

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.



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 Bezeherntny, 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.

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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.

Noes: None.

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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.

The meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m.