

ELECTIONS COMMISSION
City and County of San Francisco



**FAIR, INDEPENDENT, & EFFECTIVE
REDISTRICTING FOR COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT (FIERCE)
COMMITTEE**

Cynthia Dai, Chair
Renita LiVolsi
Michelle Parker

John Arntz, Director of Elections
Marisa Davis, Commission Secretary

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

**Fair, Independent, & Effective Redistricting for Community Engagement (FIERCE)
Committee of the San Francisco Elections Commission
Monday, October 30, 2023
6:00 p.m.
City Hall, Room 408
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, California 94102
& Remote via WebEx**

Order of Business

1. Call to Order & Roll Call

Chair Dai called the meeting to order at 6:09 p.m.

Present: Chair Cynthia Dai, Commissioner Renita LiVolsi, and Commissioner Michelle Parker.

The Chair has excused the Director of Elections from attending the meeting, which is permitted by Article VI of the Commission's Bylaws.

Commissioner LiVolsi stated the Commission's land acknowledgment of the Ramaytush Ohlone people.

2. General Public Comment

In-Person:

- Commenter 1 shared opposition to AB 1248, didn't see it as an appropriate tool for San Francisco, and expressed support for the existing multiple appointing authorities for SF's RDTF.
- Alan Burradell, District 8, urged the SF Elections Commission to make no recommendations to the Board of Supervisors to change appointing authorities for the RDTF.

Via WebEx: Lauren Girardin from the League of Women Voters San Francisco thanked the committee for doing this work and noted that the current appointing process needs to be updated.

3. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

The minutes from the August 24 and September 5 meetings were approved by general consensus.

There were no public commenters.

4. Redistricting Initiative

Chair Dai reaffirmed that the FIERCE Committee was formed solely to provide redistricting recommendations to the full commission. She also noted that Gov. Newsom signed AB 764 into law, did not sign AB 1248, vetoed SB 52, and signed bills establishing IRCs for Sacramento and Orange Counties.

The committee reviewed the Summary of FIERCE Consensus Preliminary Redistricting Initiative Reform Recommendations and proposed report format.

- Composition – Commissioner Parker mentioned that people asked why the task force should not have an odd number of members. The committee noted that this was not necessary due to the voting requirement of nine members to take action. It was recommended that these interdependencies be called out. The committee also discussed the downside of requiring a member from each district which could impact overall diversity. Additionally, details of possible stipends should be included in the funding section.
- Selection & Removal: Outreach and Recruitment – The committee agreed that outreach should be conducted in all the languages used by the Elections Department and discussed allocations of funding and stipends. The recommendations should also include reference to other jurisdictions' best practices and innovation in outreach.

- Selection & Removal: Qualifications and Restrictions – The committee reviewed disqualifying conflicts of interest, requirements, and restrictions to serving on the Commission. Chair Dai suggested that civic engagement possibly be added to the criteria. The committee also suggested that applicants could initially self-certify for financial qualifications until selected as a finalist when Form 700 is required by City law. Questions around how post-service requirements would be enforced were suggested to be built into implementation plans.
- Selection & Removal: Vetting and Selection — The committee discussed adding clarification that the purpose of the selection body is to administer the random selection of the first 8 after vetting the 40 “most qualified.”
- Selection & Removal: Removal – The committee suggested re-wording for clarity and allowing the IRC to select alternates.
- Redistricting Line-Drawing Criteria – The committee agreed on listing criteria such as geographical barriers, compactness, contiguity, citing no incumbency protection, etc. using the Elections Code 21130, FAIR MAPS Act, and Long Beach’s criteria as examples of what to include.
- Funding – The committee discussed including reasonable staffing and funding, possible stipends and reimbursements to reduce barriers to participation, etc. Commissioners encouraged the Board of Supervisors to get community input on what is a meaningful and modest stipend. The committee also discussed the need to consider funding across the multiple phases and components of the redistricting process.
- Commission Processes – Commissioners agreed that these should set the IRC up for success, such as requiring early training and protecting them from influence. It was also agreed that most of the best practices the IRC should use do not need to be included in the charter, and that the passage of AB 764 will set some process requirements applicable to San Francisco.
- Missed Deadline – The committee noted the interdependence of timing and deadlines across the full process, i.e. by starting earlier the IRC would have time to facilitate a good process. Chair Dai also noted that AB764 applies to SF because the city charter is silent on this topic; it also does not require us to adopt our own deadline.
- Timing – Commissioner Parker suggested referring to the City Clerk’s report recommendations in the rationale and note “newly required by AB 764” for those that are now state law.

Commissioner Parker suggested that the scope and history of how and why this process was started be included in the report to the Board of Supervisors. Chair Dai suggested that documents such as the Redistricting Initiative Plan, which covers a lot of that narrative, be added to the online page. The package to the Board of

Supervisors could include a page on our website, the plan, discussion deck and final FIERCE recommendations. Other comments regarding formatting and additional detail were shared.

Commissioners agreed to incorporate Vice President Jerdonek's suggested text in the Redistricting Recommendations Document.

Public commenters:

- *In-person*: Alan Buradell suggested the whole report be framed as "something to consider" and that the committee not take a position. He also expressed his objection to the League of Women Voters' earlier comment, referring to their preference of having unelected bodies "wielding power" instead of elected officials.
- *Via WebEx*: Lauren Girardin, League of Women Voters San Francisco suggested that anything added to the Charter be "in addition to" state law and to beware of conflicts that may require future Charter amendments. She commended the committee on the groundwork to ensure that San Franciscans, the Board of Supervisors, and the future Redistricting Task Force and/or Independent Redistricting Commission of San Francisco have clarity.

Chair Dai moved to approve the final report which includes the preliminary recommendations and the recommended package to the Board of Supervisors. Commissioner LiVolsi seconded.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE FINAL REPORT

Chair Dai YAY
Commissioner LiVolsi YAY
Commissioner Parker YAY

3 Yays 0 Nays. Motion passes.

5. Agenda Items for Future Meetings

Unless the full Commission requests the FIERCE Committee to meet again, there are no future meetings planned at this time.

There were no public commenters

6. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 pm.