



**SF Environment**

**Our home. Our city. Our planet.**

A Department of the City and County of San Francisco

London N. Breed  
Mayor

Deborah O. Raphael  
Director

**City and County of San Francisco**  
**[Commission on the Environment](#)**

**SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES DRAFT**

**Monday, March 1, 2021 at 5:00 PM**

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**PUBLIC COMMENT CALL-IN**  
**1-415-655-0001 / Access Code: 187 096 1685**

Due to the COVID-19 health emergency and to protect Commissioners, SFE staff, and members of the public, the Commission on the Environment's Meeting Room (Room 416) is closed.

Members of the public are to participate remotely. If you want to ensure your comment on any item on the agenda is received by the Commission on the Environment in advance of the meeting, please send an email to [katie.chansler@sfgov.org](mailto:katie.chansler@sfgov.org) by 5pm on February 28 or call (415) 355-3709.

Please see the information on the next page for remote meeting access.

**COMMISSION MEMBERS:** Heather Stephenson (President), Eddie Ahn (Vice President), Elmy Bermejo, Tiffany Chu, Johanna Wald, Mike Sullivan and Sarah Wan.

**ORDER OF BUSINESS**

**Public comment will be taken on each agenda item involving discussion or action before the Commission takes action on that item.**

**1. Call to Order and Roll Call.**

The special Commission on the Environment meeting was convened at 5:05 p.m.

Present: Commissioners Eddie Ahn, Elmy Bermejo, Tiffany Chu, Heather Stephenson, Mike Sullivan, Johanna Wald, and Sarah Wan.

**2. President's Welcome.** (Discussion)

President Stephenson read the Ramaytush Ohlone Land Acknowledgement and the new committee assignments. She explained that the purpose behind this special Commission meeting is to provide an update on the Department of the Environment's budget. She also announced that public comment would be kept to 2 minutes for each speaker.

There was no public comment.

**3. Approval of Minutes of the February 1, 2021 Commission on the Environment Meeting.**  
(Explanatory Documents: February 1, 2021 Draft Minutes) (Discussion and Possible Action)

Public comment received via phone:

Daniel Tahara called to confirm the spelling of his name as well as Helena Bireki.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Sullivan and a second by Commissioner Bermejo, the minutes were approved without objection. (Ayes: Commissioners Ahn, Bermejo, Chu, Stephenson, Sullivan, Wald, and Wan; Noes: None; Absent: None).

**4. General Public Comment:** Members of the public may address the Commission on matters that are within the Commission's jurisdiction and are not on today's agenda.

Public comment received via phone:

Katherine Howard expressed concerns around the Ferris wheel in Golden Gate Park. Katherine referenced impacts to wildlife and asked others to call into the HPC on March 3<sup>rd</sup>. Katherine said more information could be found at: [sfurbannature.org](http://sfurbannature.org)

The caller expressed concerns around the Ferris wheel in Golden Gate Park and asked for help in improving the City's lighting policy. Light pollution and artificial light have been shown to have a negative impact on insects. The caller asked for the City to follow the science when making decisions around lighting.

Chris called to discuss the Board of Supervisors' Land use Committee and when the Construction and Demolition Ordinance would be brought back to the Committee. He asked when there will be additional climate policies and if there will be a carbon fee attached to the C&D ordinance. He referenced a study that found the cost of carbon should be no less than \$125 per metric ton of carbon and that it could lead to \$20M for communities most impacted by climate change.

Helena Bireki called to second the previous caller's comments.

PRESENTATIONS

**5. Presentation on Changes to the Department Budget and Vote on Whether to Approve Resolution File 2021-02-COE Addressing Short-Term and Long-Term Funding Concerns for Critical Department Programs.** Sponsor: Heather Stephenson, Commission President; Speakers: Deborah Raphael, Director, and Joseph Salem, Program Manager, Finance and Administration (Explanatory Document: Resolution File No. 2021-02-COE Addressing Short-Term and Long-Term Funding Concerns for Critical Department Initiatives and Programs) (Discussion and Possible Action)

President Stephenson introduced the agenda item.

Joseph Salem presented on the impacts to the Department's budget from reduced work orders.

Director Raphael spoke about the impacts to programs and next steps.

President Stephenson spoke about her shock in learning that the Department does not receive funding from the General Fund and how this has impacted the Department over the last few years. She said that there needs to be a discussion around the long-term funding for the Department.

Vice President Ahn said that he agrees with President Stephenson and does not understand how the Department can handle these cuts while battling a global crisis. He asked about the scope of stimulus funding the Department would receive and how other City departments are handling this.

Director Raphael said that the City has about a \$600M shortfall over the next two years. The Mayor's office is hoping that the stimulus funding will be able to fill that gap. Her understanding is that all departments are having similar conversations with their commissioners.

Vice President Ahn said that these budget cuts are bad for the environment and environmental justice, and he expressed his concern. He then asked about the completion of the GHG inventory and if this process would be affected by the budget cuts.

Director Raphael said that we will still do the inventory work and that the PUC will still fund the Department, but that there won't be significant reductions to emissions if the Department cannot fund the necessary work.

Commissioner Sullivan said that this is alarming and heartbreaking. He thinks that everything is important, but the climate work is the most important with the EV work as a low-hanging fruit. He agrees that this should be an opportunity to find long term funding.

Commissioner Wald agreed with what everyone has said. She said that the resolution is a good answer to the short-term funding problem, and that this is the first time the Commission has been asked to do this. She suggested a letter from President Stephenson as well as letters from individual Commissioners and asked that staff figure out a process for sending these letters. She also suggested that Commissioners try to attend budget meetings with Director Raphael to better advocate for the Department's funding.

President Stephenson asked if there is an opportunity to send a letter that speaks to developing a plan for long-term funding and the implementation of the climate action plan. She added that she is interested in the idea of sending individual letters to District Supervisors.

Commissioner Chu said that she would be happy to draft as many letters as necessary. She asked Director Raphael if letters would be enough.

Director Raphael said that these are all ways to show up including encouraging others to show up. She said this starts with letters, but the long game is organizing. Director Raphael added that more work needs to be done to learn what the options are and that any connections to potential sources of funding would be very helpful.

President Stephenson said that there needs to be work done to figure out what can be done from a voter and policy perspective.

Director Raphael agreed that we need help with this research.

Commissioner Bermejo said that there are new Supervisors who might benefit from meetings to learn about the Department and helping them understand why this is so important. She said that letters and phone calls are helpful and generate responses.

Commissioner Wan asked if there have been any conversations about this with the Mayor's Office.

Director Raphael said that the Mayor is hearing about ideas from the Supervisors around how to spend the stimulus funding. She has heard that it would be helpful to make everyone aware of the budget impacts through the resolution and any other communications.

Commissioner Wan suggested having an amount in mind when asking for additional funding and what it would be used for.

President Stephenson said that the resolution needs to clearly ask for the budget to be made whole but that we also need a sustainable long-term plan for the budget. She added that there are additional steps that need to be taken to figure out what is needed.

Commissioner Wan agreed and wanted to ensure that the discussion on what is needed does not fade away.

Director Raphael said that opportunities to ask for funding for new work could arise, but those asks would need to be specific.

Commissioner Wan asked about media attention and making the public more aware of this issue.

Director Raphael said that this meeting is televised and that a strategy is being developed to share this more broadly.

Commissioner Wan said that there might be an opportunity to work on this with other jurisdictions in California and approach private foundations.

Commissioner Wald suggested adding an appendix to the resolution that includes a list of what the Department would not be able to do with the lack of funding.

Commissioner Ahn added that he would also like to add a list of what the Department would like to do with additional funding to the appendix.

Commissioner Wald said that there is one paragraph where this could be added on page 20, line 5. She added that the lack of clear budget figures might contribute to the confusion.

President Stephenson asked if it would be helpful to mention the \$346,000 funding gap in this section.

Commissioner Wald said that this is mentioned in the paragraph above.

President Stephenson said it would be challenging to create an appendix around what the Department would like to do at this time.

Commissioner Wald suggested eliminating the paragraph she mentioned previously. She asked for her recommended changes to be shared on the screen.

Charles Sheehan asked for Katie to share her screen and clarified what options were being shown.

Commissioner Wald said that she would prefer to add a new paragraph.

President Stephenson asked to clarify if the following paragraph should be removed.

Commissioner Wald said that in the absence of a concrete figure, it should be removed. She also suggested another change to ask for increased collaboration on finding a funding solution.

Commissioner Sullivan asked if it would be right to eliminate the ask for longer term funding.

Commissioner Wald said that it is not as strong without an actual budget number.

Commissioner Wan asked if there would be another resolution in the future because this paragraph would not be enough to initiate an ask for longer term funding.

Vice President Ahn suggested setting a timeline for the Commission to request this greater increase in funding.

Commissioner Wald suggested asking the Mayor and the Board to acknowledge that the Department needs more funding to do the work that is being asked of them.

President Stephenson said that coming up with a timeline also seems challenging but that she likes the idea of asking for an acknowledgement.

Commissioner Sullivan said that he would like to signal to the Board and the Mayor that there will be an ask in the future. He suggested asking them to support future increases in funding.

Director Raphael suggested moving to public comment and clarified the amendments.

Commissioner Sullivan said that asking for an acknowledgement that funding discussions should continue would be sufficient.

President Stephenson agreed and asked to move to public comment.

Public Comment via Telephone:

There were 17 public comments received that expressed concerns from members of Local 21, the public, and Department staff around funding concerns for the Department. They referenced the budget cuts and the disconnect with the need for climate action and emission reductions. They also mentioned the desire to support the Department and build political will for longer-term funding solutions. Many callers reiterated the dire need for the Department's climate work in order to protect San Francisco from detrimental impacts from climate change. They said that San Francisco should be leading by example and that cutting the Department's budget is fiscally and morally wrong.

President Stephenson thanked the callers for their work and time. She asked to see an amended resolution.

Charles explained the amendments and read them aloud.

President Stephenson asked for any feedback.

Commissioner Sullivan said that he approves of the changes.

Commissioner Wald agreed.

Charles said that the appendix would be written from the PowerPoint slide that included the programs that would be not funded.

Vice President Ahn said that this would not cover programs that could be covered with an increase in funding. He suggested making it read "unfunded programs" in the appendix.

Commissioner Wan asked if there is a time crunch for the resolution or if this conversation can continue in the future.

Commissioner Wald said that it's important to note that the appendix is a partial list of programs that won't be funded under certain circumstances.

Charles said that the word "partial" could be added to the appendix title.

Director Raphael said that this is a small universe of programs that wouldn't be funded because of this specific cut.

President Stephenson said that she is happy to continue talking about funding for the Department.

Vice President Ahn said that he is in favor of working toward a long-term vision of increasing the Department's funding.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Wald and a second by Commissioner Chu, the amendments to the resolution to:

- Add: Appendix I: Partial list of programs that will not be funded unless funding is restored
- On page 3 of the resolution, remove: "That, in the face of the climate crisis and the urgent need for San Francisco to continue to lead at home as well as nationally and internationally, the COE also asks the Mayor and Board to support future increases and acknowledge that we need an increase in the future increase the Department's funding, in addition to restoring the reductions, for Climate and EV work in order to ensure the Department's ability to accelerate efforts on behalf of the climate and address the growing threat of global warming"
- On page 3, add: "That, in the face of the climate crisis and the urgent need for San Francisco to continue to lead at home as well as nationally and internationally, it is critical that action be taken to address the Department's ongoing lack of stable and sufficient funding to carry out the essential climate and EV work that it has been tasked with"
- On page 3, add: "That the COE also asks the Mayor and Board, in addition to restoring the reductions, to acknowledge the importance of increasing funding for Climate and EV initiatives and to work with the Department to accelerate efforts accordingly to address the growing threat of global warming"

were approved without objection. (Ayes: Commissioners Ahn, Bermejo, Chu, Stephenson, Sullivan, Wald, and Wan; Noes: None; Absent: Wald).

Upon a motion by Commissioner Wan and a second by Commissioner Sullivan, the resolution was approved without objection. (Ayes: Commissioners Ahn, Bermejo, Chu, Stephenson, Sullivan, Wald, and Wan; Noes: None; Absent: Wald).

## 6. Adjournment.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:26 p.m.

**The next meeting of the Commission on the Environment is scheduled for Tuesday, March 23, 2021, at 5:00 p.m. In compliance with the San Francisco Health Officer's Order No. C19-07, directing all individuals to "shelter in place", Public meetings, panels and other advisory bodies will continue on a remote conferencing basis only.**

**Find out about upcoming events and search for archived meeting materials on the SFEnvironment.org website.**

### Attending the Meeting: Watch or Listen

Members of the public have the following options for attending the meeting:

**WATCH** (via SFGovTV) - [www.sfgovtv.org](http://www.sfgovtv.org)

**OR**

Watch the meeting using a computer or smart device by clicking on the following link:

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<https://ccsf.webex.com/ccsf/onstage/g.php?MTID=ebc9eb9b3556f3cd99877e0ca0eb21c8d>

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### Participating During Public Comment: By Phone

Members of the public will have opportunities to participate during public comment. The public is asked to wait for the particular agenda item before making a comment on that item. Comments will be addressed in the order they are received. When the moderator announces that the Commission is taking public comment, members of the public can:

**PUBLIC COMMENT CALL-IN: 1- 415-655-0001 / Access Code: 187 096 1685**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Ensure you are in a quiet location</i></li><li>• <i>Speak clearly</i></li><li>• <i>Turn off any TVs or radios around you</i></li></ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. When prompted, "raise hand" by pressing * <b>3</b> and you'll be queued.</li><li>2. Callers will hear silence when waiting for your turn to speak. Operator will unmute you.</li><li>3. When prompted, callers will have the standard three minutes to provide comment.</li></ol>
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In accordance with Governor Gavin Newsom's statewide order for all residents to "Stay at Home" - and the numerous local and state proclamations, orders and supplemental directions - aggressive directives have been issued to slow down and reduce the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Copies of explanatory documents are available at 1) on the Commission's website <http://www.sfenvironment.org/commission>; (2) upon request to the Commission Affairs Officer, at telephone number 415-355-3709, or via e-mail at [katie.chansler@sfgov.org](mailto:katie.chansler@sfgov.org).

### **Important Information**

The ringing of and use of cell phones, pagers and similar sound-producing electronic devices are prohibited at this meeting. Please be advised that the Chair may order the removal from the meeting room of any person(s) responsible for the ringing or use of a cell phone, pager, or other similar sound-producing electronic devices.

NOTE: Persons unable to attend the meeting may submit to the Committee, by the time the proceedings begin, written comments regarding the agenda items above. These comments will be made a part of the official public record and shall be brought to the attention of Committee Members. Any written comments should be sent to: Commission Affairs Manager, Department of the Environment, 1455 Market Street, Suite 1200, San Francisco, CA 94103 by 5:00 p.m. on the day prior to the hearing. Comments that cannot be delivered to the Commission Affairs Officer by that time may be sent to Katie Chansler via e-mail [katie.chansler@sfgov.org](mailto:katie.chansler@sfgov.org).

### **Public Comment**

At this time, members of the public may address the Committee on items of interest that are within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Committee but are not on today's agenda. Public comment will be taken following each agenda item. Each member of the public may address the Committee for up to three minutes, unless otherwise announced by the President. If it is demonstrated that the comments by the public will exceed 15 minutes, the President may continue Public Comment to another time during the meeting.

The Brown Act forbids the Committee from taking action or discussing any item or issue not appearing on the posted agenda. This rule applies to issues raised in public comment as well. In response to public comment, not on an agenda item, the Committee is limited to:

1. Briefly responding to statements made or questions posed by members of the public, or
2. Request staff to report back on a matter at a subsequent meeting, or
3. Directing staff to place the item or issue on a future agenda (Government Code Section 54954.2(a).)

### **Accessible Meeting Policy**

The Commission on the Environment meeting will be held virtually due to the public health emergency.

To obtain a disability-related accommodation, including auxiliary aids or services, or to obtain meeting materials in alternative format, please contact Katie Chansler at (415) 355-3709. Providing at least 72 hours' notice will help to ensure availability. Written reports or background materials for calendar items are available for public inspection and are available online at [www.sfenvironment.org/coe](http://www.sfenvironment.org/coe). Public comment will be taken on each item before or during

consideration of the item.

The following services are available on request 72 hours prior to the meeting; except for Monday meetings, for which the deadline shall be 4:00 p.m. of the last business day of the preceding week: For American sign language interpreters or the use of a reader during a meeting, a sound enhancement system, and/or alternative formats of the agenda and minutes, please contact Katie Chansler at (415) 355-3709 to make arrangements for the accommodation. Late requests will be honored, if possible.

### **Language Access**

Per the Language Access Ordinance (Chapter 91 of the San Francisco Administrative Code), Chinese, Spanish and or Filipino (Tagalog) interpreters will be available upon requests. Meeting Minutes may be translated, if requested, after they have been adopted by the Commission. Assistance in additional languages may be honored whenever possible. To request assistance with these services please contact the Commission Affairs Officer at 415-355-3709 or [katie.chansler@sfgov.org](mailto:katie.chansler@sfgov.org) at least 48 hours in advance of the hearing. Late requests will be honored if possible.

### **語言服務**

根據語言服務條例(三藩市行政法典第91章)·中文、西班牙語和/或菲律賓語(泰加洛語)傳譯人員在收到要求後將會提供傳譯服務。翻譯版本的會議記錄可在委員會通過後透過要求而提供。其他語言協助在可能的情況下也將可提供。上述的要求·請於會議前最少48小時致電 415-355-3709或電郵至[katie.chansler@sfgov.org](mailto:katie.chansler@sfgov.org)向委員會秘書提出。逾期提出的請求·若可能的話·亦會被考慮接納。

### **Acceso A Idioma**

De acuerdo con la Ordenanza de Acceso a Idiomas "Language Access Ordinance" (Capítulo 91 del Código Administrativo de San Francisco "Chapter 91 of the San Francisco Administrative Code") intérpretes de chino, español y/o filipino (tagalo) estarán disponibles de ser requeridos. Las minutas podrán ser traducidas, de ser requeridas, luego de ser aprobadas por la Comisión. La asistencia en idiomas adicionales se tomará en cuenta siempre que sea posible. Para solicitar asistencia con estos servicios favor comunicarse con el Secretario de la Comisión al 415-355-3709, o [katie.chansler@sfgov.org](mailto:katie.chansler@sfgov.org) por lo menos 48 horas antes de la reunión. Las solicitudes tardías serán consideradas de ser posible.

### **Access Sa Wika**

Ayon sa Language Access Ordinance (Chapter 91 ng San Francisco Administrative Code), maaaring mag-request ng mga tagapagsalin sa wikang Tsino, Espanyol, at/o Filipino (Tagalog). Kapag hiniling, ang mga kaganapan ng miting ay maaring isalin sa ibang wika matapos ito ay aprobahan ng komisyon. Maari din magkaroon ng tulong sa ibang wika. Sa mga ganitong uri ng kahilingan, mangyaring tumawag sa Clerk ng Commission sa 415-355-3709, o [katie.chansler@sfgov.org](mailto:katie.chansler@sfgov.org) sa hindi bababa sa 48 oras bago mag miting. Kung maari, ang mga late na hiling ay posibleng pagbibigyan.

### **Know your Rights under the Sunshine Ordinance (Chapter 67 of the San Francisco Administrative Code)**

Government's duty is to serve the public, reaching its decisions in full view of the public. Commissions, boards, councils, and other agencies of the City and County exist to conduct the people's business. This ordinance assures that deliberations are conducted before the people and

that City operations are open to the people's review. For more information on your rights under the Sunshine Ordinance or to report a violation of the ordinance, contact the Sunshine Ordinance Task Force, City Hall, Room 244, One Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, San Francisco, CA 94102-4683 at Phone No.: (415) 554-7724; Fax No.: (415) 554-5163; E-mail: [soft@sfgov.org](mailto:soft@sfgov.org). Copies of the Sunshine Ordinance can be obtained from the Clerk of the Sunshine Task Force, the San Francisco Public Library and on the City's website at [www.sfgov.org](http://www.sfgov.org).

### **Lobbyist Registration and Reporting Requirements**

Individuals and entities that influence or attempt to influence local legislative or administrative action may be required by the San Francisco Lobbyist Ordinance [SF Campaign & Governmental Conduct Code §2.100, et. seq] to register and report lobbying activity. For more information about the Lobbyist Ordinance, please contact the Ethics Commission at: 25 Van Ness Avenue, 2nd Floor, San Francisco, CA 94102; telephone (415) 252-3100, fax (415) 252-3112, web site at [www.sfgov.org/ethics](http://www.sfgov.org/ethics).

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