

Minutes
Sunshine Ordinance Task Force
Special Meeting
February 23, 1999

Meeting convened at 4:07 p.m.

1. Present:

Pilpel
Planthold
Bernstein
Brugmann
Graffis
Ray
Watkins

2. Minutes

None available; consideration deferred to next meeting; Vice Chair Planthold volunteered to take notes until the arrival of our new Task Force Secretary Angela Armstrong arrives.

3. Report of Task Force Clerk

Clerk unable to attend; Chair reviewed packet of five recent complaints; Vice Chair Planthold asked about how a Task Force member should respond to any complaint to which the Task Force member had somehow been a witness; such information would not automatically preclude any Task Force member from also participating in discussions and decisions about action on any such complaint; according to Ms. Frankel, our assigned counsel; Ms. Frankel did ask that when any Task Force member becomes aware of a complaint to which (s)he had been in some way a witness, it helps her in formalizing some type of response to the complaint if she knew more facts.

4. Task Force Questions and Comments

Vice Chair Planthold noted the coarseness of language and tone of discussion was sometimes in words too harsh to be printed in a publication of general distribution/circulation.

5. Hearing on Pending Complaints

Comstock v. Department of Elections and City Attorney; Chair Pilpel said that Nicole Wong was still doing legal research on aspects of this complaint and so thought it helpful to continue this. Ms. Bernstein asked the Chair to try to put in writing his summary report of a 3-minute conversation with Acting Elections Director Naomi Nishioka. Chair Pilpel indicated that Ms. Nishioka indicated she only recently received the complaint and would respond, even to the extent of attending a meeting of the Sunshine Ordinance Task Force.

9.

Since the Comstock complaint hearing was contingent on when would be the next meeting of the Sunshine Ordinance Task Force, we went to Item 9 for consideration of a Special Meeting of the Sunshine Ordinance task Force on Tuesday, March 2 at 4:00 p.m. in Room

2001 of 1660 Mission. The Chair determined there would be a quorum. (Johnny Brannon arrived at 4:32 p.m.) The Chair decided to have a Special Meeting as indicated above.

6. Review Pending Local Legislation

None known to be pending before the San Francisco Board of Supervisors.

7. Review Other Pending Legislation

SB 48 (Sher) still in committee. The Board of Supervisors and the Mayor ate in support of this, such that San Francisco's lobbyists in Sacramento would so indicate.

8. Continued Consideration of San Franciscans for Sunshine

Started with Responsibility for Administration;; SFS plan would require the office of the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors to provide staff; some members felt it would be better for staffing to come from/through the Ethics Commission.

Start Art III Public Information, Section 20

Section 21: Release of Public Information;; unclear as to what was meant by a 1996 amendment requiring use of "the largest non-profit, non-proprietary public computer network..." Maybe some broader reference to "internet or other comparable..."

22: Maybe each department should have a PIO who will respond to information requests without referring inquiries to a Mayor's Press staff. (Bruce Brugmann stipulated that the City Attorney's Office did have an effective system for getting answers to oral public information requests.)

Also, should any PIO have an affirmative duty to make initial inquiries, with a follow-on duty to give a timely response if the requested information is not readily available.

Section 23: Should policy bodies be required to have a communications log, similar to what shows up in the agenda of the Board of Supervisors? If so, should it be appended to the agenda or separately available?

Section 24: Non-Exempt Public Information (i.e., disclosable). Maybe impacts on labor contracts and MOU's so we may look at some changes.