

**WEST HOLLYWOOD
ETHICS REFORM TASK FORCE
SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA
TUESDAY, AUGUST 11, 2015
6:30 P.M.**

**WEST HOLLYWOOD CITY HALL
8300 SANTA MONICA BOULEVARD
COMMUNITY MEETING ROOM – 1ST FLOOR**

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – Task Force Chair Elizabeth Ralston called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.
 - A. Pledge of Allegiance – The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chair Ralston.
 - B. Chair Ralston reminded everyone to speak clearly into the microphones and to silence all mobile devices
 - C. Roll Call – Task Force Members Present: Joseph Guardarrama, Elizabeth Ralston, and Robert Stern. Staff Members Present: Assistant City Attorney Christi Hogin and Assistant City Clerk Melissa Crowder. No members were absent.
 - D. The minutes of July 11, 2015 and July 14, 2015 meetings were approved, as amended.

Assistant City Attorney Christi Hogin indicated that Steven Afriat of the Afriat Consulting Group, Inc. requested to speak for 15 minutes. She informed Chair Ralston that it was at her discretion whether or not to allow Mr. Afriat the additional time to speak. Chair Ralston conferred with the other Task Force members and they agreed to allow Mr. Afriat the additional speaking time.

2. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

STEVEN AFRIAT, LOS ANGELES, commented that he is a registered lobbyist with the City. He indicated that he has been a campaign consultant for elections in West Hollywood and has a history of advocating for political reform. He commented on campaign finance, regulation of lobbyists, and government ethics.

Task Force Member Stern asked Assistant City Attorney Hogin why attorneys are not required to register as lobbyists. Ms. Hogin responded that the City Attorney's office has determined that attorneys do not have to register as lobbyist if they are simply providing legal advice based on case law and a portion of the Business and Professions code.

DONALD EMBLAD, WEST HOLLYWOOD, spoke regarding SB 1818.

Mr. Stern informed Mr. Emblad that this issue is not under the purview of the Task Force.

Mr. Stern suggested that the Task Force discuss all of their ideas, decide which ideas have merit, and direct the Assistant City Attorney to draft the recommendations into a cohesive document that can be ratified by the group and provided to the City Council. The Task Force agreed with Mr. Stern's recommendation.

3. REGULATION OF CAMPAIGN FINANCE

The Task Force made the following recommendations regarding the Regulation of Campaign Finance:

- Electronic filing system for campaign finance reports. The Task Force asked staff to inquire about the cost of purchasing one of these systems.
- Require Independent Expenditure Committees to provide additional information in the disclaimers on mailers such as increasing the font size and include the top three (3) donors over \$5000.
- Require the City to sponsor two (2) candidate forums.
- Resolution adopted prior to each election requiring the City Council to engage the League of Women Voters to conduct the candidate forums and entertain requests by any group that desires to host a candidate forum.
- Raise the contribution limit based on the annual cost of living increase each election cycle.
- Require that all communications be submitted to the City Clerk for posting on the City's website.

The Task Force asked for Mr. Afriat's feedback and he provided comment.

4. REGULATION OF LOBBYISTS

The Task Force made the following recommendations regarding the Regulation of Lobbyists:

- Lobbyists must report money spent lobbying that exceeds \$1,000.

Ms. Hogin discussed the various types of influences that exist in local government.

Mr. Afriat commented on employer and lobbyists reporting in the City of Los Angeles and the County of Los Angeles.

5. REGULATION OF GOVERNMENT ETHICS

The Task Force made the following recommendations regarding the Regulation of Lobbyists:

- Change the Receipt of Gifts policy from an Administrative Regulation to an Ordinance.
- Lower the threshold for Behested Payments to \$1,000.

- Anyone that has been paid as a campaign consultant cannot be a lobbyist.
- Require the public official's recusal from decisions before them if they received behested payments above a certain level.

The Task Force and Ms. Hogin briefly discussed the City's Revolving Door Ordinance.

6. COMMENTS FROM STAFF

Ms. Hogin reviewed the next steps with the Task Force. She will bring forward a Staff Report to the next Task Force meeting outlining the recommendations the group made. If there is consensus on the recommendations, she would work with the City Manager to place the item on the next City Council agenda as New Business.

Mr. Guardarrama inquired if the Task Force members should attend the Council meeting to report on their recommendations. Ms. Hogin indicated that she would speak with the City Manager and he can discuss with the Mayor how she would like the recommendations provided whether in Staff Report format or verbally by the Task Force members.

Mr. Guardarrama also mentioned the legislation currently at the State level which would require municipalities to consolidate with the County on even year general elections. Mr. Stern expressed concern with loading the ballot which potentially creates problems. Ms. Ralston commented that the last State-wide election in June did not garner better results than local March elections. Additional discussion took place regarding concurrent elections as well as SB 163 which would provide a Vote by Mail ballot to every voter.

7. **ADJOURNMENT** – The Ethics Reform Task Force adjourned at 8:05 p.m. to its next meeting which is scheduled for Monday, August 31, 2015 at 6:30 at City Hall.

APPROVED BY A MOTION OF THE ETHICS REFORM TASK FORCE ON THIS 31ST DAY OF AUGUST, 2015.



CHAIRPERSON

ATTEST:



STAFF LIAISON

