



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 29, 2025, 5:00 P.M.

I. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

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

Chair Rodarte called the meeting to order at 5:26 pm. Jayson Chan, administrative staff, conducted roll.

A quorum was initially established with 11 members present of 13 seats. Subsequently, Member Phelps arrived at 6:07 pm, with 12 members present of 13 seats.

Present: Nancy Yap, Brian Calderón Tabatabai, Derek Steele, Rosa Soto, Sara Sadhwani, Marcel Rodarte, David Phelps, Steve Neal, Julia Mockeridge, Derek Hsieh, David Green, John Fasana, and Assistant Executive Officer Shadi Kardan.

Absent: Gabriela Gironas.

Present: Norayr Zurabyan, Assistant County Counsel.

The Los Angeles County Land Acknowledgement was played.

2. Approval of Minutes
 - Action Item: Approval of the October 8, 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 with one revision, seconded by Member Neal. Hearing no objections, the Meeting Minutes were approved as revised.

Attachments: [October 8, 2025, Meeting Minutes](#)

[October 8, 2025, Meeting Minutes \(revised\)](#)

II. DISCUSSIONS

3. Discussion and Presentation by Professor Fernando Guerra, Professor of Political Science and Chicana/o Latina/o Studies, Loyola Marymount University

Discussion and Presentation by Professor Fernando Guerra on Governance Changes in Los Angeles and the Haynes Foundation Grant on LA County Governance Reform Project.

Professor Fernando Guerra and Dr. Francisco Jasso provided a presentation on the

work of the Thomas and Dorothy Leavey Center for the Study of Los Angeles, which follows a "research, action, justice" model and specializes in public opinion. The Center has been heavily involved in three key projects: the 2023 LA Governance Reform Project, 2024 Implementing Measure G, and the 2025-2027 LA County Governance Reform Research Grant from the Haynes Foundation. The latter, led by Professor Guerra and Dr. Jasso, is a multi-year effort focused on LA County governance reform. It involves six voter surveys (the first completed), focus groups, and interviews with leaders, concluding in a 2027 comparative analysis with other counties.

Professor Guerra and Dr. Jasso addressed questions by the GRTF. They explained their survey methodology, noting that their general LA County polls of about 2,000 residents use oversampling for small populations to ensure statistical validity, with the data then weighted back for accurate representation. They confirmed that oversampling unincorporated areas is possible but requires additional funding. Their initial survey focused on Measure G familiarity, but future surveys (scheduled for the first quarter of 2026) can be focused based on the GRTF's input. The surveys are conducted in four languages for residents, with smaller language groups addressed via focus groups. They also confirmed they work with other universities, specifically USC and UCLA, often collaborating and comparing methodologies. They stressed their willingness to collaborate with the GRTF on question design and noted that all of their raw data is publicly available.

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

Attachments: [Presentation](#)

[Staff Report](#)

4. Discussion and Presentation by Los Angeles County Chief Executive Office (CEO): Overview of LA County Budget process, funding sources, challenges, and fiscal outlook.

CEO representative Kieu-Anh King presented an overview of the LA County's year-long budget process, which begins internally every October and concludes the following October. The process is formally divided into three main phases: the Recommended Budget (released mid-April), the Final Changes Budget (adopted late June), and the Supplemental Changes Budget (adopted early October). A significant challenge arose with the new departmental public budget presentations mandated by the motion creating the GRTF, as they had to be "squeezed" into February to ensure the Board heard the requests before CEO's Recommended Budget was finalized, requiring Special Board Meetings over a small window of time and the development of a standardized presentation template to manage the logistics of 38 departments. CEO faces a constant balancing act because departmental budget requests (totaling up to \$2 billion annually) far exceed the new locally controlled revenue available (\$300 million).

The total County budget amounts to \$52.4 billion, but most of this funding is restricted, with about 73% being mandated by Federal or State requirements, which leaves approximately 5% (\$2.7 billion) as truly unrestricted. The primary source of the

County's core funding, the Net County Cost (\$14.2 billion), is the money the county controls most directly and comes primarily from property tax. However, property tax revenue growth has slowed significantly over the past five years, projecting stable, but lower, growth of about 4% in the coming years. Due to this slow revenue growth and the need to fund significant obligations, such as lawsuit settlements and labor agreements, the County was compelled to impose an 8.5% curtailment across department budgets. In terms of spending the limited Net County Cost, public protection (including Sheriff, Fire, and Probation) accounts for the largest single share at 32%. King concluded by stressing CEO's role is to facilitate the resource allocation process to bridge the gap between the numerous demands for services and the limited funds available to meet those needs.

Kieu-Anh King addressed questions by the GRTF by explaining that the County's budget process is largely incremental, with ongoing funding rolling over into the base budget annually, requiring departments to request new funds for programmatic increases. Evaluating effectiveness involves several steps: departments monitor services by contractors via contract monitoring and audit plans, and internally review all services for alignment with current priorities.

A major upcoming change is the implementation of a new data-driven budgeting protocol, which aims to align all future budget requests with specific programs, services, and measurable outcomes to ultimately measure efficacy and move beyond simple widget counting. This new system will integrate performance reporting, which is currently handled separately by the older Performance Counts system. Addressing concerns about the one-year budget cycle compared to a two-year budget cycle, King drew on experience in Seattle to suggest that even a biennial budget requires substantial annual effort due to constantly changing needs and revenues.

King stated that departmental public outreach for budget proposals varies widely: community-based departments like Parks conduct robust processes with numerous advisory meetings, while others are less inclined. The public can provide oral or written feedback during Board meetings every Tuesday and throughout the 14-day May public hearings, which are legally mandated by the County Budget Act.

Finally, King mentioned the GRTF could address its mandate to find cost-neutral funding for proposals by breaking down projects into smaller chunks or phased needs over multiple fiscal years and utilizing CEO's office staff to cost out requirements.

Member Fasana expressed doubt regarding the Task Force's capacity to engage meaningfully with the complex budget and meet the deadlines, particularly for the cost-neutral Ethics Commission proposal. Fasana questioned if the Task Force should spend time on budget details, stating that the Supervisors are better equipped to identify cuts. Fasana highlighted the difficulties of having a cost-neutral proposal due in December and the recommended budget request due in January, suggesting a phased, multi-year approach to the Commission's growth to manage the timeline.

Member Sadhwani requested greater detail from King on the new CEO data-driven budgeting protocol and the budget presentation templates provided to departments.

Member Hsieh requested a definition of "no additional costs," referring to the cost-

neutral mandate.

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

Attachments: [Presentation](#)
[Memorandum](#)
[Letter](#)
[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

Member Sadhwani indicated that three Harvard students will be speaking at the next Subcommittee meeting on Long-Term Goals.

Assistant Executive Officer Kardan indicated that internal surveys regarding the Public Budget Presentations were sent to County departments, with the surveys intended for the public still pending.

The Ad Hoc Subcommittee on the Independent Ethics Commission expressed interest in engaging with Nicolas Heidorn to draft initial recommendations. The subcommittee also met with Don Garcia from the Executive Office, who provided suggestions including potential revenue opportunities like fees on Form 700 filers. Following suggestions, the subcommittee plans to bring in "end user experts," such as attorney Stephen Koffman, to discuss the practical compliance challenges faced by candidates and campaigns, noting the complexity and ambiguity of the Form 700.

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

Attachments: [Staff Report](#)

6. Executive Director Oral Report: Update and Possible Action on Ongoing Requests

- GRTF budget (County Counsel billing)
- Available technical equipment
- 2026 regular meeting dates and locations

Assistant Executive Officer Kardan provided an update on the GRTF budget, technical equipment and 2026 regular meeting dates and locations. Specifically, County Counsel has not yet billed the GRTF for services provided. The cost for the Parliamentarian is covered by overhead and not billed directly to the Task Force. Chair Rodarte decided to rely primarily on the Parliamentarian for meetings, with the GRTF required to collectively approve any requests for external legal opinions due to the associated expenditure.

Quotes for technical equipment were requested. Utilizing County provided equipment would eliminate the need for the virtual desktop security requirement to access county resources from personal machines, which had been problematic.

Based on member surveys, the GRTF's meeting schedule for next year will be the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays at 5:00 P.M. Staff provided a list of potential meeting facilities to the GRTF. The Task Force specifically requested that the location list be updated to indicate whether the area is unincorporated, and suggested prioritizing specific areas like Altadena to encourage broader community engagement. Assistant Executive Officer Kardan emphasized the need for members to email any new location suggestions or contacts as soon as possible to expedite the confirmation process.

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

Attachments: [Staff Report](#)

III. MISCELLANEOUS

7. 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.

IV. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

8. 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.

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

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

V. ADJOURNMENT

9. Adjournment of the October 29, 2025, Governance Reform Task Force meeting.

Chair Rodarte adjourned the meeting at 8:39 pm.