



STATE OF CALIFORNIA
FAIR POLITICAL PRACTICES COMMISSION
1102 Q Street • Suite 3000 • Sacramento, CA 95811

September 14, 2023

Committee for a Financially Sound Pacific Grove, [REDACTED]

Short-Term Rental Owners & Neighbors Group of Pacific Grove (“StrongPG”),
[REDACTED]

Monterey County Vacation Rental Alliance Political Action Committee,
[REDACTED]

Annee Martin, [REDACTED]

Joy Colangelo, [REDACTED]

Anthony Tersol, [REDACTED]

Kirstie Wilde, [REDACTED]

Melanie Meharchand, [REDACTED]

**Re: Advisory Letter - In the Matter of Committee for a Financially Sound Pacific Grove,
et al, FPPC No. 2019-00415**

Dear all:

The Enforcement Division of the Fair Political Practices Commission enforces the provisions of the Political Reform Act (the “Act”).¹ This matter was opened in response to two sworn complaints and a commission-initiated complaint in response to numerous anonymous advertisements opposing a local ballot measure, Measure M, that was considered by the City of Pacific Grove during the November 6, 2018, General Election. The Enforcement Division is closing this case without further action because there is insufficient evidence to prosecute.

The Act requires that recipient committees, meaning those committees that have received at least \$2,000 in contributions, fully and accurately report all contributions and expenditures.² In addition, persons who qualify as an independent expenditure committee, meaning those persons who spend at least \$1,000 on independent expenditures in a calendar year, must also disclose activity on campaign statements.³ A recipient committee that qualifies as a primarily formed ballot measure committee, such as those that are formed for the purpose of opposing a local ballot measure or a committee that makes most expenditures in opposition to a local ballot

¹ The Political Reform Act is contained in Government Code sections 81000 through 91014, and all statutory references are to this code. The regulations of the Fair Political Practices Commission are contained in Sections 18104 through 18998 of Title 2 of the California Code of Regulations, and all regulatory references are to this source.

² Sections 84213, subdivision (a) and 84200, *et seq.*

³ Sections 84213, subdivision (b) and 84200, *et seq.*

measure, must follow additional reporting and disclosure rules.⁴ These additional disclosure requirements include but are not limited to, reporting contributions of \$1,000 or more within twenty-four hours of receipt and changing the name of the committee to reflect the primarily formed position.⁵ In general, committees are required to include advertisement disclosures on yard signs, newspaper ads, and large banners.⁶

In this matter, the Enforcement Division has reviewed the available evidence regarding numerous yard signs, newspaper advertisements, and campaign statements filed by the registered committees. There is insufficient evidence to determine which committees or persons were responsible for all advertisements. Though some activity was reported on campaign statements, several advertisements lacked disclosure. The evidence shows that the activity may have been conducted by a loose organization of individuals working independently and collectively to defeat Measure M. There is insufficient evidence to determine a party responsible for particular advertisements. There is evidence to show that more information is needed about the Act to ensure future compliance. Therefore, the Enforcement Division closes the case with this advisory letter.

Although we are closing our file, please be advised of the provisions in the Act and regulations regarding campaign related communications. If you need additional or future guidance, you may contact the Commission's Advice team by sending an email to advice@fppc.ca.gov. There is also information pertaining to campaign related communications available on the Commission's website, www.fppc.ca.gov. Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please feel free to contact me at (916) 323-6421 (voicemail only) or tgilbertson@fppc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Theresa Gilbertson
Senior Commission Counsel
Enforcement Division

CC: Complainants, Luke Coletti, via email and Thom Akeman, via email

⁴ See Section 82047.5.

⁵ See Section 82036, 84203, and 84107.

⁶ Sections 84501, *et seq.*