

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR HOLLY J. MITCHELL

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Implementing Governance Reform: Seating the Governance Reform Task Force

In recent years, Los Angeles County (County) has faced increasing demands for governance reform to enhance transparency, equity, and accountability in how decisions are made and services are delivered. By approving Measure G during the November 5, 2024, general election, voters made clear their intent to modernize and improve governance structures across the County, ensuring they are inclusive, responsive, and reflective of the diverse communities we serve. At the same time, the narrow margin of support underscores the need to ensure that the process ahead represents all voices in the County—including those who were skeptical of the measure—in order to broaden and deepen the public’s confidence in the County government that ultimately emerges.

Measure G calls for the establishment of the Governance Reform Task Force (Task Force) to drive the structure and implementation of sweeping governance change, including the establishment of four new seats on the Board of Supervisors (Board), the powers, duties and staffing of the elected County Executive, Director of Budget and Management and structure and duties of this new department, the duties and structure of the Office of the County Legislative Analyst, and the powers and duties of the Ethics Compliance Officer as well as structure for an independent ethics commission. This Board

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must now formalize the structure, membership, and responsibilities of this Task Force, enabling it to fulfill its critical role in implementing the reforms envisioned by Measure G.

The Board emphasized that implementation of Measure G would be conducted with diverse and inclusive input to ensure the new governance structure is accountable to all County residents. It is critical that the Task Force conduct meetings in an inclusive and accessible manner and seek public input throughout the County. The Task Force shall be comprised of fifteen (15) members with relevant skills and experience, with two (2) members selected by each Supervisor (including representation from the County workforce), who then select the remaining five (5) members. Representation from all Board offices was a key element of past comparable bodies, including: the Blue-Ribbon Task Force on Child Protection (each Supervisor appointed two members); the Blue-Ribbon Commission on Homelessness (each Supervisor appointed one member); and implementation of the Open Space, Beaches, River Protection and Water Conservation Measure of 2016 (each Supervisor appointed a member to the five member Advisory Board), the Los Angeles County Rent Stabilization Task Force (comprised of one appointee per Supervisorial District) and other task forces. Additionally, the inclusion of at-large members appointed from a public application process, with safeguards where only the Task Force can remove its own members (and only for cause), maintains the independence of the work of the Task Force.

Appointees to the Task Force must demonstrate qualifications and experience relevant to governance reform, including backgrounds in public administration, policy development, community advocacy, or organizational leadership, as well as appropriate representation from the County workforce. This approach ensures that the Task Force reflects the diverse perspectives, skills, and lived experiences necessary to address the County's governance challenges effectively.

This composition is consistent with governance reform efforts in other large jurisdictions that are instructive for this Task Force, such as the New York City' Charter Revision Commission¹, King County (Washington) Charter Review Commission², Miami

¹ See <https://www.nyc.gov/site/charter/index.page>

² See <https://kingcounty.gov/en/legacy/independent/charter-review-commission>

Dade County's Charter Review Task Force³, to identify best practices and lessons learned. This comparative analysis will inform recommendations tailored to the County's unique needs and complexities. Moreover, the County can learn from the City of Los Angeles's recent Charter Reform Commission that reviewed the City's charter to improve the City's service delivery, better define the role of the City's Ethics Commission, establish a process to fill vacancies in elected offices and analyze an increase in the number of City Council districts.⁴ The Task Force must stay centered on its core task of fleshing out the new structures introduced by Measure G and fulfilling the commitment of cost neutrality made to voters. The Task Force's jurisdiction should not include internal Board procedures left to the Board's discretion by Measure G, thus allowing the Board to continue ongoing efforts to improve its internal functions and procedures to provide better governance to County residents. Furthermore, the Task Force should make every effort to produce consensus recommendations with the broad support of its members and ensure that the public have ample time to digest and weigh in on such recommendations.

As the County embarks on a once-in-a-generation effort to strengthen our governance, it is imperative that the Board come together to center equity, transparency, and representation—not only in the seating of the Task Force, but also in the external opportunities to improve the way the public can access this vital deliberative process.

I THEREFORE MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

- 1) Create the Governance Reform Task Force ("Task Force"), as set forth in Measure G and by the deadline therein, to be supported by the Executive Office.
 - a) The Task Force shall be comprised of a total of fifteen (15) Members at all times.
 - i) Two (2) Members shall be selected by each Supervisor and appointed by the Board, for a total of ten (10) Members.
 - (1) One of the two Members selected by each Supervisor must be a labor representative from the County workforce, provided however that no two Members shall be a member, employee,

³ See <https://www.miamidade.gov/global/government/charter/task-force-2017/home.page>

⁴ See https://clkrep.lacity.org/onlinedocs/2023/23-1027-S2_ord_188303_8-12-24.pdf

officer, or director of the same labor organization.

(2) The initial ten (10) Supervisor-selected Members shall be appointed no later than March 31, 2025.

ii) The remaining five (5) at-large Members shall be selected by a four-fifths majority vote of the Supervisor-selected Members and appointed by the Board, provided that:

(1) The ten (10) Supervisor-selected Members shall apply the criteria and conduct the application process set forth in Directive 3 below for the selection of the remaining at-large Members, with such revisions as may be adopted by a four-fifths vote of the Supervisor-selected members.

(2) The Task Force collectively reflects the diversity of the County to the utmost extent possible.

iii) Consistent with the Board's intention for the Task Force to operate independently, a Member may only be removed from the Task Force for cause and by the Task Force's action.

b) Members shall:

- i) Reside or work in the County and reflect the diversity of the County;
- ii) Have demonstrated qualifications and experience in community outreach/engagement with marginalized and socioeconomically disadvantaged populations;
- iii) Have demonstrated knowledge and expertise in matters relevant to governance reform, including backgrounds in public administration, policy development, academia, and/or organizational leadership;
- iv) Have no conflict of interest, or the appearance thereof, with the work and objectives of the Task Force.

c) The Task Force's jurisdiction shall be to develop recommendations to the Board for implementation of Measure G, which shall include:

- i) The structure and responsibilities of the County Executive, Director of Budget and Management, County Legislative Analyst, Ethics Commission, and Ethics Compliance Officer, as well as the Office of

Ethics Compliance and the Charter Review Commission.

- ii) Options for establishing each of the above positions and bodies, including identification of funding sources to cover all costs associated with the establishment and ongoing operation of the same. Only existing County funding sources may be utilized, and cannot result in any additional costs to, or taxes imposed on taxpayers, thus funding must be found within existing resources. Any cost savings relied upon in any option must be clearly identified, including the amount and source.
 - iii) Changes to the direction and oversight of municipal services for the unincorporated areas, in particular the respective roles of both the County Executive and the Supervisor representing a particular unincorporated area. Any recommended changes should include specific analysis and justification for how such changes would improve the quality and responsiveness of services and representation of the unincorporated areas.
- d) While the Task Force should strive for consensus in all decisions, the following require the approval by a majority of Task Force Members that includes the affirmative votes of at least two (2) Members selected by each of the four (4) Supervisors, for a total of eight (8):
- i) Adoption of, or revisions to, the rules and procedures of the Task Force;
 - ii) Removal of a Member of the Task Force;
 - iii) Adoption of any Task Force recommendation for submission to the Board.
- e) In conducting the robust and inclusive community and stakeholder outreach and input required by Section 11.74 of Measure G, the Task Force shall:
- i) Hold its meetings throughout the County, including in each Supervisorial District, with an option for virtual participation.
 - ii) Substantively engage with community organizations and stakeholders from each Supervisorial District.

- iii) Engage and seek feedback from all organizations and individuals who provided public comment (in any form) in connection with the Board meetings at which Measure G (or the original motion) was considered.
 - iv) Make all efforts to host meetings at locations that are accessible to persons with disabilities and accessible to affordable public transportation.
 - v) Ensure language access to the general public, including providing professional interpretation services, translated written materials, and clear mechanisms for requesting accommodations.
 - vi) Provide drafts of all recommendations to the general public at least 10 days prior to each meeting.
 - vii) Adopt a recommendation only after a public meeting (with public comment) has been held for such recommendation, and after its final text has been public for at least 30 days.
- 2) Direct the Executive Officer to report back to the Board in writing within 45 days with options for implementation plans to operationalize and facilitate the work of the Task Force. The options must identify staffing and total costs (both one-time and ongoing), as well as any changes, reductions or impacts to current Executive Office operations or functions.
- 3) Direct the Executive Officer, in coordination with County Counsel, to report back to the Board in writing in 45 days with a recommended application process (including minimum qualifications consistent with this motion) from which the five (5) at-large Members of the Task Force will be selected. The recommendations shall set forth an open and public application process for individuals interested in serving as Task Force Members. This pool of applicants shall be a resource to the Supervisor-selected Members in determining individuals for appointment. All individuals appointed as an at-large Member must have applied through this public process and met the established minimum qualifications.
 - a) The application process should be designed and conducted with the intention of attracting applicants that satisfy the established minimum

qualifications and reflect the diversity of the County population, including:

- i) Race/ethnicity
 - ii) Gender
 - iii) LGBTQ+ identity
 - iv) Age
 - v) System impacted (formerly incarcerated, houseless, foster youth, etc.)
 - vi) Immigration status
 - vii) Income levels
 - viii) Residence in unincorporated areas of the County
 - ix) Education levels
 - x) Disabilities
 - xi) Religion
 - xii) Renter-Homeowner parity
 - xiii) Geographical diversity
- b) The initial application window should open as soon as practical after the process and qualifications are approved by the Board, and close no later than April 15, 2025, to allow the Supervisor-selected members of the Task Force to select the five (5) at-large Members before the deadline set forth in Measure G.
- 4) Direct County Counsel, in collaboration with the Executive Officer, to report back to the Board in writing within 45 days with a draft Board resolution, consistent with the Board's intention to provide a framework in which the Task Force will be otherwise free to govern itself:
- a) Establishing procedures and requirements to minimize conflicts of interest and ensure the independence of the Task Force.
 - b) Delegating authorities essential to the Task Force's function.
 - c) Setting forth minimum fundamental standards for public notice and participation, language access, culturally responsive and proficient outreach, submission of final recommendations to the Board, and compliance with applicable law.

- d) Requiring the Task Force to respond to reasonable requests from the Board for updates on its work.
- 5) Consistent with Section 10.20 of Measure G, which reserves to the Board the power to "establish rules of organization and procedure" in furtherance of "the conduct of its functions," the Task Force's jurisdiction shall not include internal Board procedures, such as: days of the week on which motions are filed, the process by which motions and pieces of legislation are considered before they are agendaized at a regularly scheduled board meeting, Board agenda management, and other items pertaining to the procedural rules of the Board.

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