this Stipulation;

7. This Stipulation is not binding on any other law enforcement or regulatory agency, and does not preclude the Commission or its staff from cooperating with, or assisting any other government agency with regard to this matter, or any other matter related to it; except that neither the Commission nor its staff shall refer this matter, or any other matter related to it, as pertains to any alleged violation by Respondents, to any other government agency;

8. Respondents plead no contest to the violation(s) of the Oakland Municipal Code specifically identified in Exhibit #1 to this Stipulation, and in the manner set forth in Exhibit #1, which is expressly incorporated by reference in its entirety to this Stipulation;

9. The Commission will impose upon Respondents the penalties and/or other remedies specified in Exhibit #1, as they pertain to each of the named Respondents;

10. Respondents shall pay the amount specified in Exhibit #1 to this Stipulation to the City of Oakland general fund within 30 days of the Commission's acceptance of this Stipulation;

11. In the event the Commission refuses to accept this Stipulation, it shall become null and void, and within fifteen business days after the Commission meeting at which the Stipulation is rejected, any payments already tendered by Respondents in connection with this Stipulation will be reimbursed to them;

12. In the event the Commission rejects this Stipulation and a full evidentiary hearing becomes necessary, this Stipulation and all references to it are inadmissible as evidence, and neither any member of the Commission, nor the Executive Director or any member of PEC staff, shall be disqualified from that hearing because of prior consideration of this Stipulation;

13. This Stipulation may not be amended orally. Any amendment or modification to this Stipulation must be in writing duly executed by all parties and approved by the Commission at a regular or special meeting;

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14. This Stipulation shall be construed under, and interpreted in accordance with, the laws of the State of California and the City of Oakland. If any provision of the Stipulation is found to be unenforceable, the remaining provisions shall remain valid and enforceable; and

15. The parties hereto may sign different copies of this Stipulation, which will be deemed to have the same effect as though all parties had signed the same document. Verified electronic signatures shall have the same effect as wet signatures.

So agreed:

Tovah Ackerman (Oct 19, 2026 10:13:57 PDT) — Oct 19, 2026

Tovah Ackerman, Enforcement Chief
City of Oakland Public Ethics Commission, Petitioner — Dated

Signed by: Ken Maxey BCB8EC2F46954A7... — October 16, 2026

OAKPAC, Respondent — Dated

DocuSigned by: Barbara Leslie F1CF7D5B64ED420... — October 16, 2026

Barbara Leslie, Respondent — Dated

Signed by: Robert Zachary Wasserman 44A6BB859B5149C... — October 16, 2026

Robert Zachary Wasserman, Respondent — Dated

–

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DECISION AND ORDER

The foregoing Stipulation of the parties In the Matter of OAKPAC; BARBARA LESLIE; and ROBERT ZACHARY WASSERMAN, PEC Case No. 22-09.02, including all attached Exhibits, is hereby accepted as the final Decision and Order of the City of Oakland Public Ethics Commission, effective upon execution below by the Chair.

So ordered:

_____ _____

Francis Upton IV, Chair
City of Oakland Public Ethics Commission

Dated

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EXHIBIT #1
In the Matter of OAKPAC, Oakland Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce; Barbara Leslie; and Robert Zachary Wasserman
PEC 22-09.02 Case Summary

INTRODUCTION **1**
FACTUAL SUMMARY **2**
SUMMARY OF LAW & LEGAL ANALYSIS **16**
VIOLATIONS: OAKPAC, BARBARA LESLIE, ROBERT ZACHARY WASSERMAN **18**
PENALTY ANALYSIS **20**
RECOMMENDED PENALTIES **22**

INTRODUCTION

Respondent Oakland Political Action Committee ("OAKPAC") is a general purpose committee within the meaning of Government Code section 82027.5 formed by the Oakland Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce. Oaklanders for Responsible Leadership, Opposing Desley Brooks for Oakland City Council 2018 ("ORL"), was a committee primarily formed to oppose former Councilmember Brooks. This case involves the failure to disclose OAKPAC as an intermediary for contributions to ORL in connection with the November 2018 election.

ORL was initiated by Mayor Schaaf and is the subject of another stipulation, approved by the Public Ethics Commission on October 9, 2024, in which Mayor Schaaf admitted to engaging in activities that constituted operating a candidate-controlled committee that received contributions above the legal limit for candidate committees and that also failed to report intermediary contributions that were received by OAKPAC and then made to ORL.

OAKPAC received contributions from certain donors and then made contributions in correspondent amounts to the ORL campaign committee, resulting in those donors' names not appearing on campaign finance forms leading up to the election or, for contributions of $5,000 or more, on the face of ORL's ads (as committees such as ORL were legally required to do -- but not OAKPAC, due to its committee status and timing of contributions and expenditures during the 2018 election).

PEC staff and Respondents have agreed to settle this matter without an administrative hearing. They are now presenting their stipulated agreement, summary of the facts, and legal analysis to the City of Oakland Public Ethics Commission for its approval. Together, PEC staff

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and Respondents recommend approval of their agreement and imposition of administrative penalties as described in more detail below.

SUMMARY OF THE FACTS

Organization of Oaklanders For Responsible Leadership (ORL)

In 2018, Desley Brooks was sitting on the City Council District 6 seat and was running for re-election. Sometime around the summer of that year, Mayor Schaaf contacted a political consultant she had used on her successful 2014 mayoral run, Ace Smith, seeking advice about a possible independent expenditure campaign against Brooks' re-election. ("Independent expenditure," also called an "IE," refers to a political campaign that is not directly connected to any of the candidates that it supports or opposes. The legal rules surrounding IEs are discussed in detail later in this Exhibit).

Smith and Mayor Schaaf approached campaign consultant Doug Linney to see if he would be interested in running an IE. Linney later told the PEC that during his initial meeting with Mayor Schaaf and Smith, Schaaf told him, "Let's do an IE campaign against Desley, and let me see if I can get some other folks involved to make it happen" (the quote is from Linney, paraphrasing what Mayor Schaaf had said to him).

Linney produced a document on July 10, 2018, called "District 6 IE Proposal." It envisioned a two-pronged campaign, consisting of anti-Brooks messaging focused on allegations of corruption and bullying behavior, as well as a voter turnout drive focused on newly registered voters and midterm skippers. The centerpiece of the strategy, in the words of Linney's proposal, was the use of an "aggressive and highly targeted field campaign to 'create' 3,500 votes." The campaign team would consist of Linney (overall management, mail), Nathan Stalnaker (field canvassing) and Andrew Truman Kim (phone banking), as well as an initial itemized budget of $181,400. The subsequent campaign largely followed this plan, including in its selection of the key campaign personnel (Linney, Stalnaker and Truman Kim). Linney later described this document to the PEC as "our working plan."

Linney shared the plan with Mayor Schaaf, as well as with Smith's campaign firm. He did not share it with any other people at this time. Mayor Schaaf took part in subsequent group

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discussion of the plan with Linney and Smith's firm. At one point, she suggested raising the budget to more than $200,000 because (as she stated in an email to Linney and Smith) "I think raising $200k shouldn't be hard and could shoot for more." Linney corresponded with Mayor Schaaf about formally registering the committee, but held off as she worked to involve others.

After receiving Linney's proposal, Mayor Schaaf met with Barbara Leslie and Zachary Wasserman of the Oakland Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and its campaign committee, called OAKPAC, who Schaaf knew were also contemplating campaign activities. Mayor Schaaf provided them with Linney's campaign plan, as well as feedback on the plan that she had received from Smith. She invited Leslie, Wasserman and others to join a series of weekly phone conferences with Schaaf and Linney "to discuss strategy and stay in touch on the campaign," stating that she "defer[red] to you on who else should join these calls."[1]

On August 8, 2018, the first phone conference of the IE team (which still had not yet been officially registered or given a name) was held between Mayor Schaaf, Wasserman, Leslie, Linney, Stalnaker (the consultant who would be overseeing the field program, as described earlier in Linney's campaign plan), and Andreas Cluver of the Alameda County Building Trades Council. This was the first of what became a weekly series of phone conferences to discuss the progress of the IE campaign, according to interviews, emails and meeting minutes that also reflected what was discussed at and around the time of these meetings. Topics of discussion at these meetings included fundraising, polling, messaging, endorsements, and the recruitment of "public-facing members" (described below). Linney and Stalnaker would also provide updates on the progress of the campaign, particularly the field program. Mayor Schaaf also remained in direct communication with Linney through email and text message, outside of the weekly meetings.

An early topic of discussion among the group was the need to find "public facing members" whose names could appear on the group's campaign forms and represent the campaign

[1] Among other examples of Mayor Schaaf's soliciting input from Leslie and Wasserman relating to the IE campaign activities, she also provided them with an early draft poll for purposes of discussion at the group's upcoming weekly phone conferences (despite Linney's reluctance to share the draft too widely). The poll had been scheduled to begin in early August, but was halted at the last minute at Mayor Schaaf's request, in order to incorporate feedback from OAKPAC. Leslie and Wasserman continued to be consulted on major committee decisions.

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to the public. In the words of an email that Linney sent to Mayor Schaaf at the time, they needed someone who would be "believable as a decision-maker on this." Around this time, the group had also received advice from Linney to the effect that Mayor Schaaf could assist the IE as long as she did not hold decision-making authority for the campaign.[2] Indeed, meeting minutes from first IE team conference on August 8, 2018 stated that because this was "not a candidate control committee[] … Doug [Linney] can't make final decision. Must rely on Andreas [], Barbara [Leslie], Zach [Wasserman]." Leslie and Wasserman have both represented to the PEC that they were not the final decision makers in this regard. Leslie separately emailed Linney on August 16 with additional ideas on "public facing members for filing and for later." Eventually, the group settled on Police Commissioner Jose Dorado who began attending the weekly phone conferences as of August 29, 2018 (about a month after the weekly meetings had started, and more than two months after Linney had produced ORL's campaign plan).

Another early topic was "rules around running an IE" (as described in August 8, 2018 IE meeting minutes) and other legal rules around "structure of the committee" and contributions (August 15, 2018 minutes reference the need for a legal "cheat sheet"). Early correspondence Mayor Schaaf forwarded to Wasserman and Leslie and other individuals raising money in August referenced discussion of IE fundraising rules, thresholds for contribution limits and reporting, and in particular, a "curios[ity]" around "back load[ing] spending[]" because "[s]ome people might not want to donate until closer to the end."

ORL was formally registered as a campaign committee on August 24, 2018, with Dorado as its principal officer[3]. The name given for the committee on its registration form (Form 410) was "Oaklanders For Responsible Leadership, Opposing Desley Brooks For Oakland City Council 2018" (referred to hereafter in this Exhibit as "ORL"). ORL did not identify itself as a candidate-

[2] Note that this is not an accurate statement of the law concerning candidate-controlled committees (the correct rule is that Mayor Schaaf could not have "significant participation" in the campaign, which is not the same thing as being a "decision-maker").

[3] In interviews with the PEC, Linney and Dorado both confirmed that this was largely a ministerial role. Neither Mayor Schaaf, nor any other member of ORL appeared on any of committee's campaign forms as a principal officer, despite being more closely involved in the committee's strategy and fundraising than Dorado.

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controlled committee on its registration form, nor did it list Mayor Schaaf as a controlling candidate. Mayor Schaaf did not sign the form[4]. Ultimately, Desley Brooks lost the election. She received 5,483 first-round votes versus 9,858 for the winning candidate in this ranked-choice contest.

Following payment of the outstanding debt to Linney (including a win bonus), ORL filed a Form 410 with the PEC on June 15, 2020, terminating itself as a committee.

OAKPAC & ORL Fail to Properly Report Intermediary (Conduit) Contributions

In the course of their fundraising efforts, OAKPAC was effectively used as a pass-through vehicle for donors who wished to contribute money to ORL.

When soliciting contributions to ORL, some ORL principals gave donors the option of contributing directly to ORL or waiting until October 20, 2018, and giving their money to OAKPAC instead. This was done because ORL, as a primarily-formed committee[5] opposing Desley Brooks, was legally required to publicly report all of its large donors within 24 hours.

[4] Nor was Mayor Schaaf's role disclosed at later stages of the campaign. In September, ORL began its field program, in which it visited prospective voters door-to-door in District 6. Neither the committee's field script, nor its talking points for the field staff, mentioned Mayor Schaaf's role with the committee. According to ORL's internal (non-public) talking points, field staff were instructed to identify ORL by its committee name (which did not mention Mayor Schaaf). If asked who was behind the committee, campaign workers were to name Jose Dorado and "city leaders who believe there is a need for better, more responsible leadership in District 6" (according to the script ORL gave its canvassers). If asked directly whether Mayor Schaaf was involved with the campaign, field staff were instructed to respond that the "Mayor supports the effort. We expect the Mayor to help with the fundraising, but [she] isn't part of the decision making process…" Similarly, phone bankers for ORL were given a script that instructed them to say that they were calling from "Oaklanders For Responsible Leadership." The call script made no reference to Mayor Schaaf's involvement with the group, instead telling phone bankers to state that ORL "was formed in response to many residents concerned with Desley Brooks' unacceptable pattern of behavior on our City Council."

[5] A "primarily-formed committee" is a campaign committee that spends at least 70% of its funds to support or oppose one or more specific candidates (or ballot measures) in a particular election, or has the primary purpose of supporting or opposing one or more specific candidates (or ballot measures). ORL was a primarily- formed committee because it spent 100% of its funds opposing Desley Brooks; it therefore had to comply with the particular disclosure rules applying to primarily-formed committees (including the requirement to report large contributions it received within 24 hours). OAKPAC was not a primarily-formed committee and therefore did not have to file those 24-hour disclosure reports.

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OAKPAC, on the other hand, was not officially engaged in an IE against Brooks, and therefore did not have to make any such disclosures. All it was required to do was file periodic (not daily) reports on its finances, the last of which (before the election) covered all money it had received up to October 20. Donors who wished to keep their names out of the public record until after the election were given the option of holding off on donating until after October 20, and then giving their money to OAKPAC. OAKPAC then contributed that money to ORL under its own name. Meanwhile, ORL was informed of these pledges (before October 20) and could (and did) make its spending decisions accordingly, knowing that this money would eventually be coming its way "via OAKPAC" (in the words of ORL's internal accounting document). Consistent with this practice, committee members were expected to "bring commitments to the committee to track cash flow." (ORL's September 5, 2018 meeting minutes.) And so they did: members provided regular and detailed updates on their fundraising activities during the weekly meetings (as ORL meeting minutes consistently show), and via the shared "Pledge Tracker" which tracked contribution amounts and matched them to the committee member(s) responsible for securing a given pledge. Wasserman and Leslie have stated that they did not believe that these fundraising activities violated the law.

ORL principals also encouraged donors who wished to give $5,000 or more to send their money to OAKPAC instead of ORL, with the understanding that OAKPAC would give the money to ORL. This was done in order to avoid Oakland's law requiring IE committees such as ORL to disclose their top two donors over $5,000 on the face of ads that they send out to public. By giving money to OAKPAC rather than ORL, donors could avoid being named on the face of ORL's ads.

For example, in an October 2, 2018 email that was shared with Leslie and Wasserman, among others, an individual who had received instructions from an ORL principal expressly stated: "I suggest that contributions **under** $5,000 be made directly by check to the IE "Oaklanders for Responsible Leadership (ORL)" and that contributions over $5,000 be made directly by check to the IE "OakPAC." **PLEASE coordinate or inform** [redacted] **of payment so she can track how the contributions have flowed into the race.**" (emphasis in the original email.) In response to this email, Wasserman instructed that "checks to OakPac should not be sent

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before 10/20" (the last date on which contributions would be reportable prior to the election). As evidenced by emails and other documents received by the PEC in the course of this investigation, OAKPAC, including Leslie and Wasserman, closely tracked incoming pledges and checks, and coordinated on the timing of the subsequent disbursements to ORL. Leslie told the PEC that she was primarily focused on not making OAKPAC a "primarily formed committee" under the law (essentially meaning a committee that spends 70% or more of its funds on a particular race).

Fundraising for ORL in this manner continued even after the election concluded. ORL owed a debt to Linney's firm after the election. In order to pay back the debt, Schaaf, Leslie, Wasserman and others organized a fundraising dinner in which guests were encouraged to contribute up to $5,000. All of these donors were told to make their checks out to OAKPAC, though the event was advertised as a joint fundraising event for ORL and OAKPAC. That event took place on July 1, 2019 and raised a total of $56,500. OAKPAC then contributed a total of $39,000 to ORL.

Neither ORL nor OAKPAC reported any of these transactions as "intermediary contributions" on their campaign finance reports, as required under the law. Leslie and Wasserman (the latter of whom personally solicited some of these contributions) reviewed and approved OAKPAC's campaign finance reporting forms and Leslie signed them as to their completeness and accuracy, under penalty of perjury. Leslie and Wasserman later told the PEC that they were not aware that OAKPAC would be deemed under the law to be acting as the "intermediary" for these contributions and that they would not have solicited contributions in this way if they had fully understood the legal implications of it.

The donors to OAKPAC whose contributions were passed on to ORL without being properly reported were the following:

	Contributions to ORL Made Via OAKPAC		
	Donor (per 460)	**Date of Contribution to OAKPAC**	**Amount**
1.	Bay Area Citizens PAC	10/23/2018	$2,500
2.	Horizon Beverage Company	10/26/2018	$5,000
3.	Equity and General Trade Association	11/05/2018	$5,000
4.	Holiday Inn Express Hotel & Suites - Balaji Enterprises, LLC	11/05/2018	$5,000

5.	Kiva Sales and Service	11/05/2018	$2,500
6.	Lane Partners	11/05/2018	$10,000
7.	Best Bay Apartments, Inc.	11/16/2018	$10,000
8.	TMG Partners	11/16/2018	$10,000
9.	Wilson Meany LP AAF / 11 West Ninth Street Property Owner LP	05/20/2019	$10,000
10.	Abid	07/02/2019	$3,000
11.	Argent Materials, Inc.	07/02/2019	$5,000
12.	Foster Interstate Media, Inc. and Affiliated Entities	07/02/2019	$5,000
13.	Oakland Lofts, LLC	07/02/2019	$5,000
14.	Wasserman	07/02/2019	$1,000
15.	CCSAC, Inc.	07/22/2019	$5,000
16.	Comcast Financial Agency Corporation, A Comcast Cable Communications Group Company	12/18/2019	$5,000

This money was given by OAKPAC to ORL on the following dates:

Funds From OAKPAC to ORL		
Contributor	**Date**	**Amount**
Oakland Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce (OAKPAC)	11/02/2018	$2,500
Oakland Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce (OAKPAC)	11/02/2018	$10,000
Oakland Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce (OAKPAC)	11/12/2018	$17,500
Oakland Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce (OAKPAC)	11/26/2018	$20,000
Oakland Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce (OAKPAC)	05/30/2019	$10,000
Oakland Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce (OAKPAC)	07/10/2019	$19,000
Oakland Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce (OAKPAC)	08/13/2019	$5,000
Oakland Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce (OAKPAC)	12/20/2019	$5,000

As evidenced by OAKPAC's internal accounting documentation, related correspondence between Wasserman, Leslie, and others, and other documents identified by the PEC in the course of this investigation, the contributions to OAKPAC were then contributed to ORL as follows[6]:

Funds from OAKPAC to ORL (Precise Breakdown)				
Original Donor to OAKPAC	**Date Given (per 460)**	**Amount**	**Date of Contribution from OAKPAC to ORL**	**Amount**
Bay Area Citizens PAC	10/23/18	$2,500		
Horizon Beverage Company	10/26/18	$5,000		
			11/01/18	$10,000
			11/01/18	$2,500
Equity and General Trade Association	11/05/18	$5,000		
Total =		**$12,500**		**$12,500**
Holiday Inn Express Hotel & Suites – Balaji Enterprises,	11/05/18	$5,000		

[6] Some of the contributions may have been reported by OAKPAC before actually sending the check for the corresponding amount to ORL. Yet other contributions may have been transferred to ORL based on a pledge but prior to actual receipt of the funds by OAKPAC. The totality of the evidence showed all of the transfers on the table pictured constituted pass-through contributions to ORL.

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LLC				
Kiva Sales and Service	11/05/18	$2,500		
Lane Partners	11/05/18	$10,000		
			11/08/18	$17,500
Total =		**$17,500**		**$17,500**
Best Bay Apartments, Inc.	11/16/18	$10,000		
TMG Partners	11/16/18	$10,000		
			11/21/18	$20,000
Total =		**$20,000**		**$20,000**
Wilson Meany LP AAF / 11 West Ninth Street Property Owner LP	50/20/19	$10,000		
			5/23/19	$10,000
Total =		**$10,000**		**$10,000**
Abid	7/02/19	$3,000		
Argent Materials, Inc.	7/02/19	$5,000		
Foster Interstate Media, Inc. & Affiliated Entities	7/02/19	$5,000		
Oakland Lofts, LLC	7/02/19	$5,000		
Wasserman	7/02/19	$1,000		
			7/02/19	$19,000
Total =		**$19,000**		**$19,000**
CCSAC, Inc.	07/22/2019	$5,000		
			08/13/2019	$5,000
Total =		**$5,000**		**$5,000**
Comcast Financial Agency Corporation	12/18/2019	$5,000		
			12/20/2019	$5,000
Total =		**$5,000**		**$5,000**

The pass-through contributions under investigation totaled $89,800. This represented nearly half of the total money raised by ORL over the course of its existence from 2018-2019 ($202,808.99) and for which the names of the true donors were not reported to the public. Note that almost half of the total $89,800 from OAKPAC was given after the 2018 election was over.

SUMMARY OF LAW & LEGAL ANALYSIS

All statutory references and discussions of law pertain to the referenced statutes and laws as they existed at the time of the violations.

All definitions of terms are the same as those set forth in the California Political Reform Act (California Government Code Sections 81000 through 91014), as amended, unless the term is specifically defined in Oakland's Campaign Reform Act (Oakland Municipal Code Chapter 3.12) or the contrary is stated or clearly appears from the context.[7]

[7] OMC § 3.12.140.

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Provisions of the California Political Reform Act relating to local elections, including any subsequent amendments, are incorporated into the Oakland Campaign Reform Act (OCRA), except as otherwise provided in, or inconsistent with, other provisions of local law.[8]

OAKPAC Made Earmarked Contributions to ORL

No campaign contributions shall be made via a third-party intermediary unless it is reported as such by all parties who are required to file campaign finance reports.[9]

Here, OAKPAC principals solicited contributions to ORL and gave the donors the option to make their checks payable to OAKPAC; and then directed OAKPAC's treasurer to make contributions of an equivalent amount to ORL. Neither OAKPAC nor ORL publicly reported that OAKPAC was acting as an intermediary for others. The original donors names were therefore never publicly identified with ORL, though they were listed on reports filed by OAKPAC after the election.

Liability

Any person who violates any provision of the Oakland Campaign Reform Act, who causes any other person to violate any provision of this Act, or who aids and abets any other person in the violation of the Act, may be found liable for an administrative violation by the PEC. If two or more persons are responsible for any violation, they shall be jointly and severally liable.[10]

"Person" means an individual, proprietorship, firm, partnership, joint venture, syndicate, business, trust, company, corporation, association, committee, and any other organization or group of persons acting in concert.[11]

The principal officer of a committee is any individual primarily responsible for approving the political activity of the committee including, but not limited to authorizing the content of the communications made by the committee, the committee's contributions or expenditures, or the committee's campaign strategy. If more than one individual shares in the primary responsibility

[8] OMC § 3.12.240(d).
[9] OMC § 3.12.240, incorporating Cal. Govt. Code §§ 84211, 84215, 84302, and 85704.
[10] OMC 3.12.270(C)
[11] OMC 3.12.040(J)

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for those activities, each such individual is a principal officer.[12]

In addition to a committee itself, persons who qualify as principal officers of the committee are jointly and severally liable for violations by the committee.[13] In addition, an agent acting on behalf of a person is jointly and severally liable for a violation that arises out of the agent's actions. There is a rebuttable presumption that "agents" of a committee include any current or former officer of the committee; any person who has received compensation or reimbursement from the committee; and any person who holds or has held a position within the committee organization that reasonably appears to be able to authorize expenditures for committee activities.[14]

"Aiding and abetting" is not itself a violation but rather a legal rule that allows the Enforcement Unit to charge anyone who caused, encouraged, or participated in the underlying violation, even if they were not the direct perpetrator. The test of whether a person aided or abetted in the commission of a violation is whether that person in any way, directly or indirectly, aided the perpetrator(s) by acts or encouraged the perpetrator(s) by words or gestures, instigated or advised the commission of the violation, or was present for the purpose of assisting in its commission.[15] An aider and abettor must have knowledge of the illegal purpose of the perpetrator(s) and have intentionally assisted them in the violation. The aider and abettor is not only liable for the particular violation that to their knowledge their confederates were contemplating committing, but they are also liable for the natural and reasonable or probable consequences of any act that they knowingly aided or encouraged.[16]

[12] 2 Cal. Code of Regulations § 18402.1.
[13] OMC 3.12.230(A)
[14] OMC 3.12.230(B)
[15] *People v. Villa*, 156 Cal. App. 2d 128, 133, 134 (1957) (applying California Penal Code section 31, which contains a similar "aiding and abetting" provision to that found under OMC 3.12.270(C)).
[16] Id. at 134.

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VIOLATIONS:

OAKPAC, OAKLAND METROPOLITAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE; BARBARA LESLIE (NO CONTEST, WITHOUT ADMITTING LIABILITY); ROBERT ZACHARY WASSERMAN (NO CONTEST, WITHOUT ADMITTING LIABILITY)

Respondents, OAKPAC, Oakland Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce; Barbara Leslie (OAKPAC's principal officer, who also caused the violations); and Robert Zachary Wasserman (OAKPAC's agent, who also caused the violations) violated the following Oakland Municipal Code(s):

Count 1: Failure to Properly Report 16 Intermediary (Conduit) Contributions

Respondents, either directly or by causing/aiding-and-abetting, reported the following 16 payments as direct contributions from OAKPAC to ORL rather than accurately reporting them as intermediary contributions from the original donors:

	Contributions to ORL Made Via OAKPAC		
	Donor (per 460)	**Date of Contribution to OAKPAC**	**Amount**
1.	Bay Area Citizens PAC	10/23/2018	$2,500
2.	Horizon Beverage Company	10/26/2018	$5,000
3.	Equity and General Trade Association	11/05/2018	$5,000
4.	Holiday Inn Express Hotel & Suites - Balaji Enterprises, LLC	11/05/2018	$5,000
5.	Kiva Sales and Service	11/05/2018	$2,500
6.	Lane Partners	11/05/2018	$10,000
7.	Best Bay Apartments, Inc.	11/16/2018	$10,000
8.	TMG Partners	11/16/2018	$10,000
9.	Wilson Meany LP AAF / 11 West Ninth Street Property Owner LP	05/20/2019	$10,000
10.	Abid	07/02/2019	$3,000
11.	Argent Materials, Inc.	07/02/2019	$5,000
12.	Foster Interstate Media, Inc. and Affiliated Entities	07/02/2019	$5,000
13.	Oakland Lofts, LLC	07/02/2019	$5,000
14.	Wasserman	07/02/2019	$1,000
15.	CCSAC, Inc.	07/22/2019	$5,000
16.	Comcast Financial Agency Corporation, A Comcast Cable Communications Group Company	12/18/2019	$5,000
			Total = $89,800.00

Instead, OAKPAC reported them as contributions from OAKPAC to ORL on the following dates:

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Intermediary Contributions From OAKPAC to ORL Not Correctly Reported		
Date	**Amount**	**Reporting Period**
10/25/2018	$7,500	07/01/18 - 12/31/18
11/02/2018	$2,500	07/01/18 - 12/31/18
11/02/2018	$10,000	07/01/18 - 12/31/18
11/12/2018	$17,500	07/01/18 - 12/31/18
11/26/2018	$20,000	07/01/18 - 12/31/18
05/30/2019	$10,000	1/1/19 - 6/30/19
07/10/2019	$19,000	7/1/19 - 12/31/19
08/13/2019	$5,000	7/1/19 - 12/31/19
12/20/2019	$5,000	7/1/19 - 12/31/19

In this way, Respondents violated OMC § 3.12.240, incorporating Cal. Govt. Code §§ 84211, 84215, 84302, and 85704.

Respondents Leslie and Wasserman are not admitting liability to this count but are agreeing to settle (no contest).

PENALTY ANALYSIS

Oakland's Campaign Reform Act authorizes the Commission to impose up to the maximum of $5,000 or three times the amount not properly reported. The PEC's Penalty Guidelines further provide a framework for determining appropriate penalties, including possible base-level fine amounts for each type of violation under the Act. Both are summarized together for this type of violation as follows:

Violation	Base-Level Per Violation	Statutory Limit Per Violation
Failure to Properly Report Intermediary Contributions	$1,000	$5,000 or three times the amount not properly reported, whichever is greater

The PEC will consider all relevant mitigating and aggravating circumstances surrounding a violation when deciding on a penalty, including, but not limited to, the following factors:

1. The seriousness of the violation, including, but not limited to, the extent of the public impact or harm;

2. The presence or absence of any intention to conceal, deceive, or mislead;

3. Whether the violation was deliberate, negligent, or inadvertent;

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4. Whether the violation was isolated or part of a pattern;

5. Whether the respondent has a prior record of violations and/or demonstrated knowledge of the rule or requirement at issue;

6. The extent to which the respondent voluntarily and quickly took the steps necessary to cure the violation (either independently or after contact from the PEC);

7. The degree to which the respondent cooperated with the PEC's enforcement activity in a timely manner;

8. The relative experience of the respondent;

9. The respondent's ability to pay the contemplated penalty without suffering undue financial hardship. This factor shall not apply to the portion of a penalty that constitutes a repayment or disgorgement of the unlawful amount, except in cases of extreme financial hardship.

The PEC has broad discretion in evaluating a violation and determining the appropriate penalty based on the totality of circumstances. This list of factors to consider is not an exhaustive list, but rather a sampling of factors that could be considered. There is no requirement or intention that each factor - or any specific number of factors - be present in an enforcement action when determining a penalty. As such, the ability or inability to prove or disprove any factor or group of factors shall in no way restrict the PEC's power to bring an enforcement action or impose a penalty.

Analysis of the Present Case

The circumstances of the Respondents' conduct establish the following aggravating and mitigating factors that should be taken into account when determining an appropriate penalty in this case.

The violations associated with using OAKPAC as a pass-through for contributions are serious violations of the Campaign Reform Act. While the individual respondents have stated that they did not believe that the actions they took violated the law, the people involved in this arrangement were all sophisticated individuals who should have been familiar with campaign finance law (Wasserman is also an attorney) and engaged in activity which deprived voters of donor information required by law. In addition, the existence of an internal accounting and

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tracking document of contributions made to OAKPAC, and planned for ORL, suggests an intentional pattern of conduct to conceal the names of individuals whose contributions ended up going to ORL, regardless of whether there was knowledge that these activities were illegal.

In mitigation, OAKPAC did report the original donors on its own Form 460s; however, that reporting was not due until after the election was over. None of the respondents in this case have prior PEC or FPPC violations in which they were named individually or as organizations.

In total, there were 16 contributions received by OAKPAC and paid to ORL that were not properly reported as intermediary contributions, resulting in 16 violations. Because of the aggravating factors discussed above, an appropriate penalty for each of these violations should be above the base-level penalty of $1,000 but below the $5,000 maximum per-violation penalty (or three times the amount not properly reported, which is not being pursued here due to the mitigating factors) due to the respondents admitting liability and agreeing to this settlement.

RECOMMENDED PENALTIES

In light of the above factors, PEC staff and respondents have mutually agreed upon the following penalties and recommend that the Commission vote to approve them:

Count	Violations	Respondent(s)	Amount at Issue	Recommended Penalty
1	Failure to Properly Report 16 Intermediary Contributions	OAKPAC, Oakland Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce; Barbara Leslie (no contest, without admitting liability); Robert Zachary Wasserman (no contest, without admitting liability)	$89,800	$42,000 ($3,000 per intermediary contribution in 2018; $2,250 per intermediary contribution in 2019)

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Final Audit Report 2026-10-19

Created:	2026-10-19
By:	Han-Hsien Miletic (HMiletic@bwslaw.com)
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAAWLeX0VfY4gZkinJp-omnUB2OFVGpoAQu

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Signature Date: 2026-10-19 - 5:13:57 PM GMT - Time Source: server - Signature Appearance Selected: DRAW

Agreement completed.
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Adobe Acrobat Sign

ENFORCEMENT UNIT
PUBLIC ETHICS COMMISSION
CITY OF OAKLAND
250 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza
Suite 6303
Oakland, CA 94612(510) 238-3593
TDD (510) 238-3254

TO: Public Ethics Commission
FROM: Tovah Ackerman, Enforcement Chief
DATE: September 28, 2026
RE: Case Closure: In the Matter of Erik Logan (PEC Case No. 26-19):; In the Matter of Mark Tortorich (PEC Case No. 26-20); and 26-21: In the Matter of Ken Jones (PEC Case No. 26-21) prepared for the November 18, 2026 Public Ethics Commission Meeting

Requested Action: PEC Staff request the Commission adopt Staff's recommendation to close PEC Case Nos. 26-19, 26-20, and 26-21 – all proactive cases regarding Form 700 late-filers – with warning letters to Respondents.

BACKGROUND

Each of these cases concerns late filing of a required annual Form 700 (Statement of Economic Interests) for 2024 which, in pertinent part, is governed by Oakland Municipal Code § 2.25.040(B) - Conflicts of interest and personal gain.

The cases before the Commission are as follows:

- PEC Case No. 26-19, Respondent Erik Logan (then-Battalion Chief of the Oakland Fire Department (OFD), currently retired);
- PEC Case No. 26-20, Respondent Mark Tortorich (then-Commissioner of the Oakland Housing Authority Commissioner, currently separated from the City); and
- PEC Case No. 26-21, Respondent Ken Jones (then-Consultant to Oakland Housing Community Development still acting in that capacity).

In each of these cases, the required annual Form 700 was ultimately filed, but only after the applicable deadline of April 1, 2025. City filing records confirm the following filing dates for Respondents' annual Form 700s for 2024: Erik Logan filed on September 4, 2026; Mark Tortorich filed on March 27, 2026; and Ken Jones filed on June 23, 2026.

APPLICABLE LAWS AND ANALYSIS

O.M.C. § 2.25.040(B) requires timely filing of Form 700 disclosures by covered officials and employees. The PEC's Mediation and Complaint Procedures provide that, upon review of staff's written report and recommendation, the Commission may close a matter, request further investigation, request that staff seek a stipulated settlement, or proceed in another authorized manner. The Procedures further provide that the Commission may issue a warning letter at any phase of its review, either in conjunction with another remedy or as a stand-alone resolution. The PEC's Enforcement Penalty Guidelines likewise recognize warning letters as an available enforcement option in appropriate matters.

PEC staff recommend warning letter closure here because they are cured, disclosure-only violations for which more punitive enforcement would provide limited additional public benefit. In some instances, the delays were substantial, and several respondents held positions carrying clear annual Form 700 obligations. For that reason, closure with no action would understate the seriousness of the compliance failures. At the same time, all required annual disclosures are now on file, the public disclosure objective has already been achieved, and the remaining practical remedy is limited.

On the current record, these matters do not involve allegations of concealment, self-dealing, false statements, bribery, misuse of office, or other substantive ethics misconduct. Rather, they concern untimely disclosure, with varying lengths of delay and varying degrees of responsiveness before the filing deficiencies were cured. They are therefore best understood as cured reporting violations, not public corruption or misuse-of-office matters. PEC staff recommends warning letters as the most proportionate and administratively fitting enforcement response under these circumstances. They formally record the violations, preserve deterrent value for future enforcement matters, maintain a documented accountability measure for these respondents, and avoid diverting limited PEC enforcement resources away from higher-priority matters. In staff's assessment, renewed pursuit of more punitive outcomes in these cured late-filer matters would consume scarce PEC resources while offering only limited incremental transparency or deterrent value.

RECOMMENDATION

For the reasons set forth above, **PEC Staff recommend that the Commission approve closure of PEC Case Nos. 26-19, 26-20, and 26-21 with warning letters to Respondents.**

Francis Upton IV, Chair
Karun Tilak, Vice Chair
Luke Apfeld
Tanya Bayeva
L. Lawrence Brandon
Angi Fisher
Ryan Micik

Suzanne Doran, Executive Director

TO: Public Ethics Commission

FROM: Suzanne Doran, Executive Director

DATE: November 5, 2026

RE: Executive Director's Report for the November 18, 2026, Regular PEC Meeting

This memorandum provides updates regarding Public Ethics Commission (PEC or Commission) programs and operations, such as budget, staffing, and legislative and policy initiatives since the last Commission meeting, as well as a summary of major 2026 Commission projects and initiatives.

Commissioner Recruitment

One Commission-appointed seat expires in January 2027. Distribution of the Commissioner recruitment announcement and application started in September, and the application date has been extended through November 15. Staff utilized varied forms of outreach to inform Oakland residents about the opportunity to serve on the Commission over the past two months including: revised recruitment materials; tabling at community events; postering in City facilities; targeted emails to local minority bar associations and community groups representing the African American, AAPI, Hispanic, and LGBTQ communities; social media and LinkedIn posts; and coordinating with City officials to include recruitment information in their newsletters and posts. As of November 3, the Commission has received 13 online applications. At least one resident applied from every district except District 1.

The Commission Chair will appoint an Application Review Ad Hoc Subcommittee to review every application received and invite the strongest applicants to an interview. The Subcommittee will then forward the most qualified candidates for a final in-person interview and selection by the full Commission at its January 2027 PEC meeting.

PEC Legislation

Current activities related to implementation and administration of laws in the Commission's jurisdiction include:

Charter Amendment Measure EE. Final election outcomes had not be determined as of this writing, but early vote tallies show voters favoring Measure EE approval at over 73 percent. If adopted, the new legislation would take effect in 2027, requiring Commission staff to prepare salary adjustment recommendations for the offices of Mayor and City Councilmember for the Commission's consideration in the first half of 2027. Staff has initiated the groundwork in coordination with the Human Resources Management department to begin determining a method to implement these new duties, which includes selecting comparable positions for both offices and California cities and counties to survey; identifying a reliable, recognized source for salary data; collecting the data; identifying best practices and professional HR-industry definitions to define standards for evaluating the salary criteria; and conducting the analysis and salary adjustment recommendations for the Commission's consideration. To administer the salary adjustment process independently and professionally within that timeframe, PEC staff will coordinate with City Administration and may contract with an outside consultant with expertise in conducting salary and compensation reviews, which are outside of the PEC's normal subject matter expertise.

In addition, the Charter amendment renames and makes substantive changes to Section 218, which is legislation within the Commission's jurisdiction. The new section retains the prohibition on Councilmembers and their staff attempting to direct or coerce City employees under the jurisdiction of the Mayor, City Administrator or other appointed or elected officers in conducting administrative actions. However, sentences are removed that detail types of prohibited activity, enforcement mechanism, and penalty for violation. The new language reframes the section from one that specifies only prohibited actions by Councilmembers and their staff to instead add new elements that specify the duties of the City Administration to respond to Council inquiries and affirms the Councilmembers' ability to request information or data, report constituent complaints, follow up on service requests, make proposals for projects or plans, and obtain updates. These provisions are unique to Oakland; no other ethics commission in California has these requirements. Staff will conduct further analysis to determine necessary revisions to PEC ethics guidance and how to assess potential complaints under this section.

Limited Public Financing Program. Three candidates participated in this year's program, and all three candidates met program eligibility requirements including participating in a qualified debate. The deadline for submission of reimbursement claims passed on November 2. The table below shows the public financing distributed and outstanding reimbursement claims for each candidate as of November 2, 2026.

Candidate	Funds Distributed	Reimbursement Requests Pending
Charlene Wang	$8,912.00	$42,731.75*
Nate Adams	$21,461.28	$26,563.67*
Kevin Jenkins	$38,309.57	$33,249.57*

*Final reimbursement is capped at the maximum amount available to each candidate, $48,000.

A post-election report will be presented at a future meeting.

Looking Ahead - PEC Priorities

Following the Commission's October 28 retreat, staff started updating its work plan to align with the priorities and projects identified by the Commission. A summary of program goals, key performance indicators, and major initiatives for the coming year will be included with the 2026 year-end staff reports presented at the January meeting.

Key priorities identified for 2027-2028 include:

- Implementing the Commission's new salary-setting responsibilities established by Charter Amendment Measure EE.
- Conducting comprehensive legislative reviews to identify best practices and potential amendments for City Council consideration, with an initial focus on:
    - Local and state restrictions on contractor contributions and disclosure requirements; and
    - The Sunshine Ordinance/improving systems for public records access, which may include planning a public event or hearing.
- Evaluating complaint and mediation procedures, penalty guidelines, and enforcement processes for opportunities to improve timely case resolution.
- Continuing to strengthen enforcement efforts by prioritizing high-impact cases, accelerating preliminary complaint reviews, reducing caseload, and creating capacity for proactive investigations.
- Advancing Democracy Dollars implementation milestones needed for a 2030 pilot, including completing software development, policy development, contract execution, partnership building, identifying potential funders, and baseline data analysis.
- Launching a public outreach campaign celebrating the PEC's 30th anniversary to highlight its mission, accomplishments, and impact.

- Expanding internal outreach to increase City staff awareness of PEC resources, education programs, and enforcement responsibilities.
- Partnering with ITD to streamline late-fee collection and automate local disclosure forms, improving the filing experience and public access to data while reducing manual processing and publication tasks.

Please note, the list above is not a full picture of all the PEC's ongoing work but a brief summary of key projects and priorities in the broader context of the PEC's mission and duties as established by its governing laws and policy.

Major 2026 Projects or Initiatives

The table below provides a high-level overview of PEC projects and initiatives that are either statutory requirements or obligatory core services that require substantial staff time in 2026:

Quarter	Month	Commission Items	Major Staff Activities
1	January	Elect Chair and Vice Chair ✓ PEC-appointments to fill vacant seats ✓ Democracy Dollars Outreach Strategy Report presented ✓	• New Commissioner onboarding • Chair and Vice Chair Orientation • City Council salary adjustment presented to Commission • Hybrid meetings implemented • Recruitment to fill staff vacancies conducted • Mid-cycle budget proposal and information submitted
	February	No meeting	
	March	City Council Salary Adjustment resolution adopted (Charter Sec. 202) ✓ City Attorney and City Auditor Salary Adjustment discussion ✓ Transparency ad hoc subcommittee established ✓	
2	April	Special Meeting – City Attorney Salary Adjustment adopted (Charter Sec. 401(1)) ✓ City Auditor Salary Adjustment adopted (Charter Sec. 403(1)) ✓	• City Attorney and City Auditor salary adjustment presented to Commission • Mid-cycle budget adjustment process • Staff Performance Reviews completed • Dept. Equal Access Report completed • 5 positions filled, offers pending for remaining vacant positions • Updates to OCRA and LPF guides and training materials for 2026 elections published • Election-related education, compliance, and enforcement activities
	May	Review and comment on proposed Charter amendments to Sections 218, 301, 400, and 603 ✓ 2026 OCRA Guide published ✓ Democracy Dollars ad hoc subcommittee established ✓	
	June	No meeting	
3	July	Limited Public Financing Program Overview and 2026 Guide presented ✓ City Auditor's Ethics Climate Survey Report ✓	• Onboarding and training for 4 new FTEs • Administer Limited Public Financing Program • Election-related education, compliance, and enforcement activities
	August	Special Meeting – Announce funds available and fund distribution for 2026 election ✓	

Quarter	Month	Commission Items	Major Staff Activities
	September	Presentation/demo of PEC disclosure tools ✓ Announce Commissioner application process ✓	• Update the OpenDisclosure website for the 2026 elections • Draft 2023, 2024, and 2025 Annual reports/Strategic Planning Retreat planning
4	October	Special Meeting – Strategic planning retreat ✓ 2023, 2024, and 2025 Annual reports published ✓	• Administer Limited Public Financing Program • Election-related education, compliance, and enforcement activities • Recruitment to fill PEC-appointed Commission seat/Coordinate City Attorney appointment
	November	• Adopt 2027 meeting schedule • Establish Commissioner Recruitment ad hoc subcommittee, refer applicants for full Commission interviews	
	December	No meeting scheduled	
Looking Ahead to 2027			
1 & 2	January - June	• Elect 2027 Chair and Vice Chair • PEC-appointment to fill 2027-2030 term • Subcommittee appointments: o Legislation review o Complaint, penalty procedures, processes • Adopt method for new salary-setting duties for Mayor and City Council/authorize new salaries for FY 27-28 • Recommendations from Transparency Ad Hoc subcommittee presented to Commission	• New Commissioner onboarding • Implement new salary-setting duties enacted by Measure EE • Calculate and publish contribution and expenditure limit adjustments • FY 27 – 29 Budget Development • Democracy Dollars software development/design pilot option • Draft 2026 Annual Report • 30th Anniversary outreach campaign • City staff ethics awareness outreach campaign • Updates to ethics training and educational resources • Partnership with ITD to standardize and streamline local disclosure forms and data publication

Francis Upton IV, Chair
Karun Tilak, Vice Chair
Luke Apfeld
Tanya Bayeva
L. Lawrence Brandon
Angi Fisher
Ryan Micik

Suzanne Doran, Executive Director

TO: Public Ethics Commission
FROM: Jelani Killings, Senior Analyst, Engagement and Compliance
DATE: November 4, 2026
RE: Engagement and Compliance Program Report for the November 18, 2026 Regular PEC Meeting

This memorandum provides a summary of major accomplishments in the Public Ethics Commission's (PEC or Commission) Engagement and Compliance program activities since the last regular meeting. Commission Staff compliance activities focus on enhancing compliance with disclosure rules and improving tools for public access to local campaign finance and other disclosure data. 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.

Compliance with Disclosure Requirements

Commission staff conduct filing officer duties as required by state and local law and aim 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 – The pre-election filing deadlines for the November election were on September 24, 2026, and October 22, 2026. All candidates on the November 2026 ballot were required to file campaign statements. Candidates raising or spending $2,000 or more file their campaign statements on FPPC Form 460. Candidates intending to keep their campaign under $2,000 must file FPPC Form 470. Ballot measure committees and other recipient committees with fundraising or spending activity connected with the November ballot must also file for the pre-election deadlines.

All candidates on the November 2026 ballot required to file have filed their statements. A total of 61 reports were filed, and six committees were assessed late fees.

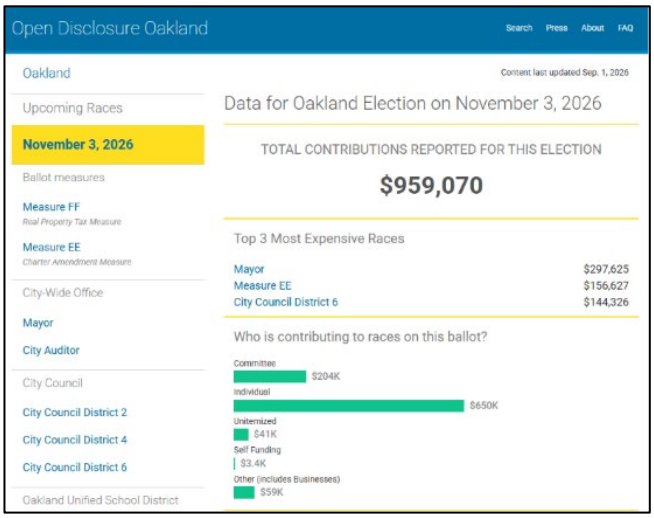
Campaign statements are available to view and download at the PEC's Public Portal for Campaign Finance Disclosure.

47
Registered Lobbyists

Lobbyist Registration Program – 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. October 31 was the deadline for quarterly lobbyist activity reports covering the period from July 1 through September 30, 2026. Fifty reports were filed, and six lobbyists were assessed late fees. An up-to-date list of registered lobbyists and lobbyist activity reports with links to view and download individual reports is available at the Public Ethics Commission's Lobbyist Dashboard and Data webpage.

Behested Payment Disclosure – During the month of October, the Mayor's Office reported two behested payments totaling $31,000 in contributions solicited for charitable, legislative, or governmental purposes. Behested Payment Reports must be filed with the campaign filing officer within 30 days of successfully soliciting $5,000. The reports are available for public viewing through the Public Portal for Campaign Finance Disclosure. A search for filings by a public official's name will return any behested payment reports in the database submitted by the official (identified as Form 803).

Illuminating Disclosure Data

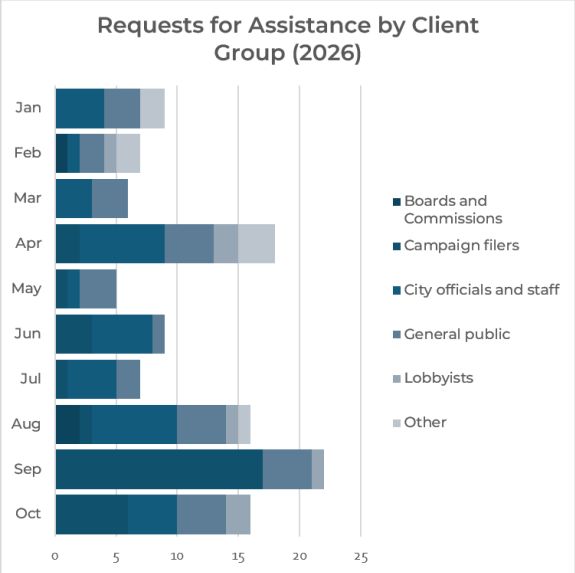


Open Disclosure Oakland – The opendisclosure.io campaign finance app is live with the data for the November 2026 election cycle. Open Disclosure Oakland, a nonpartisan tool, was developed by volunteers from OpenOakland, a civic technologist group, in partnership with Commission staff to give all Oakland residents equal access to campaign finance data. The Open Disclosure Oakland website shows funds donated to both political candidates and ballot measure committees and provides clear summaries of money raised and spent as well as financial trends for each election. The website also includes a search function that makes campaign donation records easy to search and sort and allows users to search campaign donors by name across multiple campaigns and elections. Open Disclosure Oakland is updated daily with data imported directly from the City's campaign finance database and includes a notification system that sends subscribers alerts about new campaign reports.

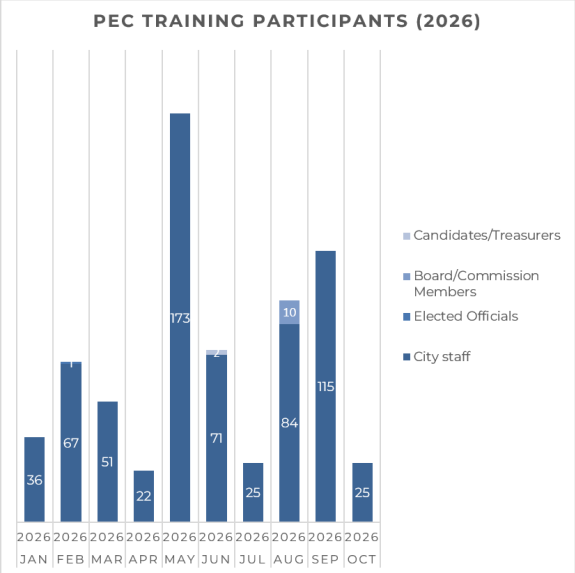
ADVICE AND ENGAGEMENT

Advice and Technical Assistance – Between September 2026 and the date of this report, Commission Staff responded to 38 requests for information, advice, or assistance regarding campaign finance, ethics, Sunshine law, or lobbyist issues.

***Ethics Training* –** In addition to the PEC's online ethics trainings, Commission Staff provides live trainings for City employees through the City's New Employee Orientation (NEO), Supervisory Academy, and upon request. On September 16, Staff provided a presentation to department directors regarding campaign activity rules. The presentation covered provisions of the Oakland Campaign Reform Act and Government Ethics Act, including misuse of City resources, reporting solicited contributions, and rules related to ballot measure activity. On September 29, staff provided the training for all City employees.



***Candidates and Campaigns* –** As part of our continuing campaign education efforts, staff issues routine guidance to ensure that candidates and committees are aware of local rules during this election season. In the months of September and October, Staff sent out two bulletins and two notices covering the following topics:



- A bulletin reminding campaign committees and officeholders about social media disclaimer requirements.
- A joint citywide bulletin with the Department of Human Resources Management to remind City staff and officials about the rules related to campaign activity.
- An email reminder that, under state law, candidates who control multiple candidate-controlled committees, including officeholder committees, are required to file pre-election campaign statements for each committee.
- A notice about the prohibition on distributing campaign materials on City property and other Government Ethics Act requirements.

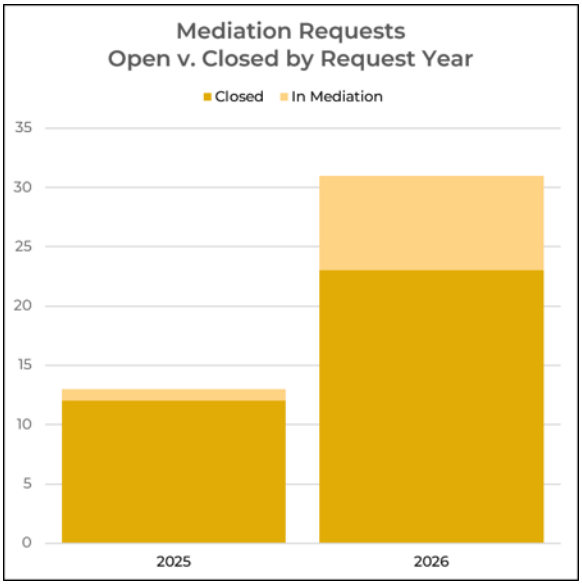
***General Outreach* –** On October 14, Staff tabled at the Mayor's East Oakland State of the City Address to distribute Commissioner recruitment materials. The Commission application period has been extended to November 15, and activities to publicize the opening will continue through the application deadline.

Francis Upton IV, Chair
Karun Tilak, Vice Chair
Luke Apfeld
Tanya Bayeva
L. Lawrence Brandon
Angi Fisher
Ryan Micik

Suzanne Doran, Executive Director

TO: Public Ethics Commission
FROM: Bhawna Chowdhary, Ethics Analyst
Jelani Killings, Senior Analyst, Engagement and Compliance
DATE: November 4, 2026
RE: Mediation Program Report for the November 18, 2026, PEC Meeting

Pursuant to the Oakland Sunshine Ordinance, the Commission conducts mediation of public records requests made by members of the public to City departments for records within the department's control. Since the last Commission meeting, the Commission received nine new requests for mediation, and completed 12 mediations. This brings the total mediation caseload to nine open mediations.



Staff resolved the following cases:

1. **In the Matter of the Office of the City Administrator (Mediation Case No. M2025-06).** On October 3, 2025, the Commission received a request for mediation alleging that the City Administrator's Office failed to respond to a public records request. Staff initiated mediation on October 3, 2025. The City Administrator's Office released all the responsive records on September 14, 2026 and closed the public records request. Accordingly, Staff closed the mediation with no further action.

2. **In the Matter of the Office of the City Council (Mediation Case No. M2025-08).** On October 31, 2025, the Commission received a request for mediation alleging that the District 3 Council office failed to respond to a public records request. Staff initiated mediation on October 31, 2025, and contacted the City Council staff. The City Council office released responsive documents on a rolling basis throughout September and October 2026. Staff contacted the Requestor to confirm that they received all responsive documents, but the Requestor did not respond to further communications.Accordingly, Staff closed the mediation with no further action.

3. **In the Matter of the Public Works Department (Mediation Case No. M2025-10).** On November 12, 2025, the Commission received a request for mediation alleging that the City of Oakland's Public Records Coordinator (Office of the City Clerk, Office of the City Administrator) failed to respond to a public records requests made by the Requestor. Staff initiated mediation and contacted the City Clerk's office. The City Clerk was awaiting a response from the Requestor to narrow the scope of the request. Staff contacted the Requestor and was informed that they are no longer interested in obtaining the record. Accordingly, Staff closed the mediation with no further action.

4. **In the Matter of the Planning and Building Department (Mediation Case No. M2025-12).** On November 17, 2025, the Commission received a request for mediation alleging that the Planning and Building Department failed to respond to a public records requests made by the Requestor. Staff initiated mediation on November 17, 2025, and contacted the department. On December 15, 2025, the Planning and Building Department released a series of documents and stated that they would continue to release responsive documents on a rolling basis. The Planning and Building Department initiated an EDDR request for any available responsive documents and is awaiting the results. On October 7, 2026, staff contacted the Requestor to confirm if they were still interested in pursuing mediation and received no response. Accordingly, Staff closed the mediation with no further action.

5. **In the Matter of the Oakland Police Department (Mediation Case No. M2026-02)**. On January 29, 2026, the Commission received a mediation request alleging that the Oakland Police Department (OPD) closed a public records request citing a privacy exemption. However, the Requestor believed that the requested records were not exempt. Staff initiated mediation on January 29, 2026, and contacted the City Attorney's Office to confirm whether the cited exemption applied to all the requested documents. Staff followed up with OPD to release non-exempt documents to the Requestor. On October 19th, 2026, OPD released the responsive documents. October 20, 2026, Staff contacted the Requestor and confirmed that they received the responsive documents. Accordingly, Staff closed the mediation with no further action.

6. **In the Matter of the Oakland Police Department (Mediation Case No. M2026-16).** On August 4, 2026, the Commission received a request for mediation alleging that the Oakland Police Department (OPD) failed to respond to a public records request. The Requestor believed that the records sought were not exempt from disclosure. Staff initiated mediation on August 4, 2026, and contacted OPD. On August 15, 2026, OPD released the responsive documents. Staff contacted the Requestor and confirmed receipt of the responsive documents. Accordingly, Staff closed the mediation with no further action.

7. **In the Matter of the Office of the City Administrator (Mediation Case No. M2026-17).** On August 24, 2026, the Commission received a mediation request alleging that the City Administrator failed to release relevant documents to a public records request. Staff attempted to contact the Requestor multiple times to acquire additional information about the request and initiate mediation. Staff received no response after two months. Accordingly, Staff closed the mediation with no further action.

8. **In the Matter of the Oakland Police Department (Mediation Case No. M2026-18).** On August 1, 2026, the Commission received a request for mediation alleging that the Oakland Police Department (OPD) failed to release responsive documents to a public records request. Staff initiated mediation on August 1, 2026. On August 20, 2026, OPD released the requested documents. Staff contacted the Requestor and confirmed receipt of the responsive documents. Accordingly, Staff closed the mediation with no further action

9. **In the matter of the Oakland Privacy Advisory Commission (Mediation Case No. M2026-28).** On October 12, 2026, the Commission received a mediation request alleging that the Privacy Advisory Commission failed to provide responsive documents to a public records request. Staff initiated mediation and contacted the Information Technology Department (ITD), Oakland Police Department (OPD), and the City Administrator's Office, respectively. ITD and the City Administrator's Office released the responsive documents, confirmed that no additional responsive records exist, and closed the public records request. Staff notified the Requestor. Accordingly, Staff closed the mediation with no further action

10. **In the Matter of the Office of the City Administrator (Mediation Case No. M2026-30).** On October 12, 2026, the Commission received a mediation request alleging that City Administrator's Office (CAO) failed to provide responsive documents to a public records request. Staff initiated mediation and contacted the Information Technology Department (ITD) to confirm that there were no responsive records. ITD confirmed that there were no responsive records and closed the request. Staff notified the Requestor. Accordingly, Staff closed the mediation with no further action

11. **In the Matter of the Oakland Police Department (Mediation Case No. M2026-31).** On October 12, 2026, the Commission received a mediation request alleging that the Oakland Police Department (OPD) failed to provide responsive documents to a public records request. Staff contacted OPD and the Internal Affairs Bureau (IAB) regarding the request. IAB stated that it does not handle public records releases; contact the Records Division and provide additional, specific details about the requested records. Staff notified the Requestor. Accordingly, Staff closed the mediation with no further action.

12. **In the Matter of the Office of the Planning and Building (Mediation Case No. M2026-32)**. On October 14, 2026, the Commission received a request for mediation alleging that the requested records were not provided in a timely manner. Staff initiated mediation on October 15, 2026, and contacted the Planning and Building Department. On October 26, the Planning and Building Department released the responsive records. Staff contacted the Requestor and confirmed that they received all the responsive documents. Accordingly, Staff closed the mediation with no further action

PUBLIC ETHICS COMMISSION
CITY OF OAKLAND

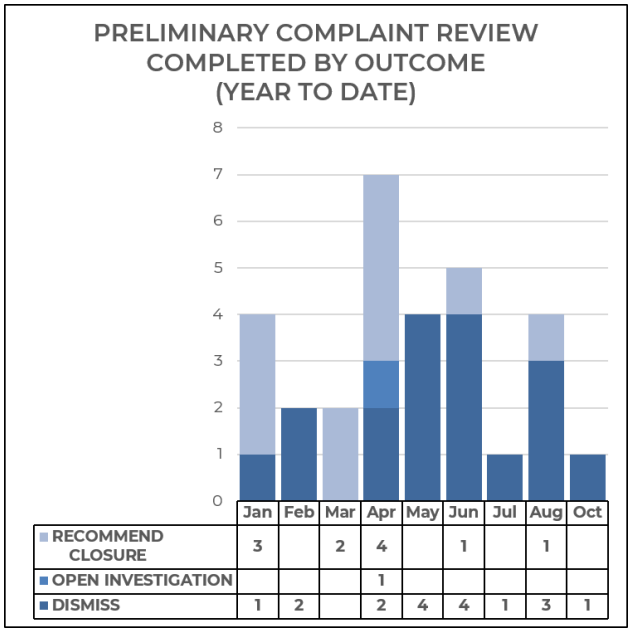
Francis Upton IV, Chair
Karun Tilak, Vice Chair
Luke Apfeld
Tanya Bayeva
L. Lawrence Brandon
Angi Fisher
Ryan Micik

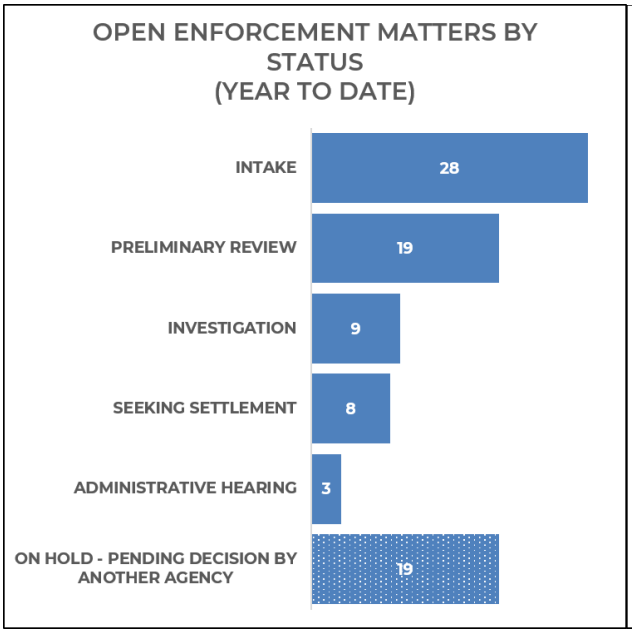
Suzanne Doran, Executive Director

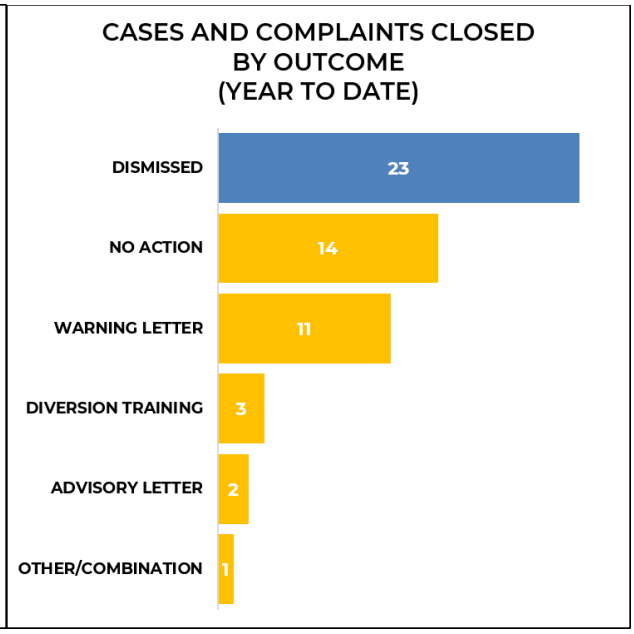
TO: Public Ethics Commission
FROM: Tovah Ackerman, Enforcement Chief
DATE: November 6, 2026
RE: Enforcement Report for the November 18, 2026, Regular PEC Meeting

Since the last Enforcement Program update submitted to the Commission on September 4, 2026, Commission staff **received five formal (sworn) complaints**. Commission staff also referred out a number of complaints to other agencies. Complaints referred to another agency and placed on hold pending a determination are not included in the caseload count.This brings the **total caseload to 67 open matters**. Additionally, there are **37 informal matters under review** that have not yet been dismissed or elevated and assigned a case number.

The charts below summarize complaints received, preliminary review of complaints completed by outcome, all open enforcement matters by complaint status, and cases and complaints closed by outcome.

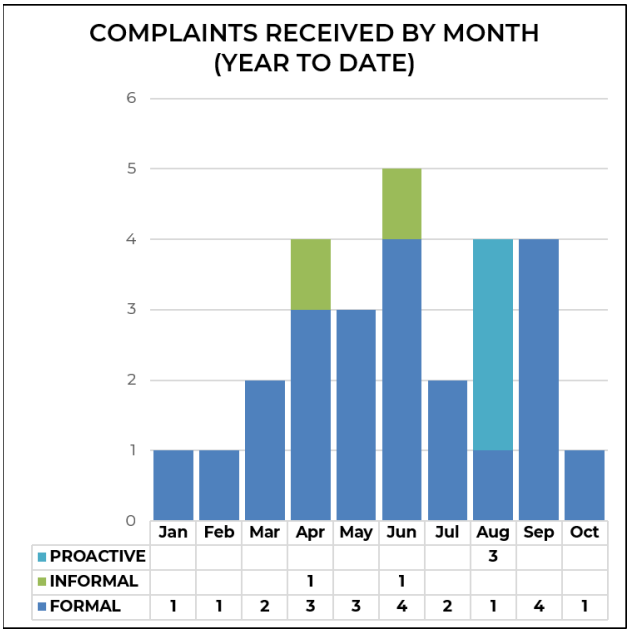






An overview of the complaint process as well as the Commission's full Complaint Procedures and Penalty Guidelines can be found on our Enforcement Program webpage

A searchable table of closed complaints can be found on our Enforcement Actions webpage.



The following complaints have been dismissed:

- ***In the Matter of Mark Forte (PEC # 24-26.02).*** In August of 2024, PEC Staff received a formal complaint alleging that the Respondent misused their position by releasing documents in response to a public records request that failed to redact a single address. Case outcomes t asserts disclosure of the a Complaint dismissals then-Mayor Sheng Thao by making one of her vocal critics, the Complainant, unsafe. PEC Staff dismissed the complaint because it does not meet the minimum threshold for opening an investigation based on a multi-factor

assessment, including the low likelihood of substantiating a violation given the facts presented, that the matter appears to be a one-off event, the minimal severity of the alleged conduct, and given current PEC resource constraints.

- ***In the Matter of Michael Houston (PEC # 24-26.03).*** In August of 2024, PEC Staff received a formal complaint alleging that the Respondent misused their position by inappropriately closing two of the Complainant's complaints filed with the City Auditor's Office, which the Complainant asserts benefitted the public employees and private citizens accused within those complaints, as well as then-Mayor Sheng Thao. PEC Staff dismissed the complaint because it does not meet the minimum threshold for opening an investigation based on a multi-factor assessment, including the low likelihood of substantiating a violation given the facts presented, that there is no evidence or allegation that Respondent is engaging in a pattern of case closures, that the complaint itself lacks relevant details to justify further investigation, and given current PEC resource constraints.
- ***In the Matter of City Workers (PEC # 26-14).*** In June of 2026, PEC Staff received a formal complaint alleging that employees within the City of Oakland's Department of Public Works were not following the Department's internal procedures or best practices relating to illegal dumping enforcement. The complaint has been referred to the City Auditor's Office. PEC Staff dismissed the complaint because the PEC lacks subject matter jurisdiction over the allegations, another agency with more appropriate jurisdiction has already been made aware of the allegations, and the complaint does not include information to support further investigation.

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Transparency Ad Hoc Subcommittee

(ad hoc, created March 18, 2026)

Members: Commissioners Francis Upton IV (Chair), Luke Apfeld, Angi Fisher

September 10, 2026

Commissioners present: Commissioners Francis Upton IV (Chair), Luke Apfeld, Angi Fisher
Staff present: Niels Thorsen, Ethics Analyst II
Guest: Michelle NewRingeisen, Strategy & Business Operations, Information Technology Department

Minutes

1. Staff provided update that CityCamp Oakland was cancelled due to a conflicting event. The Executive Director is extending an invitation to the Office of the City Attorney to meet with the subcommittee.

2. Guest, ITD Strategy & Business Operations Manager Michelle NewRingeisen, shared information and answered Commissioners questions about: ITD's role in supporting public records retrieval and the City's Electronic Data Discovery Request (EDDR) process. EDDR operates through the internally developed OakApps application, independent of the NextRequest system. ITD manages technical aspects of email retrieval, while departments review and respond to PRRs. The process involves standardized forms, technical work queues, and output in Microsoft Outlook (.pst) format, which can contribute to delays. Legal review and interdepartmental coordination are often required with ITD managing technical processes and the City Attorney's Office responsible for legal determinations.

The Commissioners discussed whether alternative systems or output formats could improve efficiency and reduce staff workload required to respond to public records requests. Opportunities for technology and automation were discussed, including reducing manual processing, leveraging artificial intelligence for document review and redaction, and improving automation while maintaining legal compliance. Staffing and operational challenges were highlighted in the discussion, noting that PRRs are handled in addition to departments' primary responsibilities. The Subcommittee discussed the potential benefits of dedicated staffing, automation, or a combination of both.

Broader opportunities for improving access to public records were identified, such as applying emerging technologies, targeting departments with high PRR volumes, and ensuring City staff understand and comply with statutory timelines.

Next Steps

- The Subcommittee will continue gathering information from City departments and subject matter experts to identify opportunities for improving access to public records and develop actionable recommendations. Representatives from the Office of the City Attorney and the City Clerk will be invited to a future meeting.
- The Subcommittee will continue to explore opportunities to take part in or organize a public event such as a panel discussion or hearing on these topics.