



(Approved March XX, 2026)

**CALIFORNIA FAIR POLITICAL PRACTICES COMMISSION
MINUTES OF HEARING, Public Session
Thursday, January 15, 2026
10:00 a.m.**

**Chico Municipal Center Council Chamber
421 Main Street, Chico
CA 95928**

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

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 10:07 a.m.

1. Public Comments for items not on the agenda.

Ms. Conny McCormack made public comment.

2. Approval of November 2025 Commission Meeting Minutes.

MOTION: To approve the November 2025 Meeting Minutes. Moved by Commissioner Ortiz, seconded by Commissioner Zettel. The motion passed 5-0.

3-4. Consent Calendar

3. In the Matter of Prov 3:9 LLC and John Kruger; FPPC No. 21/040.

Commissioner Zettel stated concerns of comparable stipulations used for this case.

Commissioner Brandt stated his support in the maximum penalty for this violation and the importance of free and fair elections. Chair Silver asked if these types of egregious cases are referred to law enforcement who can conduct a criminal investigation and Executive Director Galena West confirmed there is an automatic referral program to the Attorney General and District Attorney's office for such violations. Executive Director West clarified for Commissioner Wilson the different processes that may occur when the FPPC is simultaneously investigating and prosecuting a case in conjunction with a criminal investigation or a local ethics commission.

MOTION: To approve Item 3. Moved by Chair Silver, seconded by Commissioner Ortiz. The motion passed 5-0.

4. In the Matter of County of San Benito; FPPC No. 23/006.

Commissioner Brandt stated his support for this stipulation. Chair Silver stated his support for collaboration with stakeholders to potentially sponsor or adopt regulations that make rules clear for officials and jurisdictions to follow in reducing prohibited campaign-related mass mailings at public expense.

MOTION: To approve Item 4. Moved by Chair Silver, seconded by Commissioner Ortiz. The motion passed 5-0.

5-6. Pre-Notice Defaults

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

Pre-notice default.

6. In the Matter of Phillip Wiley; FPPC No. 24/734.

Pre-notice default.

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

Pre-notice default.

8-15. General Items

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

Senior Commission Counsel John Feser presented the item. Chair Silver disclosed ex-parte communication with Ms. K.C. Jenkins and Mr. Jay Carson of the California Political Attorneys Association, Mr. Gary Winuk of Kaufman Legal Group, Mr. James Harrison of Olson-Remcho, Mr. Nicholas Sanders of the Political Law Group, Mr. Bob Stern of the Los Angeles City Ethics Commission, and former FPPC Commissioner Catharine Baker.

Commissioner Ortiz stated concerns of tarnishing reputations, but was also conflicted due to the concerns of the use of staff time and resources for this process. Ms. Jenkins and Mr.

Winuk made public comment. Commissioner Brandt stated he is not opposed to deferring the adoption of this regulation, but wants to ensure it moves forward. Commissioner Zettel

voiced concerns of tarnishing reputation and stated her support of providing evidence and

allowing for a witness. Commissioner Wilson asked Executive Director West if revising the probable cause proceedings had occurred in the past or if this is a new issue that has been

brought to the Commission. Executive Director West stated the discovery process was added within the last 10-15 years in hopes of providing information to reach settlements quicker,

but the overly formal process has been shown to delay the overall probable cause process and requires many man-hours from staff. General Counsel Bainbridge clarified that the discovery process was put into effect in 2012. This item was pushed back to the March agenda and no action was taken.

9. Regulation Projects for 2026.

General Counsel Bainbridge presented the item. Commissioner Brandt emphasized the importance of working with the Secretary of State on the CARS Project. Chair Silver expressed the importance of having regulations regarding AI disclaimers on advertisements and educating the public on how to comply with them. Chair Silver disclosed related ex-parte communications with various clerks and county registrars in the City of Ventura, Ventura County, City of Los Angeles, Los Angeles County, and Assembly Legislative Ethics Counsel Pat Fitzgerald to discuss the Form 700 process. No action was taken.

10. Legislative Update.

Senior FPPC Legislative Counsel Lindsey Nakano presented the item. Commissioner Ortiz voiced her support for mandatory campaign training for candidates and treasurers.

Commissioner Wilson suggested including city attorneys and city managers for mandatory campaign training since they would be the individuals to consult with local elected officials.

MOTION: To sponsor proposals 1-10 in the Legislative Update. Moved by Chair Silver, seconded by Commissioner Brandt. Motion passed 5-0.

11. 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.

Chief of Administration Dr. Jue Wang presented the Administration and Technology Division Staff Report as submitted.

Executive Fellow Josh Donner presented the FPPC 2025 Annual Report.

Communications Director Shery Yang presented the 2025 Heat Map.

Chair Silver thanked Executive Director West for her continued contribution to the agency.

Executive Director West highlighted the COGEL Conference and participation from staff.

12. Commissioner Comments and Proposed Future Agenda Items.

No comments.

The meeting adjourned at 12:14 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Davina Vo
Commission Assistant
Approved March XX, 2026

Adam E. Silver, Chair
Fair Political Practices Commission