



ETHICS COMMISSION

CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

PAUL A. RENNE
CHAIRPERSON

PETER KEANE
VICE-CHAIRPERSON

BEVERLY HAYON
COMMISSIONER

DAINA CHIU
COMMISSIONER

QUENTIN L. KOPP
COMMISSIONER

LEEANN PELHAM
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Date: January 18, 2017

To: Members of the Ethics Commission

From: Steven Massey, Electronic Disclosure & Data Analysis Manager

Subject: **Agenda Item 8: New Ethics Commission Website**

Summary This report provides information about the launch of the Ethics Commission's new website and plans for its continued improvement.

Action Requested No action is required by the Commission, as this item is for informational purposes only.

On December 21, 2016, the new website of the Ethics Commission was launched.

The new website represents a complete rethinking of the way users interact with the site. On the new website, we streamlined navigation, removed clutter and added features like searchable advice letters and quick entry points. It also will service as a platform for developing additional online compliance materials, disclosure resources and interactive tools in the months ahead.

The New sfethics.org

Staff first presented its plan to modernize the Ethics Commission's website in September 2015. Since then, our focus has been on implementing that plan to re-build our site from the ground up. Some of the new website features include:

User-centered homepage: A new homepage banner is being used to provide timely and pertinent content for users. The banner can be changed quickly for new messages about important deadlines and developments. New quick access buttons point users to the most frequently requested services.

Simplified site navigation: Over 4,500 pages of content have been reorganized into more meaningful sections with a visible site hierarchy for easier navigation. For continuity, the site preserves many historical links to documents from the previous version of the website.

Opportunities to provide feedback: Each web page has a place for users to provide feedback to the Commission. The web page the user was looking at is transmitted, in addition to the comments, allowing staff to better respond to inquiries or address issues with pages on the site. Users can also provide general feedback to the Commission via Twitter or Facebook.

Compliance process walk-throughs: Each disclosure process has improved documentation to help explain processes from initial registration to termination, so filers can better understand the unique processes required to comply with state and local law. Staff plans to build upon the new documentation in the coming months.

Searchable advice letters: Advice letters have been reorganized and can be searched by category, law, section, date range, and keywords to make it easier to learn more about how the laws apply under specific facts.

Complaint process walk-through: Staff worked with students at UC Hastings to draft plain-language documentation of the complaint process. Complainants can learn about the entire process from complaint preparation through settlements and hearings on the merits.

Translated documents: Chinese, Spanish, and Filipino language sections have been added to the site to comply with the City's language access ordinance. As new compliance guides and materials are developed, and additional resources are secured, content will be translated into these languages. The site provides translated information about the Commission and a contributor guide at launch.

Responsive design: The new website is designed to be readable on a variety of devices and platforms. It takes advantage of large screens, but also scales down content for laptops, tablets, and mobile devices – which are increasingly being used to access information. It also improves site accessibility for differently abled persons.

Improved site reliability and security: The site has been moved to a more reliable web hosting service. In addition, the site now transmits over an encrypted (SSL) connection providing improved website security for users.

Future Development

Staff plans to continue to enhance the site in the coming months and make additional improvements based on user feedback. The Commission's FUSE Senior Fellow, Gayathri Thaikkendiyil, will be helping to lead that outreach, including working with the Committee on Information Technology (COIT) Public Voice program, among others.

FUSE Senior Fellow

As part of its FY17 budget, the Ethics Commission was selected from a competitive application process to host a Senior Fellow through the City's FUSE Senior Fellow program for one year beginning in September 2016. The FUSE program partners with departments to identify pressing strategic challenges and recruits entrepreneurial professionals to serve in the department for one year. As we continue to enhance our website, the Commission's Senior Fellow will focus on the following additional improvements:

- Identify and develop new ways to support Form 700 compliance by providing filers with user-friendly online tools and guidance materials;

- Enhance online data disclosure capabilities to support the more tailored needs of different types of user groups that want to understand and analyze available data; and
- Ensure continuous improvement of the website content and features by incorporating user feedback.

COIT San Francisco Public Voice Program

The Senior Fellow will also be working with COIT through the City's Public Voice Program to gain additional website feedback from the community through a process referred to as "user testing". The Public Voice Program is delivering a test service by bringing together city agencies and local partners such as *CivicMakers*, *LightHouse for the Blind*, and *Microsoft*. The Ethics Commission's website project was selected as an initial demonstration of the Public Voice Program.

In this initial demonstration, San Francisco residents will sign-up to participate in the user testing sessions to be conducted at the San Francisco Public Library. A broad range of testers with different backgrounds, digital skills, and familiarity with the Ethics Commission will be identified through outreach efforts facilitated by the Public Voice Program. Testers will navigate the site to perform specific tasks and provide feedback on their experience. Staff will evaluate test results and user feedback to identify improvements for the website.

Before launching the new website, staff conducted accessibility testing to identify any issues with the website's design. For example, accessibility considerations include support for screen readers, content display such as text formatting, size, fonts, and colors, and the layout of the information. Through the Public Voice Program, staff will receive a professional consultation from the *Lighthouse for the Blind* to help validate and improve upon the website accessibility efforts.

We look forward to providing a brief overview at your meeting on January 23 and to answering any questions you may have at that time.



New chapter. New website.

We invite you to work with us to improve our online content and tools to promote integrity in San Francisco city government.

[Read More](#)

Photo Credit: Steven Massey - CC

[Give feedback on our new web site](#)



GET GUIDANCE ▾

Request ethics advice



E-FILE STATEMENTS ▾

Submit disclosures online



VIEW DISCLOSURES ▾

Search statements & data



FILE A COMPLAINT ▾

Report violations of ethics laws

Meetings 📅

19
Dec

Agenda – December 19, 2016

1:00 P.M. @ Room 416 City Hall, 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, San Francisco. [\(Watch Live 📺\)](#)

Posted: Dec 16, 2016

[More Meeting Information >](#)

News 📰

Public Announcement of Enforcement Action

Ethics Commission Fines Committee for Unlawful Use of Campaign Funds, and Issues Warning Letters to Department of Public Health and Sunshine Ordinance Task Force for Failure to Comply with Sunshine Ordinance

Posted: Dec 20, 2016

[More News >](#)

Get Interested Persons Updates

Sign up to receive agendas, filer courtesy notices & important updates via email:

Email Address

[Subscribe](#)

About the Ethics Commission

The Ethics Commission was established by San Francisco voters in November 1993, and serves the public, City employees and officials, and local candidates through education and enforcement of governmental ethics laws, including public information, reports and advice; campaign disclosure and economic interests filings; lobbyist and campaign consultant registration and reporting; public financing for City campaigns; audits, investigations and enforcement.

[Learn More >](#)

[Public Notices >](#)

Contact Us

Monday - Friday 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.

25 Van Ness Ave,
Suite 220,
San Francisco, CA 94102

415-252-3100

415-252-3112

ethics.commission@sfgov.org

sfethics.recordsrequests@sfgov.org

Connect



Resources

- Federal Election Commission
- Fair Political Practices Commission
- California Secretary of State
- Cal-Access
- City & County of San Francisco
- San Francisco Department of Elections
- San Francisco City Attorney's Office
- SF Open Data

