
From: Esther Marks [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, February 10, 2021 12:38 PM
To: Ambrose, Noreen (ETH); Lee, Yvonne (ETH); LARRY BUSH; Chiu, Daina (ETH); Pelham, Leeann (ETH)
Cc: Ethics Commission, (ETH)
Subject: Agenda item 8 proposed budget Fiscal Year 2022

This message is from outside the City email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources.

I have to leave meeting by 11:30 a.m. but wanted to give my response to the budget proposed for Fiscal Year 2022. Thank you for the previous opportunities for input.

I support proposed operating budget of \$6.5 million. The executive director's explanation of the essential department needs that would be kept are the strongest arguments in support of this budget. I am also happy to see that she is proceeding to fill the 5 vacant positions and has authorization to proceed with filling the sixth vacant position. As your executive director explained, the new hires and a larger budget will enable the Department to "begin to make crucially needed strides in restoring public confidence in our government institutions and help achieve the high ethical standards in local government that San Franciscans demand and deserve".

As discussed previously, I think the Investigations and Enforcement division needs to be strengthened in order to increase public confidence in government. The Department could move ahead in addressing the "tone at the top" culture in City leadership. Using the executive director numbers, I suggest a staff increase of 4 and a budget of \$640,000 for 2022. As I previously recommended, adoption of a time line of resolving most investigative matters within 9 months and resolving more complex matters within 18 months. As Commissioner Bush stated at an earlier meeting, it would be ideal, if most investigative matters could be resolved in 6 months. The Ethics@Work is useless if people think they can get away with noncompliance or abuse. An example being previous agenda item 5.

With strong Commission support in mobilizing public opinion, my hope is the proposed \$6.5 million budget will be approved. However, in the event of any reductions in the approved budget, I object to eliminating 3 staff positions focused on administrative support:

- elimination of on-demand response for assistance would mean the public would be limited in participating in Ethics Commission programs
- delay in revenue collection would negatively affect Department budget
- delay in ability to timely process essential procurement and payments for goods and services means no one will want to do business with you

This Department non-response fuels an attitude of "what are they good for".

Thank you.