

CITY OF OAKLAND

BUDGET ADVISORY COMMISSION

Meeting of the City of Oakland Budget Advisory Commission (BAC) held Wednesday, August 13, 2025, at 6:00 PM.

The Budget Advisory Commission was held in The Meeting Room at the 81st Avenue Branch Library, located at 1021 81st Ave, Oakland, CA 94621.

Commission Members:

Mandela Bliss, Larisa Casillas, Mike Forbes, Ben Gould, Margaret Grimsley, Mike Petouhoff, Jane Yang, Stephisha Ycoy-Walton

City's Representative(s):

Nathan Bassett & Walter Silva – *Finance Department*

Meeting Minutes:

Administrative Matters (5 minutes)

• Welcome and Roll Call

- **Present:** Commissioners Bliss, Casillas, Yang, Ycoy-Walton, Grimsley
- **Absent:** Commissioners Forbes, Gould, Petouhoff
- **Quorum Established:** Five of eight current commissioners were present.

II. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes (5 minutes)

• Meeting Minutes Approved For:

- April 9, 2025
- May 14, 2025
- June 11, 2025
- July 9, 2025
- **Motion:** Commissioner Ycoy-Walton moved to approve; Commissioner Bliss seconded.
- **Outcome:** Motion passed unanimously.

III. Commissioner Protocol (5 minutes)

• Appointments and Inquiries Update – Presented by Nathan Bassett

- Four appointments currently on hold
- Two new inquiries for commissioner seats
- Seat distribution: 1 per councilmember, 3 for Mayor, 1 for Auditor, 2 for Finance Management Committee, 1-Economic Development Committee
- Vacancies remain in Districts 3, 6, and 7

IV. Finance Department Updates (5 minutes)

• Presented by Nathan Bassett

- Announced departure from the City; Budget Bureau will provide additional staff support
- Recruitment underway for Finance Director and Revenue Tax Administrator

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- Budget Book release is forthcoming
- Expressed appreciation for the Commission's contributions
- **Commissioner Grimsley** inquired about submitting Measure W proposals to Council

V. Community Engagement Ad Hoc: Community Input on the Budget Process (60 minutes)

- **Purpose:** Biennial recommendations to the City Administrator on the budget process
- **Focus Areas:** Transparency and accountability
- **Public Comment Highlights:**
 - **Mayor's Commissioner:** Forums should be more interactive and workshop-style
 - **Senior Center Representative:** Staffing is inadequate at senior centers
 - **Diana Bell (Social Justice Ministry):** Advocated for accessible, relationship-based engagement
 - **Casey (People's Budget Coalition):** Criticized forums as performative; called for educational and engaging formats
 - **Amanda Mire (Surge Bay Area):** Expressed concern over rushed budget process and lack of clarity
 - **Alisha Randolph Bryant (Diamond District Resident):** Praised online budget book; raised concerns about federal/state cuts
 - **Jared Mitchell (Librarian):** Suggested community drop boxes; emphasized importance of library, parks, and arts funding
 - **Nathan Bassett:** Shared updates on performance measures and challenges in forum organization
- **Commissioner Feedback:**
 - **Grimsley:** Requested feedback on forum format and survey involvement
 - **Bliss:** Emphasized year-round engagement
 - **Yang:** Recommended executive summary and recommendation table in report
 - **Ycoy-Walton:** Advocated for more workshops, integration with People's Budget Coalition, and an annual communication calendar
 - **Casillas:** Ad Hoc Committee will incorporate feedback and submit a revised draft by September 30; vote scheduled for next meeting

VI. Open Forum (10 minutes)

- **Commissioner Grimsley:**
 - Requested Commission involvement in Measure W proposals
 - Raised concern about upcoming Council item (September 10) related to criminalization of homelessness

VII. Adjournment

- **Meeting Adjourned at 7:30 PM**
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