

March 29, 2026

So-Called Reform Would Gut The City's Participatory Governance Streamlining Task Force Proposes "Long Live the King"

Commission Streamlining Now in the Board of Supervisors Hands:
Will Mandelman Define What "Politically Feasible, Modest Reforms" Are?
Preserve Participatory Governance in San Francisco!

by Patrick Monette-Shaw

"Long Live Democracy" is **not** what San Francisco's Commission Streamlining Task Force proposed with the highly controversial recommendations in its "Final Report" and Charter Amendment for the November 2026 municipal ballot.

After spending a year deciding how to make City government more "efficient," the Commission Streamlining Task Force's package of recommendations and proposed legislation fueled by its hatred of participatory governance has landed at the Board of Supervisors for adjudication and passage. The package of "streamlining" items is essentially a ruse to hand Mayor Lurie more strong-mayor powers.

Things don't bode well following the Supervisor's initial hearing March 17 on the Task Force's package of "streamlining" reforms. Some observers have taken to referring to them as "steamrolling," not "streamlining."

As things stand now, it all may come down to what the definition of "non-controversial" is.

San Franciscans have long sought to balance our Executive Branch under the Mayor, Legislative Branch under the Board of Supervisors, and Judicial Branch via San Francisco Superior Court by creating our fourth branch of government: A citizen-led system of checks and balances known as our collection of Boards, Commissions and oversight policy bodies. For decades, San Franciscans have treasured and worked hard to develop participatory governance of our City.

"We the People" need to take our government back from the wealthy oligarchs and their backers who continue to seek influencing our local government and political system by pouring money into elections like the "Proposition D" ballot measure in 2024 and the Charter Amendment measure inching its way to our November 2026 ballot.

In recent days, local media have started to report the Board of Supervisors and the City may make few changes to our City's commission system after all (see below). The *Westside Observer* has our doubts, since this is the first we've heard such claims!

President Mandelman Whiffed

When the streamlining curve ball was pitched to Board President Raphael Mandelman in Board Chambers during a "Committee of the Whole" inaugural hearing on the Streamlining Task Force report and recommendations Tuesday March 17, he swung. But unsuccessfully whiffed!

Mandelman started off the *Committee of the Whole* hearing by saying:

"The Task Force's mandate was to identify opportunities to modify, consolidate, or eliminate public bodies to improve the administration of City government, while preserving meaningful opportunities for public engagement."



Long Live Democracy isn't what the Streamlining Task Force has proposed with recommendations in its "Final Report" and **Charter Amendment** for the November 2026 ballot. "**We the People**" must stop "**Long Live the King**" at the Board of Supervisors — or otherwise, at the ballot box!

" 'We the People' need to take our government back from the wealthy oligarchs and their backers who continue to seek influencing our local government and political system by pouring money into elections like the 'Prop. D' ballot measure in 2024. "

The “*public engagement*” clause wasn’t actually a mandate of the Task Force. He tossed that in for good measure.

Surprisingly, he then said:

“It is highly unlikely that I, or any other member of proposed the Board of Supervisors, will introduce that particular Charter Amendment, or that this Board would send that particular Charter Amendment on to the voters in November.”

Before San Franciscans get their hopes up that the Board of Supervisors will modify or reject most, or any, of the Streamlining Task Force’s recommendations, voters should note that at that point Mandelman began waffling. After all, March 17 was a “TACO Tuesday,” on which Mandelman, like Trump, could always chicken out. It’s probably best to temper your hopes.

That’s because a partial verbatim [transcript](#) of Mandelman’s full opening remarks on March 17 shows he claimed he has already asked the City Attorney’s Office to begin working with the Board of Supervisors only on drafting an alternative version of a Commission Streamlining Charter Amendment to implement only *some* of the Streamlining Task Force’s recommendations.

He neglected to enumerate which “*some*” of the recommendations he was referring to, or whether it would be a complete revised Charter Amendment replacement. But nobody asked.

Mandelman may have once again put the cart before the horse, if he has already asked the City Attorney’s Office to start writing an apparent replacement Charter Amendment, even *before* the Board of Supervisors starts holding actual additional public hearings about what may be problematic in the language of the Charter Amendment submitted on behalf of the Streamlining Task Force to suss out needed changes.

Worse, Mandelman then claimed there are “*a host of recommendations that are non-controversial*” in the Task Force’s final report and proposed Charter Amendment. He alluded to there being “*consensus support* [on the Board of Supervisors] *for a whole bunch of the work*” the Task Force had proposed. He said so with a straight face, *before* 58 members of the public spoke — nearly unanimously in opposition — to the Streamlining Task Force’s report and recommendations during two hours of public testimony to Mandelman and the Board of Supervisors.

And of course, Mandelman failed to define or quantify “*some,*” “*a host of,*” “*non-controversial,*” or how much “*consensus.*”

Then he became even more vague.

He asserted there may be a “*diversity of perspectives*” which might be “*just worth the squeeze.*” And that the Task Force had thought through what was the best, most rationale recommendations for the “*Doctor Spock-ization of our Charter.*” He didn’t clarify either vague utterance, leaving it to listeners to discern or intuit about his meaning.

Readers may want to review the transcript linked above to try to make sense of the context. Because this *Westside Observer* columnist couldn’t understand whether Mandelman was trying to say some of the Task Force’s recommendations had been “*worth the juice*” to have squeezed and worth the effort and so should be kept and included in a Charter Amendment, *vs.* whether they should be “*squeezed*” *again* by the Board of Supervisors to see if better, different, or more juice can be obtained to be put into an alternative Charter Amendment the City Attorney’s Office may now be working on.

“Mandelman said it was ‘highly unlikely’ that the Board would advance the Task Force’s full Charter Amendment to voters. But he also revealed that he had already asked the City Attorney’s Office to begin drafting an alternative version incorporating unspecified portions of the proposal.

What those portions are remains unclear.”

“Mandelman then claimed there are ‘a host of recommendations that are non-controversial’ in the Task Force’s final report and Charter Amendment. And he alluded to there being ‘consensus support [on the Board of Supervisors] for a whole bunch of the work’ the Task Force had proposed.

Mandelman failed to define or quantify ‘some,’ ‘a host of,’ ‘non-controversial,’ or how much ‘consensus.’”

“Mandelman’s remarks grew more ambiguous as he referenced a ‘diversity of perspectives’ and the ‘Doctor Spock-ization’ of the City Charter — implying a move toward more flexible governance structures.”

Similarly, readers may want to review the transcript to see if they can glean a better understanding of why Mandelman was asserting the Task Force had done a fine job with “*Doctor Spock-ization*,” which had been worth the Task Force’s hard work to move away from rigid strict parenting rules stuck in the City Charter that should have more “*flexible*,” reasonable, and rationale parenting rules, by moving them to the City’s Administrative Code where they can be flexibly modified.

Because in the very next breath, Mandelman said that’s **not** what politics is, **not** what the Board of Supervisors is going to do, and **not** what voters are going to be asked to do in November. What! Huh?

Some observers of that meeting expressed that their bottom line is they don’t trust Mandelman to do what is best for people, but is trying to sound wise and experienced, but saying nothing of substance. Others think Mandelman is trying to have his cake and eat it too ... or is speaking out of both sides of his mouth ... or isn’t bright enough or progressive enough to stop this destructive exercise (which won’t save any money). Even others think Mandelman is ambitious, and wants to be seen as a “*player*” with the oligarch big boys (by spouting pro-Spockian efficiency), but also wants to be seen as a “*man of the people*” tossing out sarcastic references to the messiness of public forums.



Other observers think that on one hand Mandelman is saying this huge amount of paperwork and attempt at policy by the Streamlining Task Force is ridiculous and not to be trusted, but since he is out of his league, he can’t articulate what actually needs to happen and just degenerates into cheesy vague references that he hopes will make him seem smart or funny.

Some think Mandelman is trying, with his horrible metaphors, to be in a position where he can say “*I told you so*” no matter what happens regarding commission reform.

Mandelman’s Clarification

The *Westside Observer* sought clarification on the vagueness of Supervisor Mandelman’s opening statements on March 17. In response to a records request placed on March 25 about which of the Streamlining Task Force’s 800-plus decisions and recommendations may have been deemed by the Board of Supervisors to be “*controversial*” vs. “*non-controversial*,” Mandelman’s office responded there are no responsive records to the request. Apparently that work hasn’t been done, as of writing this article.

In the same records request, a list was also sought of which members of the Board of Supervisors, their staff, and any other City employees who will be involved in drafting a list of the controversial vs. non-controversial recommendations to include, or exclude, from the new Charter amendment the City Attorney’s Office was asked to begin drafting on behalf of the Board of Supervisors. Mandelman’s aide responded saying Mandelman and his legislative aide Melanie Mathewson “*have been party to discussions regarding commission streamlining, but that does not currently extend to drafting a list of ‘controversial’ vs. ‘non-controversial’ recommendations.*”

To his credit, Mandelman’s Legislative Aide, Renil Bejoy, did indicate that he cannot speak to or produce records of work that other Supervisors may be doing with respect to the requested records. For all we know, the other ten members of the Board of Supervisors may be trying to do what they can on behalf of their respective constituents.

Nor are there records identifying which supervisors or staff members are working on the proposed alternative Charter Amendment. Finally, the records request also sought any draft versions currently available of a **replacement** Charter Amendment that the City Attorney’s Office has provided in response to Mandelman’s request for assistance in crafting a replacement Charter Amendment. Again, Mr. Bejoy indicated no responsive records currently exist, as of March 26.

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In stark contrast to the Streamlining Task Force’s very public process and diligent efforts to update records of its proceedings on its well-maintained public website between each of its meetings, it’s inconceivable that Mandelman doesn’t even have a list or documents available at this point itemizing what he believes are the *non-controversial* vs. *controversial* recommendations, as if he will be the sole arbiter!

Since the Board of Supervisors is on recess the week of March 30 through April 3, that leaves the Board of Supervisors just four work weeks between April 6 and May 1 to work on developing, in collaboration with the City Attorney’s Office, an alternative Charter Amendment by the purported May deadline to incorporate which “*some*” of the Streamlining Task Force’s recommendations will be deemed “*non-controversial*,” whatever that means, and advanced to voters this November.

What Mandelman Didn’t Say

It’s clear Mandelman has drank so much of SPUR’s Commission Streamlining Kool Aid that he’s just going along with it! He neglected to say several things on March 17.

First, why Mandelman said the Board only has until May to develop an alternative Commission Reform ballot measure, when in fact the Board of Supervisors “*Rules of Order*” seems to suggest the Supervisors have until July to place Charter amendments on the November 2026 ballot, hasn’t been explained

Second, Mandelman didn’t mention any potential problems with the Ordinance the Streamlining Task Force submitted and whether the Board of Supervisors will hold hearings on the proposed Ordinance, or whether he asked the City Attorney to make any changes to it. Or whether the Board of Supervisors will just accept the Ordinance as the Task Force submitted it, without any further review ... and just pass as the Task Force submitted. It’s rife with controversial changes, too!

Mandelman made no mention of the costs of any of the 150 Boards and Commissions, and how the proposed Charter Amendment and Proposed Ordinance may end up saving the City any money, or how much the Streamlining Task Force’s recommendations will actually cost the City in tangible and intangible ways, if adopted as submitted.

And finally since the Streamlining Task Force’s “*Final Report*” and Charter Amendment and Ordinance was formally “**Filed**” by the Board of Supervisors on March 17, Mandelman said not one word about whether there will automatically be further Board of Supervisors Rules Committee hearings on any of the recommendations and Charter Amendment, or a replacement Charter Amendment Mandelman asked the City Attorney to start working on.

Optimism in the Media

Back on October 3, 2025 the *Mission Local* ran an [article](#) by Xueer Lu titled “*Prop. E was supposed to rein in S.F. mayor’s power. Instead, it’s recommending the opposite.*” It’s been clear since September 2025 that the Streamlining Task Force has been hell bent on handing the Mayor more power. The article quoted political strategist Jim Stearns who worked on the “*Prop. E*” campaign in 2024 as saying “*Prop. E was supposed to trim the fat, get rid of some of the duplicates, get rid of the dead wood. It [was] not to destroy the commission system, but to keep it robust and alive.*”

The Streamlining Task Force’s report and Charter Amendment would largely destroy the current system.

More recently, on March 16, 2026 — the day before Mandelman’s Committee of the Whole Hearing on St. Patrick’s Day — the *Mission Local* ran an [article](#) by Yeh Gilman, titled in part, “*S.F. may make few changes to city commissions after all.*” It was a preview article to a separate article the next day.

“**The records request also sought any draft of a **replacement** Charter Amendment that the City Attorney’s Office has provided. No responsive record existed as of March 26.**”

“**Mandelman didn’t mention any potential problems with the **Ordinance** the Streamlining Task Force submitted and whether the Board of Supervisors will hold hearings on the proposed Ordinance, or whether he asked the City Attorney to make any changes to it.**”

“**On March 16 the *Mission Local* ran an article titled in part, ‘*S.F. may make few changes to city commissions after all,*’ reporting that ‘*the move to trim San Francisco’s galaxy of commissions might die with a whimper.*’**”

Gilman reported that *“the move to trim San Francisco’s galaxy of commissions might die with a whimper.”* The *Westside Observer* has very strong doubts about Gilman’s evaluation. After all, Mayor Lurie and SPUR have been adamant they expect to see the Streamlining Task Force’s full panoply of recommendations and the Charter Amendment the Task Force submitted put before the voters and fully enacted with a bang, not a whimper.

Gilman reported on March 16 that Mandelman said he’s currently working on a charter amendment ballot measure that includes *“things that make sense and are not going to be a huge political fight.”* The next day on March 17, Mandelman mentioned nothing about *“things that make sense”* or that he hoped to avoid a political fight.

Gilman also reported Mandelman is pushing for a *“modest set of commission reforms,”* quoting Mandelman as having said *“We’re going to have to strike a balance between what’s important and what’s politically feasible.”* Again, the *Westside Observer* is skeptical, because the next day on March 17 Mandelman made no mention of only *“modest reforms”* and didn’t wade into the issue of what is *“politically feasible,”* or who would define what *“politically feasible, modest reforms”* means.

Would Mayor Lurie or Supervisor Mandelman single-handedly define what *“politically feasible”* means? Or would that be left to billionaire Michael Moritz, who along with *TogetherSF* and Kanishka Cheng had disastrously put *“Proposition D”* on the November 2024 ballot? After all, Mandelman participated as a panelist on government effectiveness at an *“AbundantSF”* event on January 20, 2026. *AbundantSF* is another Astroturf Network group backed by billionaires with their own political agendas about what’s politically feasible. SPUR’s current executive director, former District 7 Supervisor Sean Elsbernd, doesn’t seem to care about what’s politically feasible, but is heavily invested in government reform.

AbundantSF is particularly interested in charter reform, given its strong ties to state Senator Scott Wiener. It’s political director is the notorious Todd David, who was formerly the political director of the *“Scott Wiener For State Senate”* campaign. David was also the president of the Residents For Noe Valley Town Square, which secured the \$1.7 million State grant with Senator Wiener’s and Assemblyman Matt Haney’s assistance to build the notoriously expensive toilet in the Noe Valley Town Square project, along with other City funds secured by then San Francisco Supervisor Scott Wiener. Andres Power, former Mayor Breed’s Policy Director for six-and-a-half years, was appointed as the *AbundantSF* representative on the separate Mayor Lurie–Supervisor Mandelman Charter Reform working group.

The *Mission Local* ran another [article](#) by Yeh Gilman the next day on March 17, following the Board’s *Committee of the Whole* hearing on the Streamlining Task Force’s proposed Charter Amendment. Gilman’s second article was titled *“S.F. supes plan to ignore vast majority of commission streamlining recommendations.”*

As part of Gilman’s lede to the article, she asserted Board President Rafael Mandelman said *“I don’t think we’ll touch many of the live wires,”* Mandelman had said nothing about *“live wires”* during his opening remarks during the Committee of the Whole hearing, which Gilman described was an *“informational”* hearing. The Board typically doesn’t hold merely informational hearings!

Presumably the *live wires* refer to Task Force recommendations that don’t fit the billing of being *“non-controversial.”*

Gilman wrote:

“With Mandelman’s pledge to move forward on only the most anodyne of [the Task Force’s] recommendations, the movement to cull San Francisco’s many commissions may end not with a bang but a whimper.”

Readers should take the assessment the Streamlining Task Force may not end with a bang, but end with a whimper and melt away into the darkness, with a grain of salt.

That’s because, in part, according to his official *“Prop. G”* public calendar obtained under multiple records requests, Supervisor

“The *Mission Local* ran another article the next day on March 17, titled ‘S.F. supes plan to ignore vast majority of commission streamlining recommendations,’ reporting Mandelman said ‘I don’t think we’ll touch many of the live wires.’”

He had said nothing about ‘live wires’ during his opening remarks during the *Committee of the Whole* hearing on March 17.”

“Readers should take the assessment the Streamlining Task Force may not end with a bang, but end with a whimper and melt away into the darkness, with a grain of salt.”

Mandelman had met at least 21 times between October 1 and January 20 alone with various constituencies regarding Charter Reform, sometimes at the request of members of the Streamlining Task Force itself, and with SPUR. Mandelman didn't spend 17-and-a-half hours in those 21 meetings out of the goodness of his heart determining which were the Task Force's "non-controversial" recommendations.

After all, Mayor Lurie's *Chief of Infrastructure, Climate & Mobility*, Alicia John-Baptiste, was most recently SPUR's Chief Executive Officer, prior to Sean Elsbernd. John-Baptiste was listed as an attendee at 12 of Mandelman's 21 meetings. Of the 21 meetings, Mandelman's "Prop G" calendars redacted (with black) the meeting topic descriptions for 6 of the meetings, hiding details about his government reform discussions.

Controversial Recommendations Bucket

Many of the problematic, and controversial Streamlining Task Force's recommendations involve the pursuit of government "efficiency" at the expense of diversity and community voice on boards and commissions. Purportedly, the Board of Supervisors are "reticent" to expend their political capital about changing some of the boards and commissions, including:

- **Commission on the Environment:** Convert from a governance to an Advisory body; add a three-year Sunset date (giving authority to the Board of Supervisors not to extend the Commission of the Environment after three years); move from the City Charter to the Admin code; remove Department Head hiring-and-firing authority; remove the Environment Commission's budget and contract authority; and rename it from a "Commission" to a "Council."
- **Commission on the Status of Women:** Move from the City Charter to the Admin Code; convert to an Advisory body; change from "for cause" to "at will" member removal; remove Department Head hiring-and-firing authority; and remove the Commission's budget and contract authority.
- **Sheriff's Department Oversight Board:** Convert from a governance to an Advisory body; move from the City Charter to the Admin code; change from "for cause" to "at will" member removal; remove the Oversight Board's budget and contract authority; change membership seat qualifications; remove subpoena powers; and reduce Board of Supervisor appointees from 4 to 3 and increase the Mayor's appointees from 3 to 4.
- **Youth Commission:** Move from the City Charter to the Admin Code and rename from a "Commission" to a "Council."

While Mandelman may claim the Board of Supervisors are currently "reticent" about the Task Force's recommendations, they are being lobbied heavily by *Neighbors for a Better San Francisco*, and *AbundantSF* to meddle with the four bodies above, anyway.

And those four aren't the only ones.

As the *Westside Observer* last [reported](#), there's a host of boards and commissions at great risk of being eliminated. Our coverage included a [matrix](#) of the 20-plus categories of changes of major decisions the Task Force made to the 86 bodies it recommended be kept. That included recommendations to move 18 bodies from the City Charter to the Administrative Code; change, eliminate, or make merely "desirable" the member qualifications for 25 bodies; remove the hiring and firing authority over their respective City Department heads from 26 bodies; and change member removal from "For-Cause" to "At-Will" removal for 24 bodies; among other changes, essentially handing the Mayor *carte blanche* to engineer removal of members of boards and commissions for no reason at all.

All of these changes involve "controversial" recommendations that the Board of Supervisors should take immediate action to overturn and **not** implement.

But there are more egregious recommendations the Streamlining Task Force submitted to the Board of Supervisors that the *Westside Observer* didn't wade into in our last article. The Task Force's 308-page proposed **Ordinance** it recommended and submitted for Board of Supervisors approval include:

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There are more egregious recommendations the Streamlining Task Force submitted in its 308-page proposed **Ordinance.**

- **Recall of Commissioners:** The Ordinance removes the ability of San Franciscans to recall commissioners appointed to the Airport, Ethics, Port. and Public Utilities commissions. There's no reason to strip recall authority from San Francisco voters. The Task Force apparently did so out of spite for the citizenry! It's certainly another "*controversial*" recommendation the Board of Supervisors must overturn.
- **Ballot Simplification Committee:** The proposed Ordinance also changes the membership of the Ballot Simplification Committee which is charged with writing a ballot digest for each measure placed on the City Ballot. The digests are designed to be fair and impartial summaries of ballot measures in approximately 300 words, written at the 8th grade reading level to facilitate comprehension.

The five-member Simplification Committee had three appointees by the Board of Supervisors and two appointees by the Mayor, one of whom had to be recommended by the SFUSD as a qualified educational reading specialist. The Task Force changed it to only two seats appointed by the Board of Supervisors, and changed the third seat to being appointed by the School Superintendent with a requirement that appointee must merely have professional experience *related to* reading education, instead of being a *specialist* in reading education. The seat qualifications for the Mayor's appointees were largely removed, allowing the Mayor to select political patronage appointees.

Worse, the Task Force changed the requirement Ballot Simplification nominations come from the League of Women Voters; The Northern California Newspaper Guild; the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, Northern California Chapter; or the Northern California Broadcasters Association. Those organizations were replaced with a mere requirement nominations be solicited from nonpartisan organizations that represent professional journalists, or focus on free and fair elections. This is certainly another very "*controversial*" recommendation the Board of Supervisors must overturn!

- **San Francisco's Disaster Council:** The proposed Ordinance the Streamlining Task Force submitted revises §7.3 of the Administrative Code by changing the membership of the Disaster Council, and changes the requirement that the Disaster Council meet quarterly to only meet annually. The Ordinance also removes the requirement that any time there is a declared emergency that activates the City's "*Emergency Operations Center*," an after-action written report describing the City's **response** to the disaster be submitted to the Disaster Council and to the Board of Supervisors.

These changes were not discussed or voted on by the Streamlining Task Force; they were instead quietly negotiated by the Department of Emergency Management and the City Attorney's Office off site, not during open public meetings.

The Board of Supervisors must **not** approve these highly "*controversial*" recommendations!

There are a whole slew of controversial changes in the proposed Ordinance the Task Force submitted. But Mandelman said nothing on March 17 about whether the Board of Supervisors also asked the City Attorney's Office to rewrite the proposed Ordinance!

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As for the 166-page proposed **Charter Amendment** the Task Force submitted to the Board of Supervisors, it also recommended changes involving high-stakes areas of City governance, including:

- **Ethics Commission Ballot Measure Authority:** The Task Force recommended overturning the Ethics Commission's authority to place ballot measures on the municipal ballot independently, unless it obtains a four-fifths vote by the Ethics Commission. For the 30-plus years the Ethics Commission had been granted this authority, Ethics had never been required to seek Board of Supervisors approval or amendments to proposed ballot measures before now. Ethics had placed just five measures on the ballot independently of the Supervisors, all of which voters passed. But during the Task Force's meeting on January 20, Task Force member Sophia Kittler hysterically kept inventing wildly hypothetical scenarios to convince her Task Force colleagues to change the rules.

“The 166-page proposed Charter Amendment the Task Force submitted also recommended changes involving high-stakes areas of City governance.”

This is "*controversial*" precisely because it could possibly prevent future campaign finance reforms that incumbent Supervisors don't like, for example changes to the City's public campaign financing program. It harms the Ethics Commission's independence and policy making role. The Board of Supervisors must reject this recommendation and

preserve the current status quo for Ethics Commission ballot authority.

The Streamlining Task Force also recommended that the member seat qualifications for the Ethics Commission be made merely “*desirable*” rather than mandatory. That change must also be rejected by the Board of Supervisors.

- **City Employee’s Retirement System (SFERS)** The proposed Charter Amendment provides that any merger of the Retirement Board and the Retiree Health Care Trust Fund Board be approved by Ordinance of the Board of Supervisors, if both bodies decide by a majority vote of members of each body to approve a merger. The Charter Amendment doesn’t specify whether the actual members and beneficiaries of each of the two Boards (approximately 40,000-plus members) are included in such a vote, or whether just the Board members of each body approve a merger. SFERS’ Chief Executive Officer/Chief Investment Officer had testified to the Streamlining Task Force that the two Boards have vastly different investment strategies and portfolios, and are unlikely to approve merging into a single body. The Board of Supervisors should **not** be interfering in the internal affairs either retiree fund!

This is yet another ridiculous “*controversial*” recommendation the Board must overturn.

- **Residential Rent Stabilization and Arbitration Board (Rent Board):** On October 1, 2025 the Streamlining Task Force ruled that there should be **no changes** made to the Rent Board, including that the Rent Board retain its ability to submit the names of three qualified nominees to be its Executive Director (the three-nominee “*short list*” process), and the Rent Board should have **sole** authority over removing the Rent Board’s Executive Director.

But after the Streamlining Task Force had made that decision, when the City Attorney’s Office got around to drafting the proposed Charter Amendment for the Task Force to submit, the City Attorney creatively changed it such that the three-nominee short list process should continue to have that authority only until January 1, 2027 (following the November 2026 Charter Amendment ballot measure). Thereafter, the Board of Supervisors would be allowed to write a new Ordinance to modify the appointment and removal process and allow the Mayor to single handedly appoint the Executive Director of the Rent Board without input from Rent Board members, and hand the Mayor sole authority to remove the Rent Board’s Executive Director.

“ The Streamlining Task Force initially ruled the Rent Board should have sole authority over removing the Rent Board’s Executive Director.

The City Attorney creatively changed it so City Supervisors could grant the Mayor sole authority to remove the Rent Board’s Executive Director after January 1, 2027.

San Franciscans rely on rent control should demand that the Board of Supervisors **not approve this extremely ‘*controversial*’ recommendation.**”

Every San Franciscan who relies on rent control should demand that the Board of Supervisors not approve this extremely “*controversial*” recommendation.

- **Annual Statements of Purpose and Annual Reports:** Similarly, the Streamlining Task Force had initially voted to eliminate the annual statements of purpose and annual reports required of each board and commission — but only for the 58 designated “*decision-making*” bodies included in the Task Force’s “*workbook*” of the 150 boards and commissions.

But again, when the City Attorney’s Office got around to writing the Task Force’s proposed Charter Amendment to submit to the Board of Supervisors, the City Attorney creatively changed that to eliminating the requirement **all** bodies submit an annual report on their activities and accomplishments, not just the 58 deemed official decision-making bodies. The City Attorney apparently did so without a re-vote by the Streamlining Task Force.

The Board of Supervisors must not approve this extremely “*controversial*” recommendation.

- **Sunshine Ordinance Task Force (SOTF):** The proposed Charter Amendment the Task Force submitted seeks to modify Chapter 67, Section 67.30 of the Administrative Code to remove the requirements that specific organizations must nominate members of the Sunshine Ordinance Task Force, and instead provides that the Board of Supervisors will appoint members to the Task Force, taking into account the following **desired qualifications** for members, **among other factors** that the Board of Supervisors **deem relevant**: Experience and/or demonstrated interest in the issues of citizen access and

participation in local government; journalists from racial/ethnic-minority-owned news organizations, or whose work focuses on issues impacting minority racial or ethnic communities, or who work with a media organization or publication whose target audience is a minority racial or ethnic community; and attorneys. What other factors would the Board of Supervisors deem *relevant*? A loyalty oath to the Mayor of San Francisco?

This proposed Charter Amendment would remove the requirement nominations must be made by the local chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists and the League of Women Voters, and an additional member be someone who is physically handicapped, along with two members who must have experience in consumer advocacy. What purpose is served by stripping these nominating agencies and seat qualifications?

The Board of Supervisors must also reject these extremely “*controversial*” recommendations.

There are additional controversial recommendations in the Task Force’s proposed Charter Amendment.

San Franciscans Must Get Involved

San Franciscans must demand that the Board of Supervisors completely reconsider the Streamlining Task Force’s recommendations. and uphold the will of the voters to provide independent oversight of our City’s departments and services.

Readers need to watch what the Board of Supervisors **do** next, not just what lip service they say! The Streamlining Task Force paid no attention to the Budget and Legislative Analyst’s (BLA) “*Financial Analysis*” that estimated \$33.9 million is spent annually on supporting boards and commissions, while the Task Force was making decisions and developing its recommendations. As it was, because one of the Task Force’s meetings had run over on time of its room reservation, the BLA’s report was never formally presented during a Task Force meeting and was never rescheduled for the Task Force to ask meaningful questions.

They simply ignored the BLA’s analysis. As the *Westside Observer* previously reported, the most the City will save from commission “*streamlining*” is a paltry \$105,482 from eliminating the 60 boards, commissions and inactive policy bodies it recommended be eliminated. That’s because the City’s part-time staff supporting the eliminated 60 bodies will still keep their jobs performing other job duties.

It would set an ominous new precedent if the Board of Supervisors agree to place any commission reform Charter Amendment on the ballot to resolve baseless assertions that it will cure “*inefficiencies*” in City government.

Concerned San Franciscans should rapidly submit written testimony to the Board of Supervisors noting your concerns about the Streamlining Task Force’s arbitrary and “*controversial*” recommendations. Tell the Board your own beliefs about why specific Streamlining Task Force recommendations — in both the initial Ordinance and its proposed Charter Amendment — are controversial and must be removed.

Address and submit your written testimony to the Board of Supervisors at bos@sfgov.org or board.of.supervisors@sfgov.org, referencing Board File #260147. And monitor upcoming Board of Supervisor’s meeting agendas at <https://sfbos.org/events/calendar/upcoming>, including upcoming agendas for its Rules Committee meetings.

We need to make sure we get no Mayor-Kings in San Francisco. And we keep our participatory governance and democracy!

Monette-Shaw is a columnist for San Francisco’s Westside Observer newspaper, and a member of the California First Amendment Coalition (FAC) and the ACLU. He operates stopLHHdownsize.com. Contact him at monette-shaw@westsideobserver.com.

“ San Franciscans must demand that the Board of Supervisors completely reconsider the Streamlining Task Force’s recommendations. and uphold the will of the voters to provide independent oversight of our City’s departments and services.

The Board of Supervisors, which must not advance any version of the proposed reforms to voters.”
