



STATEMENT OF PROCEEDINGS FOR THE  
REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
**GOVERNANCE REFORM TASK FORCE**  
EARVIN "MAGIC" JOHNSON RECREATION AREA  
905 E. EL SEGUNDO BLVD  
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90059



**WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2025, 5:00 P.M.**

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## **I. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS**

1. Call to Order, Roll Call, and Land Acknowledgment.

**Chair Marcel Rodarte called the meeting to order at 5:20 pm. Daniel Rojas, administrative staff, conducted roll.**

**A quorum was initially established with 9 members present of 13 seats.**

**Present:** Nancy Yap, Brian Calderón Tabatabai, Sara Sadhwani, Marcel Rodarte, David Phelps, Steve Neal, Julia Mockeridge, Derek Hsieh, John Fasana, and Interim Director Shadi Kardan.

**Absent:** Derek Steele, Rosa Soto, David Green, and Gabriela Gironas.

**Present:** Edward Yen, Executive Officer; and Norayr Zurabyan, Assistant County Counsel.

**The Los Angeles County Land Acknowledgement was played.**

2. Approval of Minutes
  - Action Item: Approval of the September 24, 2025, Meeting Minutes

**No members of the public addressed the Governance Reform Task Force on this item**

**Member Fasana motioned to approve the Meeting Minutes, seconded by Member Hsieh. Hearing no objections, the Meeting Minutes was approved.**

**Attachments:** [September 24, 2025, Meeting Minutes](#)

## **II. DISCUSSIONS**

3. Oral Report by the Executive Office of the Board of Supervisors on the GRTF Budget and Staffing.

**Executive Officer Yen provided an oral report on the GRTF Budget and Staffing, outlining how the department addressed significant challenges to secure resources for the GRTF. He explained that setting up the Task Force was difficult because the assignment came after the annual budget was finalized, causing initial challenges with staffing and logistics. The Executive Office secured a final budget of \$2.324 million for the GRTF and expanded the full-time support team from three to five staff members, with additional part-time help. The Executive Office is also actively recruiting external expertise through a Master Services Agreement process for faster hiring and by engaging university research partners. Executive Officer Yen affirmed the Executive Office's commitment to fully supporting the Task Force's mission.**

**Executive Officer Yen addressed questions and requests raised by members of the GRTF.**

**Regarding the budget and staffing, Executive Officer Yen clarified that the \$2.3 million figure is the starting budget for Fiscal Year 2025-26, which includes a carry-over from the previous fiscal year. He established that the next fiscal year budget would increase based on needs and confirmed that all staffing costs thus far, excluding consultants, have been absorbed by the Executive Office. He also confirmed that the accounting data from the current fiscal year will be used to establish the next budget. The Executive Office would work on calculating the percentage of money that has already been consumed by County Counsel and staff. He confirmed that all staffing costs thus far, excluding consultants, have been absorbed by the Executive Office. The Executive Office recently established a code for charging invoices to the GRTF and will provide that information, indicating he will actively try to help the GRTF save money. Regarding personnel, he clarified that Shadi, Jayson, and three additional staff (drawn from the existing pool of County employees) would be working full-time for the GRTF.**

**Concerning contracting, Executive Officer Yen indicated that the Master Services Agreement is expected to be approved in November 2025. He confirmed that the Executive Office would onboard requested contractors as quickly as possible, noting that the shortest engagement could be one week if a contractor accepts the terms. He assured members that a contractor could be onboarded more quickly for a short-term engagement with the possibility of extension through the Master Agreement, but he would need to know the GRTF's specific needs to determine the best procurement mechanism. He also confirmed the GRTF would have discretion to retain experts of their choosing.**

**Executive Officer Yen also agreed to provide the requested information on the discretionary component of the GRTF budget for engagement experts and an estimate of those costs as soon as possible. He will assist with providing insights into departmental budget presentations and obtaining more internal knowledge from County departments. He will also follow up with County Counsel to negotiate costs associated with their staff attendance at GRTF meetings.**

**Finally, Executive Officer Yen indicated that when hiring new staff, the Executive Office will share the classification title to clearly lay out the roles, expectations, and qualifications. He also indicated that funds could be made available and adjusted within the current fiscal year if the GRTF needs more money, and he would advocate on the GRTF's behalf.**

**No members of the public addressed the Governance Reform Task Force on this item.**

**Attachments:** [Staff Report](#)

#### **4. Discussion and Presentation by Ethics Experts**

**Presenters:**

- David Tristan, Executive Director of the Los Angeles City Ethics Commission
- Galena West, Executive Director of the Fair Political Practices Commission.

Executive Director Tristan presented on the Los Angeles City Ethics Commission (Commission), an independent body overseeing governmental ethics, campaign finance, and lobbying laws with the goal of compliance over prosecution. Voters last year adopted an amendment to their charter, including a \$7 million minimum mandatory budget, the ability to hire outside counsel on enforcement, and \$15,000 administrative penalties. Led by Executive Director Tristan, five volunteer Commissioners appointed by elected officials, and 46 staff, the Ethics Commission manages a \$23 million public matching funds program, processes over 27,000 public disclosures annually, handles 25,000 mandatory education/advice contacts, and has subpoena power.

Executive Director Tristan responded to questions from GRTF members, detailing the Ethics Commission's structure and operations. He believes there are key elements that should be in the LA County charter, which should reference ordinances to allow for flexibility as the Commission evolves. Executive Director Tristan highlighted that the Commission's \$7 million minimum budget can grow based on the City's general revenue, and its enforcement team is comprised of four attorneys.

Executive Director Tristan expressed confidence in the current structure and independence of the Commission's members, noting that Commissioners tend to disassociate themselves from their appointing officials. He explained that the Commissioners control the employment of the Executive Director, who in turn manages the employment of their own staff. While the Commission's initial hiring was handled by the City's Personnel Department, the Commissioners have since taken over the hiring process.

Executive Director Tristan emphasized that the most vital aspect is creating trust with those regulated, which increases compliance by encouraging individuals to proactively communicate with the agency. He noted that LA City has stricter laws and requirements compared to the FPPC. Additionally, the public matching funds program has boosted candidate participation and allowed first-time candidates to become viable and competitive.

The Ethics Commission's generated revenue, which includes administrative penalties and lobbying registration fees, goes to LA City's General Fund rather than the Ethics Commission's budget. He also noted that the Ethics Commission is subject to the California Public Records Act, though disclosure of some information is restricted.

Finally, Executive Director Tristan believes the Ethics Commission could have more flexibility to propose ordinance changes directly on the ballot but strongly insists that the agency's increased independence demands fair, impartial leadership to prevent power misuse.

Next, Executive Director West presented on the Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC). The FPPC is structured as a five-member, non-partisan commission, where no more than three members can belong to the same political party, with appointments made by the Governor, Controller, Secretary of State, and Attorney General. The FPPC

has a staff of about 105 and budget of around \$19 million. Its core duties include issuing regulations, formal opinions, and taking positions on legislation authored by others. The agency provides extensive educational outreach and assistance, highlighted by over 50 webinars, thousands of emails and phone advice contacts (with advice letters offering immunity), and specialized tools for first-time candidates.

Enforcement is a significant part of its work, handling cases from sworn and anonymous complaints, filing officer referrals, and media reports. The FPPC has the power to prosecute both administratively and civilly. While administrative fines are currently capped at \$5,000 per violation (with a five-year statute of limitations), the FPPC manages its large caseload through a streamlined settlement program based on pre-approved regulations. This reliance on codified regulations is crucial to the FPPC's operations, as it ensures the rules are applied equally to everyone regardless of who holds office.

Executive Director West responded to questions from GRTF members. FPPC handles virtually all political reform filings statewide unless a local jurisdiction has adopted its own specific ordinances. She clarified that the agency does not enforce the Brown Act and, due to legal limitations on blocking complaints, manages its workload by using expedited procedures for repeat offenders and relying on overtime staff during elections to process complaints quickly under the requirement of full public disclosure.

1 member of the public virtually addressed the Governance Reform Task Force on this item.

**Attachments:** [Presentation by David Tristan](#)

[Presentation by Galena West](#)

[Staff Report](#)

#### 5. Update and Consideration of Potential Action: Active GRTF Ad Hoc Subcommittees

Discussion and Potential Action: Report by the following GRTF Ad Hoc Subcommittees on their progress and work plans:

- GRTF Ad Hoc Subcommittee to Identify Speakers and Experts for Long-Term Goals
- GRTF Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Expansion of the Board
- GRTF Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Public Budget Presentations and Five-Day Posting Requirement for Non-Urgent Legislation
- GRTF Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Public Engagement Strategy
- GRTF Ad Hoc Subcommittee on the Establishment of an Independent Ethics Commission

Chair Pro Tem Yap provided an update on the Expansion of the Board Subcommittee, stating they're continuing to refine the type of information and speakers needed, focusing their efforts on the directed task of developing a staffing and budget model. She noted the Subcommittee is still seeking more resources to better understand the structure of current Board offices and to facilitate resource mapping throughout the County.

Member Hsieh stated that the Public Budget Presentations and Five-Day Posting Subcommittee has begun developing an outreach and information gathering strategy via a questionnaire, and plan to keep their recommendations internal and not bring in outside vendor to expedite the process and keep cost down. Chair Rodarte also indicated that the Chief Executive Office will be providing an overview of the budget at the next GRTF meeting.

Member Mockeridge and Member Phelps volunteered to join the Ad Hoc Subcommittee on the Public Budget Presentations and Five-Day Posting.

Member Neal outlined the subcommittee's focus for the rest of the year, which includes collaborating with other subcommittees to conduct virtual events. They plan to expand their public listening sessions to cover various topics that pertain to Measure G. Additionally, the subcommittee intends to utilize the nine Councils of Governments to deliver presentations, reaching both cities and unincorporated areas and soliciting public input. The final focus is on updating the website to better engage the public and facilitate the gathering of questions.

Member Sadhwani suggested creating a standard presentation for use in outreach at various locations. Chair Pro Tem Yap indicated that she and Member Gironas recently presented at League of Women Voters. Chair Rodarte indicated that he and Member Hsieh would be speaking at the Quality and Productivity Commission. Chair Rodarte recommended that the GRTF gather and present any questions that arose from presentations made to other groups. Member Sadhwani inquired about ways members of the public could get involved, specifically through providing surveys. Member Neal also recommended setting up GRTF tables at resource fairs to gather information from the public.

Chair Rodarte recommends the Ethics Commission Ad Hoc Subcommittee engage in more detailed conversations with the previous ethics expert presenters to aid in forming recommendations.

Member Hsieh expressed interest in volunteering for the Ethics Commission Ad Hoc Subcommittee if any members decide to withdraw.

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Hearing no objections, Member Mockeridge and Member Phelps were added to the Ad Hoc Subcommittee on the Public Budget Presentations and Five-Day Posting, and Member Hsieh was waitlisted for the Ethics Commission Ad Hoc Subcommittee.

**Attachments:** [Update Report by the Public Engagement Strategy Ad Hoc Subcommittee](#)

[Staff Report](#)

### **III. MISCELLANEOUS**

6. Matters not on the posted agenda, to be presented and (if requested) referred to staff or placed on the agenda for action at a future meeting of the Governance Reform Task Force, or

matters requiring immediate action because of an emergency or where the need to take immediate action came to the attention of the Governance Reform Task Force subsequent to the posting of the agenda.

**Chair Rodarte indicated that he would be adding an Executive Director report with status updates on action items. Also, he requested Interim Director Kardan research devices for GRTF members, including tablets, laptops, and phones.**

**Member Sadhwani indicated that when additional staffing is available, it would be helpful to track any lessons learned. She also provided an update on a meeting with Harvard Kennedy School, whose researchers aim to study other counties using models similar to what is detailed in Measure G. Chair Rodarte encouraged members to connect school researchers interested in Measure G with Interim Director Kardan.**

**Interim Director Kardan reminded members to provide their availability by the next day in the form that was sent out to staff can begin to schedule out regular meetings for next year.**

#### **IV. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

7. Opportunity for members of the public to address the Governance Reform Task Force on items of interest that are within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Governance Reform Task Force.

**2 members of the public addressed the Governance Reform Task Force via written correspondence.**

**Attachments:** [Public Comment/Written Correspondence](#)

#### **V. ADJOURNMENT**

8. Adjournment of the October 8, 2025, Governance Reform Task Force meeting.

**Chair Rodarte adjourned the meeting at 8:23 pm.**