

February 28, 2026

Last Gasp for Participatory Governance in San Francisco

Commission Streamlining Handoff to Board of Supervisors

It's Now or Never for San Franciscans to Speak Up and Speak Out

by Patrick Monette-Shaw

The Commission Streamlining Task Force created by voters with “*Proposition E*” in November 2024 has wrapped up the majority of its work, and will now meet quarterly, if necessary, until it’s disbanded in January 2027.

The Task Force transmitted its 134-page “*Final Report*” accompanied with a 1,086-page “*Supplemental Appendices*” document to the Board of Supervisors for consideration, after receiving a unanimous vote of approval by the Streamlining Task Force on January 28.

Overall, of the 152 bodies the Task Force assessed, it recommended keeping 86 boards, commissions, and advisory bodies; eliminating 60 bodies; combining two bodies with either another body or City staff; and making no recommendation on the remaining four bodies, leaving that to the discretion of the Mayor and Board of Supervisors.

The Task Force’s “*Final Report*” reads like a masterclass in whitewashing of the Task Force’s deliberations and decision-making, and amounts to gaslighting of San Franciscans.

As well, the final version of the Task Force’s 166-page *Charter Amendment* and the final version of the 308-page first planned *Ordinance* were forwarded to the Board of Supervisors, reportedly on February 27 prior to the March 1 deadline.

During its year-long meetings, the Task Force took testimony from 572 public speakers during 18 of its meetings, and received written letters and petition signatures from 824 San Franciscans, almost all of which opposed preliminary decisions the Streamlining Task Force was making as they went along.

That combined opposition from 1,396 San Franciscans to the Task Force essentially fell on deaf ears.

That’s because, in part, Task Chair Ed Harrington wrongly occupies Task Force Seat 4, which required an organized public-sector labor union representative; Harrington has no such qualifications. Similarly, Task Force member Sophia Kittler occupies Seat 5, reserved for an Open Government expert; Kittler similarly has no such qualifications in open and accountable government. Kittler’s education and expertise is in private sector development. As Mayor Lurie’s Budget Director, Kittler’s City job experience is public-sector government budgeting, not open government.

Task Force Vice Chair Andrea True (*née* Bruss) was rushed to appointment as “*Director of Government Legal Reform*” in the City Attorney’s Office on January 4, 2025 — but **not** in a legal job classification code. That “*director*” position appears to have been newly created for Bruss as a golden parachute upon leaving Mayor Breed’s administration. It was a new position created in January 2025 that hadn’t previously existed, and had no previous incumbent, perhaps because her husband is none other than Judson

Commission Streamlining Task Force's Major Decisions on 86 Bodies Kept – (56.6%) – From
 During Five “Policy Topic Area” Meetings of the Streamlining Task Force: September 3 Through December 1, 2025
 (86 Bodies Were Recommended to Be “Kept,” 4 Had “No Recommendation” (Creatively Renamed “No Action”), 2 Were Canceled)

Of 42 Initial Bodies in Charter:

- 24 (57%) Kept in Charter
- 18 (43%) Moved to Administrative Code, 6 (33%) of Which Were Converted From “Governance” to “Advisory” Bodies

Board or Commission	Total	Kept in Charter	Moved to Admin. Code	Converted to Advisory	No Recommendation	Canceled
1 Abatement Appeals Board	68	28	24	15	18	8
2 Airport Commission	1	1	0	0	0	0
3 Arts Commission	1	1	0	0	0	0
4 Asian Art Commission	1	1	0	0	0	0
5 Assessment Appeals Board	1	1	0	0	0	0
6 Ballot Simplification Committee	1	1	0	0	0	0
7 Bayview Hunters Point Citizens Advisory Committee	1	1	0	0	0	0
8 Behavioral Health Commission	1	1	0	0	0	0
9 Board of Appeals	1	1	0	0	0	0
10 Building Inspection Commission	1	1	0	0	0	0
11 Cannabis Oversight Committee	1	1	0	0	0	0
12 Central Disposition Commission	1	1	0	0	0	0

The Commission Streamlining Task Force made over 800 decisions regarding San Francisco’s 152 boards and commissions. Of the 86 bodies the Task Force recommended be kept, a matrix shows 429 of the decisions, made across 20 different categories of changes.

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“The Task Force took testimony from 572 public speakers during 18 of its meetings, and received written letters and petition signatures from 824 San Franciscans, almost all of which opposed preliminary decisions the Streamlining Task Force was making.”

“Task Force Vice Chair Andrea True (*née* Bruss) was rushed to appointment as ‘Director of Government Legal Reform’ in the City Attorney’s Office on January 4, 2025 — but not in a legal job classification code.”

True. Bruss had previously been former Mayor London Breed’s Deputy Chief of Staff, and had previously been a legislative aide to then District 5 Supervisor Breed and an aide earlier to then District 10 Supervisor Malia Cohen.

All three were appointed without required membership qualifications. Throughout the Task Force’s 14-month deliberations, their decisions were made by unqualified people, lessening validity of all decisions the Task Force made.

In addition, both Harrington and the inaugural Vice Chair of the Streamlining Task Force, Jean Fraser, the Director of the Presidio Trust until recently, are both listed as Board Members of SPUR.

The Task Force appears to have been taking orders from SPUR, and SPUR’s current Executive Director, former District 7 Supervisor Sean Elsbernd. The Task Force felt no need to let input from everyday San Franciscans get in SPUR’s way.

Voters should remember that the wrongful actions the Task Force has taken were made by people clearly not qualified for their roles, but were political appointees.

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Next Steps

Now that the Streamlining Task Force has submitted its final report and proposed legislation to the Board of Supervisors, San Franciscans really need to mobilize and advocate with the Board of Supervisors to reject many of the Task Force’s draconian recommendations.

Neighborhood associations, advocacy groups, and everyday San Franciscans need to urge the Board of Supervisors and their District Supervisors to “*duplicate*” the files, which will enable the Board of Supervisors to bifurcate individual recommendations for further consideration and public debate, rather than just passing the Streamlining Task Force’s preferred recommendations en masse and *cart blanche*.

If “*We the People*” don’t get engaged now, it will have a devastating effect on participatory government in San Francisco for decades to come.

So, advocate with your neighborhood associations, political clubs, friends, and colleagues to lobby the Board of Supervisors during upcoming hearings, and urge your contacts to submit written testimony in support of stopping some of the Streamlining Task Force’s recommendations. A single City Supervisor can call for “*duplicating*” the files to trigger meaningful dialogue continuing.

And get involved yourselves by submitting testimony to the Board of Supervisors yourself. It’s now or never to monitor and attend the Board of Supervisors and its committee meeting, even remotely.

“Streamliner’s” Zero Savings

A key component of “*Proposition E*” on the November 2024 ballot required a cost analysis of the City’s boards and Commissions be prepared and submitted by September 1, 2025. The Board of Supervisors Budget and Legislative Analysts’ “*Financial Analysis*” report documented that 112 boards and commissions cost a combined \$33.9 million annually, but didn’t assess the costs of the 40 other bodies at all, which had been excluded from the BLA’s remit.

A separate *Westside Observer* [Cost Savings Analysis](#) reveals that of the 86 bodies the Streamlining Task Force has recommended be kept, there will still be \$31.2 million in annual costs associated with those bodies, fully 92.2% of the total costs.

“ At best, actual savings to the City’s annual budget *might* approach a mere \$105,482 described below, a scant 0.00066% — yes, just sixty-six **ten-thousandths of one percent — from the City’s current \$15.9 billion City budget. ”**

At best, actual savings to the City’s annual budget *might* approach a mere \$105,482 described below, a scant 0.00066% — yes, just sixty-six **ten-thousandths** of one percent — from the City’s current \$15.9 billion City budget.

Coming up empty for their efforts, it's clear that the "*streamliners*" had their panties tied in a knot all along, resulting in little savings at all!

Costs about any specific body detailed in the BLA's [report](#) were never used, or even referred to, during the Streamlining Task Force's deliberation meetings, except once in passing. And the BLA's separate 12-page PowerPoint [presentation](#) scheduled for August 20 2025 was never formally presented to the Task Force when that meeting ran out of time, and it was never rescheduled for presentation. The PowerPoint presentation had specifically noted that the BLA's report was not a true cost-benefit analysis.

Indeed, the Streamlining Task Force *never* once mentioned or ever considered the **benefits** of having any of the 152 boards and commissions, as if benefits of participatory citizen oversight was complete anathema to them, the Mayor, and SPUR!

60 Bodies Eliminated

Of the 152 boards and commissions eventually identified for review, the Streamlining Task Force identified 31 bodies were inactive, another 5 bodies were borderline inactive, and during the City Attorney's drafting of Charter change language development, two more bodies were suddenly discovered and summarily deemed to be inactive without any discussion or body-by-body detailed review. That totaled 38 inactive bodies, but the Task Force recommended keeping one of them and eliminating the remaining 37.

During body-by-body review of the remaining 114 bodies, the Task Force decided to eliminate another 23 bodies.

Ultimately, the Streamlining Task Force recommended to the Board of Supervisors [eliminating](#) 60 bodies, listed here alphabetically, including their estimated savings costs.

Of interest, the link above to the 60 bodies recommended for elimination shows their total costs *might* save up to \$2.5 million of the total \$33.9 million in expenses the Board of Supervisors Budget and Legislative Analyst (BLA) had determined all 112 of the boards, commissions, and advisory bodies cost annually.

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In reality, the probable savings total just \$105,482 or 0.314% — yes, just three-tenths of one percent — of the total \$33.9 million. The \$105,482 in actual savings would be from full-time "*hard costs*" by eliminating the 60 bodies. The overwhelming balance of \$2.3 million in costs for the 60 bodies won't materialize, because they are costs for part-time City employee "*soft costs*" who will likely keep their jobs to continue performing their other job duties beyond assisting with board and commission meetings and their board's functions.

The 60 bodies recommended for elimination include the Adult Day Health Care Planning Council, Advisory Council on Human Rights, **Bicycle Advisory Committee**, **Board of Examiners**, Citizens Committee on Community Development, City Agency Task Force (Lead Abatement), **Early Childhood Community Oversight** and Advisory Committee, Food Security Task Force, Housing Stability Fund Oversight Board, Local Homeless Coordinating Board, **Long Term Care Coordinating Council**, Our Children Our Families Council, **Public Works Commission**, **Sanitation and Streets Commission**, **SFMTA Bond Oversight Committee**, Shelter Monitoring Committee, Treasure Island/Yerba Buena Island Citizens Advisory Board, and the **Urban Forestry Council**, among others.

Since the Task Force grouped their body-by-body deliberations into five main "*policy topic area*" categories, the 60 bodies recommended for elimination sorted within their topic area category are also shown [here](#) for convenience. During each of the five main deliberative meetings, the meeting agenda further stratified groupings of particular bodies in distinct sub-topic areas.

Three of the 60 bodies identified for elimination by the Task Force are "[voter-approved bodies](#)" created by **voter approved** City Ordinances — including the "*Dignity Fund Service Providers Working Group*," "*Our City Our Home Oversight Committee*," and the "*Street Artists and Craftsmen Advisory Committee*." There are many other boards and commissions also created by voters through non-Ordinance ballot measures, but the Streamlining Task Force did not code its records to

identify the Charter bodies approved by voters. It's not clear how many the remaining 57 bodies being eliminated were ballot measure Charter bodies approved by voters.

The three voter-approved Ordinance bodies being eliminated yield no full-time staff “*hard costs*” savings to the City. In addition to three of the eight voter-approved Ordinance bodies being eliminated, another two of the eight have had sunset dates assigned, so they face potentially not being re-authorized by the Board of Supervisors.

In addition to the 60 bodies being eliminated, an additional 16 bodies are having a date-specific “*sunset*” dates applied when they are moved from the City Charter into the Administrative Code, so those 16 bodies will soon face having to defend their ongoing retention and re-certification from the Board of Supervisors during the next three years.

See below for more information about why the sunset dates are used to assist with removal of bodies.

If the Board of Supervisors eliminates the 60 bodies, and eventually allows the additional 16 bodies to sunset, that will reach a total of 76 boards, commissions, and policy bodies that will vanish — just as the backers and proponents of “*Proposition D*” had proposed during the November 2024 election, proving wet dreams can come true.

Streamlining Task Force’s Decision-Making

Although Streamlining Task Force Chair Harrington had cautioned the Task Force on June 4 against **dramatically altering** the City’s commission structure, stating that “ ‘*Proposition E* ’ was about *streamlining, not radically overhauling public governance,*” by the end of the Task Force’s decision-making deliberations on January 28, 2026 — that’s what the Task Force ultimately did.

The Task Force drastically altered the City’s Boards and Commissions, mirroring exactly what the backers and proponents of “*Proposition D*” had set out to do long before the November 2024 election. Instead of getting “*Prop. E*” reforms, in the end the Streamlining Task Force delivered a “*Prop. D*” chainsaw, instead.

Of note, of the 86 bodies the Task Force recommended be kept, the Task Force recommended changing the structure of 69 of the bodies, and also recommended modifying the responsibilities of at least 28 of the bodies. And the 86 bodies were drastically altered in several ways.

Of the 800-plus decisions the Streamlining Task Force asserts it had made through its year-long deliberations, a “[Major Decisions Matrix](#)” the *Westside Observer* has compiled (from successive iterations of Task Force’s final 40-page “[Decision Log](#)” and text in its meeting minutes) contains a 20-item breakout of the major decisions affecting the 86 bodies the Task Force recommended to the Board of Supervisors be kept. Each row on the matrix analysis is worth reviewing, because it shows the *multiple* decisions made to each of the 86 bodies recommended be kept.

The 20 categories of decisions included: Keep in charter; keep as a governance body; move from the City charter to the Administrative Code; move from other codes to the Administrative Code; add to or keep in the Admin Code; make or convert to an advisory body; transfer decisions to department staff; remove nominating ability for three-name candidate short list for hiring department heads; retain department head hiring and firing authority; remove department head hiring and firing authority; continue serving at-will; change from *for-cause removal* to *at-will removal* of body members by their appointing authority; retain budget approval; remove budget and contract authority; don’t apply a sunset date; apply three-year sunset date; remove recall of body members by voters; remove member seat-level qualifications; update member seat qualifications or make “*desirable*” body-level; and remove body-level qualifications.

Unfortunately, it’s difficult to summarize or report on how those structures and responsibilities are being modified, in part because of the lax and sloppy way the Streamlining Task Force conducted its meetings, and in part because of the bewildering onslaught of 3,725 pages of documents the Task Force has authored along the way over the past year, making tracking details extremely time consuming and difficult to reconcile and track from one document to the next, along with the

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blizzard of 3,209 pages of revisions to successive iterations of many of the documents, often within days of each document issued. That totals at least 6,934 pages the Task Force has cranked out. The *Westside Observer* has read nearly of them!

Among the worst of changes the Streamlining Task Force made that are presented in our major decisions matrix analysis, the Task Force recommended:

- 18 bodies be moved from the [City Charter to the Administrative Code](#).

The 18 bodies being moved to the Administrative code represents 43% of the 42 bodies that had initially been in the City Charter.

The 18 bodies include the Building Inspection Commission, Citizens' General Obligation Bond Oversight Committee, Commission on the Environment, Commission on the Status of Women, Disability and Aging Services Commission, Entertainment Commission, Human Rights Commission, Park, Recreation, & Open Space Advisory Committee (PROSAC), SFMTA Citizens' Advisory Council, Sheriff's Department Oversight Board, and the Small Business Commission, among others.

The Task Force did this driven by SPUR's insistence there were too many bodies in the City charter, making the Charter too cumbersome. But the real reason of moving them into the Administrative Code is to make it easier over time to then simply eliminate these boards and commissions that the Streamlining Task Force had concluded were "*inefficient*" and impediments.

For instance, the Task Force's September 13 meeting minutes reveal that initial Task Force Vice Chair, Jean Fraser (before her sudden resignation mid-stream a week later) claimed that memorializing and enshrining bodies in the Charter prevents elected officials from being able to modernize and update the bodies as needed, rapidly and nimbly as the City's' needs change over time.

As well, the Task Force's September 17 meeting minutes reveal Task Force member Sophie Hayward asserted moving bodies to the Administrative Code with sunset dates would allow for a structured "*off-ramp*" — apparently code words for making it easier for the Board of Supervisors to deny extending the life of any board or committee at the time of re-evaluating whether to reauthorize and retain the body in the future. Hayward asserted she valued having sunset clauses as a way to forcibly prompt periodic reevaluation of whether boards and commissions needed to continue existing.

- 25 bodies have their [Member Qualifications](#) changed or eliminated, or made merely "*desirable*."

The 25 bodies include the Airport Commission, Arts Commission, **Ballot Simplification Committee**, **Building Inspection Commission**, **Citizens' General Obligation Bond Oversight Committee**, Disability and Aging Services Commission, Elections Commission, **Ethics Commission**, Family Violence Council, Health Service Board, Police Commission, Public Utilities Commission, Recreation and Parks Commission, SFMTA Citizens' Advisory Council, and the **Sunshine Ordinance Task Force**, among others.

It goes without saying that removing requirements for specific and relevant credentials, experience, and training as criteria to qualify for consideration for appointment to technical or specialty public oversight bodies will lessen the quality of decisions being made by these oversight bodies. For example, removing specific membership skills for the Building Inspection Commission is a bad idea simply because the integrity of building inspection codes may suffer dangerously.

There was no real reason for the Streamlining Task Force to alter seat qualifications for bodies such as the Ballot Simplification Committee, the Sunshine Ordinance Task Force, Ethics Commission, or any of the other 22 bodies. The "*Streamliners*" did so alleging that so-called "*seat-level*" qualifications made it more difficult for appointing authorities to fill vacancies on many City boards and commissions. That justification was an utter ruse, because most of these 25

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bodies always had a full contingent of appointed board members, even if recruitment to fill the vacancies was time consuming.

And whether for “*seat-level*” or “*body-level*” qualifications to justify an appointment to a board or commission as necessary, reducing the remaining qualifications to just being merely “*desirable*” opens the door to allowing appointing authorities to engage in political patronage by appointing any “*yes-man*,” “*yes-woman*,” or erstwhile “*toady*” who will answer “*how high?*” when ordered “*jump!*”.

The Streamlining Task Force has gone so far as to allege qualifications to serve on some boards and commissions are thirty years old and should be updated to reflect the City’s “*current reality*.” The Task Force assumes San Franciscans can be gaslighted into believing that the backers and drafters of the enabling legislation that created each of these boards, commissions, and policy bodies could **not** possibly have set membership qualifications that would pass the test of time, and remain relevant and valid qualifications.

With qualifications being reduced to being merely “*desirable*,” that leaves appointments to some boards and commissions with no experience or qualifications required to serve at all. Perhaps that was another of SPUR’s end game. Suspend disbelief for a moment: ***What could possibly go wrong?***

Obviously, this will politicize appointments to civilian oversight bodies in San Francisco, allowing the Mayor, Board of Supervisors, and other appointing authorities to pick “*toadies*” for appointment to Boards and Commissions.

- 26 bodies have their [Department Head hiring](#) and firing authority removed.

The 26 bodies include the Airport Commission, Arts Commission, **Building Inspection Commission**, Children and Families First Commission, **Commission on the Environment**, Commission on the Status of Women, Entertainment Commission, **Fire Commission**, **Health Commission**, Human Rights Commission, Planning Commission, **Police Commission**, Port Commission, **Public Utilities Commission**, and the Recreation and Parks Commission, among others. It’s clear this change was driven by SPUR, as it has along been one of SPUR’s top goals.

Initially, the Streamlining Task Force had claimed that each of the Boards and Commissions would retain a “*consultative role only*” in the hiring and firing decisions of Department Heads for their respective City Departments. The “*consultative role only*” appears to have been a smokescreen to quell public commenters from opposing the changes in the early stages of the Task Force’s deliberations.

But at the very end of the Streamlining Task Force’s scheduled hearings as they were finalizing recommendations for their “*Final Report*” — perhaps at the urging of SPUR — the Task Force suddenly changed the rules to allow the Mayor to make all hiring and firing decisions, and allow the Mayor to skip consulting with the respective Boards and Commissions, and do so only if he chooses to actually consult collaboratively beforehand.

Obviously, this will also politicize the process of appointing City Department heads to hand the Mayor more “*strong mayor*” form of government powers. And it will weaken each City department’s independence.

- 24 bodies be changed from [“For-Cause” to “At-Will”](#) member removal.

The 24 bodies include the Airport Commission, Asian Art Commission, Behavioral Health Commission, Commission on the Status of Women, Disability and Aging Services Commission, Elections Commission, Entertainment Commission,

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Health Commission, Human Services Commission, Planning Commission, Police Commission, Port Commission, Public Utilities Commission, and the Small Business Commission, among others.

Changing to “*at-will*” removals will also politicize the process of appointing members to boards and commissions. It eliminates independence, reducing agencies to political tools rather than expert, neutral administrators. It undermines long-term, non-partisan, and, in some cases, constitutional, decision-making. For-cause restrictions (allowing removal only for “*inefficiency, neglect of duty, or malfeasance*”) were designed to ensure agencies operate based on expertise, rather than the whims of political pressure. And converting to “*at-will*” removal of board and commission members can easily lead to further corruption, by removal of a member for even a single vote or decision a member’s appointing authority doesn’t like. Think Donald Trump!

Streamlining Task Force’s Final Report

The Streamlining Task Force’s 134-page “[Final Report](#)” is flawed for a number of reasons. The Final Report is accompanied by a 1,086-page “[Supplemental Appendices](#)” document. Both documents were transmitted to the Board of Supervisors for consideration after receiving a unanimous vote of approval by the Task Force on January 28.

The Final Report reads like a masterclass in whitewashing the Task Force’s deliberations and decision-making, and amounts to gaslighting San Franciscans.

The report is essentially a massive cover-up. A summary of egregious assumptions in the “*Final Report*” includes:

- The Final Report’s “*Executive Summary*” states on page iv that the Streamlining Task Force’s recommendations will “*improve accountability*” by updating board and commission responsibilities through “*shifting some responsibility to the Mayor*” for hiring and firing City Department Heads. This was a key goal of SPUR’s “*Charter for Change*” report issued on November 10 before the Streamlining Task Force had concluded its body-by-body review of each of the 114 boards and commissions. SPUR’s report appears to have been intended to sway the Streamlining Task Force’s deliberations.

In reality, the *Westside Observer’s* matrix of major decisions made for the 86 bodies it recommended be kept indicates that 26 (30.2%) of the 86 bodies will have their authority over department heading hiring and firing removed, 21 (24.4%) of the 86 will have their ability to nominate and submit three-name short lists for potential department head candidates eliminated, and just 12 (14%) will retain their authority over department head hiring and firing decisions. And of course, there’s no guarantee that the Board of Supervisor will not decide to remove more authority over the department head selection, hiring, and firing processes.

This isn’t merely shifting “*some*” authority. It wholesale hands the Mayor increased “*strong mayor*” powers, plain and simple, over hiring and firing of almost all City Department Heads, except for 12 departments.

- Page 2 asserts “*Proposition E*” had “*established a Task Force of experts in City management*” to lead the “*streamlining*” work. As noted above, three of the appointees to two of the Streamlining Task Force seats — Ed Harrington, Sophia Kittler (and Jean Fraser, before Kittler) — did **not** meet the seat-level qualifications for appointment to the Task Force. As for the remaining three Task Force members, it’s disputed whether any of them are qualified to be called “*experts*.”
- Page 2 also asserts that the Board of Supervisors can decide whether to place the recommended Chart Amendment on the November ballot, and that the initial Ordinance will automatically take effect 90 days after introduction to the Board of Supervisors unless two-thirds (8 of the 11) Supervisors vote to amend them.

The Report fails to mention that the Board of Supervisors has the authority and ability to “*duplicate*” each of the proposed pieces of legislation, and can make any number of changes to either piece of the duplicated legislation.

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- In the section on Membership Qualifications (page 7), the Task Force addresses only “*body-level*” qualifications in the “*current state of the City’s commission system.*” The report asserts “*narrowly defined*” body-level qualifications can make it difficult to recruit and fill appointments, and leads to persistent vacancies. The report fails to quantify or even summarize the vacancy rates on any of the boards and commissions. Missing in the “*current state of affairs*” section is any description of “*seat-level*” qualifications and why they are valuable.
- Regarding removal of board and commission members, the report notes on page 8 that voters can recall **appointed** members of four bodies — the Airport, Ethics, Port, and Public Utilities commissions — in the “*current state of the City’s commission system,*” but it doesn’t mention or discuss **why** voters were given that authority.

Three of the commissions, excluding the Ethics Commission, oversee vast “*enterprise agency*” City departments responsible for massive City infrastructure and City contracts. San Franciscans need and want democratic oversight of the four Commissions. Recall of regulatory body members is a safety valve in the event commissioners violate their duties to act in the public’s best interest, allowing citizens to hold officials accountable if they fail to represent constituent interests. The recall mechanism provides a direct democratic check against potential corruption and incompetence.

It’s not known why the Streamlining Task Force decided the voter recall protections were within the Task Force’s “*streamlining*” mandate. The *Westside Observer* had to point out to the Streamlining Task Force during its last meeting on January 28th that its “*Decision Log*” had only identified removal of the recall provision for three of the four commissions. The Public Utilities Commission had not been listed as removing the recall feature. It was only minutes before the Task Force took its vote to adopt its “*Final Report*” that the City Attorney quickly added in the PUC at the last minute just before their vote, since the five-member Task Force had **not** noticed it was missing during earlier meetings reviewing drafts of its “*Final Report.*”

Of more interest, although it was mentioned on page 8 of its report as being part of the City’s current system, recall of members of those four commissions is not mentioned anywhere else in the “*Final Report*” until page 108, in “*Appendix D*” the “*Record the of Task Force Member Votes.*” The Task Force chose to bury this decision in the errata of its decision-making, perhaps hoping voters wouldn’t notice.

- The Streamlining Task Force made a deliberate decision to whitewash and “*scrub*” the word “*templates*” — and its reliance on templates used during their decision-making processes that began in earnest on September 3 — from its “*Final Report.*”

“ The Streamlining Task Force made a deliberate decision to whitewash and ‘scrub’ the word ‘templates’ — and its reliance on templates used during their decision-making — from its ‘Final Report.’ Their ‘Decision Log’ reveals that of the 800-plus decisions it made, 191 of the decisions were listed as ‘template alignment.’ ”

The Task Force had labored over developing a “*Governance Body,*” “*Advisory Committee,*” and “*Regulatory Boards*” templates they voted on and approved during their July and August meetings, at the insistence of their inaugural Vice Chair, Jean Fraser, one of the two SPUR Board members appointed to the Task Force. Throughout their five main body-by-body deliberation meetings between September 3 and November 19, the Task Force routinely voted on various motions on individual decisions specifically citing “*align to templates.*”

Indeed, their “*Decision Log*” reveals that of the 800-plus decisions it made, 191 of the decisions were listed as “*template alignment,*” including 21 bodies that were “*aligned*” to the final naming convention adopted for bodies. In addition, another 11 bodies that had initially been forced into template alignment or the naming convention were subsequently overturned and superseded.

That stands in contrast to the 46 “*template*” exceptions granted exemptions, to allow the 46 bodies to continue existing as they had before.

In fact, during the Task Force’s November 19 meeting — after having followed strict adherence to the early, uniform templates during its five policy topic area body-by-body decision meetings had concluded — the meeting minutes report Task Force member Kittler had “*mused that the Task Force’s templates have been useful as a decision-making framework but may not be helpful as a messaging tool going forward.*” That’s when the Task Force started covering its

tracks about its reliance on templates and began referring to them in late January as only having been merely “standards,” not “templates.” Thankfully, we know this to be whitewashing by any other name, because none of the Task Force’s meeting minutes for all of their meetings during 2025 ever referred to “standards.” They were consistently referred to as “templates.” But in the Final Report, the “templates” were creatively dumb-downed and rebranded as “standards.”

The Task Force used these templates to evaluate bodies throughout its decision-making meetings, but now wants us to believe — via gaslighting — that it had shifted to more tailored, non-template-based, or case-by-case decisions. It now expects us to **not** believe our own lying eyes that it had all along engaged in strict adherence to the early, uniform templates to guide its decisions between September 3 and November 5, when it considered the last 23 bodies in its “*General Administration and Finance*” major policy category of bodies. Why do they feel compelled to now cover this up?

“ The Task Force started covering its tracks about its reliance on templates and began referring to them in late January as only having been merely ‘standards,’ not ‘templates.’ Thankfully, we know this to be whitewashing. ”

According to the Task Force’s January 14, 2026 meeting minutes, member Sophie Hayward noted that the second version of the draft “*Final Report*” presented for the Task Force’s consideration also did **not** reflect all the Task Force’s decisions accounted for in its “*Decision Log*.”

Indeed, mirroring Ms. Hayward’s concerns, according to one Google search AI overview, concerns have been raised by community observers the Streamlining Task Force’s “*Decision Log*” does not fully reflect all actions, specifically regarding how functions of bodies are being transferred, or where they are being absorbed, and the Task Force has sometimes made decisions without a full, transparent analysis of how the functions of one body are being “*absorbed*” by another body in a chainsaw approach.

The BLA’s “*Financial Analysis*” PowerPoint presentation had specifically warned that the Task Force should carefully analyze and document how any given body’s functions would be protected and sustained by another body. The AI overview describes the process as removing commissions from the City Charter and moving them into the Administrative Code to make future “*housecleaning*” easier, a process critics suggest has not been fully documented in the Task Force’s “*Decision Log*.”

“ As part of its cover-up, the Task Force deliberately decided to exclude either its 40-page ‘Decision Log’ or the Budget and Legislative Analyst’s 38-page ‘Financial Analysis’ report from its 1,086-page ‘Supplemental Appendices’ report. It’s laughable the Task Force decided its own ‘Decision Log’ was redundant. ”

Finally, as part of its cover-up, the Task Force deliberately decided to exclude either its 40-page “*Decision Log*” or the Budget and Legislative Analyst’s 38-page “*Financial Analysis*” report from its 1,086-page “*Supplemental Appendices*” report to the Board of Supervisors to help with documenting the historical record of their deliberations. They did so, asserting:

“The decision log and BLA report were not originally intended for inclusion due to their redundancy with report content and lack of relevance for decision-making, respectively, they could be added to the supplemental appendices if the Task Force preferred.”

It’s laughable the Task Force decided its own “*Decision Log*” was redundant, when in fact it served as the basis to document in granular detail the decisions it had made that are **not** fully explained or even mentioned in the final report! But of course, the “*Decision Log*” did include the incriminating evidence that 202 of its 800-plus decisions had been made to “*align with templates*.” And the admission the BLA’s “*Financial Analysis*” report lacked relevance to the Task Force’s decision-making is a sad reminder of just how inept this Task Force had been.

In the end, the Task Force voted to merely provide hyperlinks to the documents on-line rather than transmitting them for retention at the Public Library— perhaps counting on the fact that over time, the hyperlinks would break and no longer function.

A *San Francisco Standard* [article](#) updated on February 26 quoted former Board of Supervisors president Aaron Peskin, who had authored the “*Proposition E*” ballot measure in November 2024. Referring to the Streamlining Task Force’s “*Final Report*” approved on January 28, the *Standard* stated: “*The report, Peskin suggests, is part of ‘a one-size-fits-all campaign to streamline anything and everything, even if it makes no sense’.*”

Another *San Francisco Standard* [article](#) on March 5, 2026 reported that the San Francisco Labor Council voted (apparently on Monday, March 2) “to oppose the mayor’s charter [reform] proposal [for the November 2026 ballot] around ballot measures, which could put the rest of his reforms in the crosshairs as well.”

Those are fairly damning assessments that the “*Final Report*” is wildly off course.

The *Westside Observer* plans to address some of the Streamlining Task Force’s most egregious recommendations, and other problems, in our next issue.

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