**(Approved May 14, 2026)**

**CALIFORNIA FAIR POLITICAL PRACTICES COMMISSION**
**MINUTES OF HEARING, Public Session**
**Thursday, March 19, 2026**
**10:00 a.m.**

Present: Chair Adam E. Silver, Commissioner Alf W. Brandt, Commissioner Elsa Ortiz, Commissioner E. Dotson Wilson

Executive Staff Present:

Galena West, Executive Director
Dave Bainbridge, General Counsel
Kendall L.D. Bonebrake, Chief of Enforcement
Shrdha Shah, Chief of Audits and Assistance
Jue Wang, PhD, Chief of Administration
Lindsey Nakano, Senior FPPC Legislative Counsel
Shery Yang, Communications Director

**Call to Order.**

Chair Silver called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m.

1. **Public Comments for items not on the agenda.**

   Mr. Christopher Buttner made public comment regarding an open case.

2. **Approval of January 2026 Commission Meeting Minutes.**

   **MOTION:** To approve the January 2026 Meeting Minutes. Moved by Commissioner Oritz, seconded by Chair Silver. The motion passed 4-0.

**3-9. Consent Calendar**

**3. Regulation Projects for 2026.**

General Counsel Bainbridge clarified for Commissioner Ortiz that many public officials hold multiple positions in which they are required to file Statements of Economic Interests. He further specified that a regulation exists that allows such officials to file a single expanded statement and provide copies to other jurisdictions, while ensuring everything is properly disclosed as per each filing requirement. Commissioner Wilson asked if this process was recently developed, and General Counsel Bainbridge answered that it has been around for a long time, but the new changes of electronic filing call for a clean-up review. Chair Silver stated the importance of this regulation, as he met with filers from all over the state who are frustrated with aspects of the current filing procedures for officials who serve in multiple jurisdictions. The Chair expects that this feedback will be considered in drafting a regulation that alleviates unnecessary administrative burden on public officials. General Counsel Bainbridge encouraged filing officials to reach out to the FPPC with any additional feedback.

**4. In the Matter of Melanie Bagby; FPPC No. 25/594.**

Chair Silver recognized the Enforcement Division's hard work for having over $220,000 in fines levied from January and February alone, as that amount is close to the total amount levied in 2021 and 2023. Commissioner Brandt stated that public comments attacking individuals who file reports are not helpful to the duty of the Commission.

**5. In the Matter of Jeneé Littrell; FPPC No. 23/386.**

Commissioner Wilson asked why the maximum fine was not levied for this case and Chief Bonebrake stated that since there was no pattern, the evidence suggested it was negligent and not deliberate, and the Respondent worked extensively with the Enforcement Division to

come into compliance, the fine amount was deemed appropriate for this case in line with the comparables. Commissioner Wilson stated his reluctance to vote in favor of this stipulation, given that the fine amount is too low and may cause public harm from individuals who view this violation as a cost of doing business, so long as there is a low fine, but the profits are high. Ms. Jeneé Litrell called in for public comment to address Commissioner Wilson's comments.

6. **In the Matter of the City of Orange; FPPC No. 21/501.**

7. **In the Matter of County of Fresno County Transportation Authority; FPPC No. 22/1043.**

8. **In the Matter of Michael Minnix and Committee to Re-Elect Michael Minnix; FPPC Nos. 20/817 & 20/998.**

9. **In the Matter of California Republican Party, Greg Gandrud, and Sarah Nelson; FPPC No. 20/1009.**

**MOTION:** To approve the Consent Calendar. Moved by Chair Silver, seconded by Commissioner Brandt. The motion passed 4-0.

**10-13. Default Proceedings Requesting Commission Action**

10. **In the Matter of Committee to Elect Stevevonna Evans 2018 Adelanto City Council, Stevevonna Evans for Board of Supervisors 2020, and Stevevonna Evans; FPPC No. 20/1097.**

An anonymous citizen of Adelanto made public comment.

11. **In the Matter of Thara Innocent; FPPC No. 24/816.**

**12. In the Matter of Jesse Huang; FPPC No. 24/501.**

**13. In the Matter of Steven Sanchez; FPPC No. 22/887.**

Commissioner Ortiz acknowledged these are substantial penalties and asked how fines are collected. Executive Director West stated that the Administration Division oversees the collections process and attempts to collect outstanding fines. They work with the Franchise Tax Board for tax intercept, liens are placed on real property and renewed every ten years, and there is a new settlement process to review a case that has been in collections for many years to see if interest can possibly be waived. Commissioner Brandt confirmed with Chief Bonebrake that there has been personal service for all the defaults.

**MOTION:** To approve Items 10-13. Moved by Commissioner Ortiz, seconded by Chair Silver. The motion passed 4-0.

**14-20. General Items**

**14. Adoption of Proposed Amendments to Regulation 18361.4 – Probable Cause Proceedings.**

Senior Commission Counsel John Feser presented the item. Commissioner Ortiz stated her concern for eliminating records production as it will appear a decision is presented from one side, negating the Respondent's ability to challenge with their own records. Mr. Jay Carson of Nielsen Merksamer made public comment. Chair Silver disclosed ex-parte communication with James Harrison of Olson Remcho, Catharine Baker, former FPPC Commissioner, Honorable Rich Miadich, former FPPC Chair, Bob Stern, Commissioner of LA City Ethics Commission, Jay Carson of Nielsen Merksamer, K.C. Jenkins of Bell McAndrews, Tracy Wigglesworth and Nick Sanders of Political Law Group, and Gary Winuk of Kaufman Legal Group. Chair Silver recommended taking a similar approach to

the last time this regulation was amended and take it to a Law and Policy Committee meeting to review with Commissioner Brandt. Commissioner Brandt stated his support in eliminating records production as it is not reducing the Respondent's due process rights. Commissioner Wilson recommended taking this matter to the Law and Policy Committee and having anyone who is testifying come in-person for more impact. He also recommended looking at what other agencies are doing to handle probable cause hearings.

**MOTION:** To have the Commission direct the Law and Policy Committee to convene a hearing on the issues highlighted in Item 14 and request that staff, CPAA, and other interested parties provide evidence and arguments regarding how eliminating record production or hearing witnesses from the Probable Cause process would A) affect due process rights, B) facilitate or discourage resolution of the case, C) affect fairness, D) affect staff legal arguments on changes, and E) how other ethics and campaign finance agencies address determining probable cause. Moved by Commissioner Brandt, seconded by Commissioner Ortiz. Approved 4-0.

**15. Launch of New FPPC Website.**

Chief Information Officer, Jesse Hidalgo and Education and External Affairs Unit Manager, Chloe Hackert presented the item.

**16. Form 700 Search.**

Communications Director Shery Yang and Chief of Administration Dr. Jue Wang presented the item.

**17. Generative AI Acceptable Use Policy.**

Executive Director West and Chief Hidalgo presented the item.

**MOTION:** To approve the FPPC GenAI Usage Policy. Moved by Chair Silver, seconded by Commissioner Ortiz. Approved 4-0.

**18. Legislative Update.**

Senior FPPC Legislative Counsel Lindsey Nakano presented the item. Authors of two bills have requested FPPC support: AB 2413 by Assemblymember Ransom relating to large format public advertisements paid for with public money and SB 1175 by Senator Rubio which streamlines the filing process lobbyist registrations and terminations. Chair Silver stated his support for AB 2413 if amended to clearly define dimensions and size for large format public advertisements. Commissioner Wilson raised a concern on who would be responsible for paying the penalty for any violations – the individual or the agency.

**MOTION:** Motion to support AB 2413 if amended to clearly define dimensions and size for large format public advertisements. Moved by Chair Silver, seconded by Commissioner Ortiz. Approved 4-0. Motion to support SB 1175. Moved by Commissioner Brandt, seconded by Chair Silver. Approved 4-0.

**19. Executive Staff Reports.**

Chief Bonebrake presented the Enforcement Division Staff Report as submitted.

Chief of Audits Shrdha Shah presented the Audits and Assistance Division Staff Report as submitted.

General Counsel Bainbridge presented the Legal Division Staff Report as submitted and added that the 2026 PDF version of the Political Reform Act has been posted on the website.

Chief of Administration Dr. Jue Wang presented the Administration and Technology Division Staff Report as submitted and added there are only 12 non-filers as of date.

Communications Director Shery Yang presented the Stakeholder Engagement Report.

**20. Commissioner Comments and Proposed Future Agenda Items.**

No comments.

The meeting adjourned at 2:53 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Davina Vo
Commission Assistant
Approved May 14, 2026

Adam E. Silver, Chair
Fair Political Practices Commission