

From: [Owen, David \(BOS\)](#)
To: [REG - BSC Clerk](#)
Cc: [Dorsey, Matt \(BOS\)](#)
Subject: Item #2: Charter Amendment (Police Officer Staffing Levels Conditioned on Future Tax Funding)
Date: Wednesday, November 29, 2023 10:47:27 AM

On behalf of Supervisor Matt Dorsey, we greatly appreciate your commitment to public service and the democratic process in crafting an easy-to-understand explanation of challenging policy measures, particularly the proposed charter amendment addressing Police Officer Staffing Levels Conditioned on Future Tax Funding.

We respectfully request your consideration of one key point as you make final recommendations to the language that will be presented to voters in March:

Replace the undefined and confusing term 'full funding' with a simple description of the measure's Full Funding Date trigger requirement ("*a new tax or amend an existing tax to fully fund the measure*")

Analysis:

The term 'full funding' is used four times in the draft digest prepared by the City Attorney. While we commend their office for simplifying a complicated measure, we believe that use of this term unnecessarily risks confusing voters about its meaning given the many contexts in which 'funding' is used in the proposed charter amendment.

The digest does not offer an explicit definition of 'full funding', instead relying on voters to infer that it is referencing the 'Full Funding Date' trigger in the proposed measure. This shorthand is unnecessary and confusing given the multiple contexts in which 'funding' and 'full funding' are used throughout the proposed charter amendment.

The proposed measure refers to funding or full funding in at least four significant contexts:

- **First**, the measure would set-aside funds to pay for a minimum number of full-duty police officers within the SFPD for at least five years;
- **Second**, the measure establishes a "Police Full Staffing Fund" to be used for recruiting new officers, and dedicates funding to that Fund based on a formula;
- **Third**, the measure requires the Police Commission to "approve a budget.. that includes funding for the salaries required to meet at least the Minimum Staffing Number" of full duty sworn police officers..";
- **Fourth**, the measure includes a trigger whereby none of the above provisions take

effect until a "Full Funding Date" requirement is met.

In the interest of providing clarity to voters about which aspect of funding we are describing, we strongly urge the Committee to consider providing a consistent and brief definition of full funding in each of the four parts of the digest where it is addressed.

The confusing shorthand 'full funding' is used four times throughout the digest. We therefore respectfully request you replace it with a simple description of the Full Funding Date trigger in each instance of The Proposal description, as outlined below:

Specific Amendments:

Second Paragraph:

In the first year after voters approve ~~full funding~~ ***a new tax or amend an existing tax to fully fund the measure***, Proposition ___ would set the minimum number of full-time police officers for the City at 1,700, with increases each year up to 2,074 in year five. For those five years, Proposition ___ would require the City to budget enough money to pay for at least the number of police officers SFPD actually employed during the prior year.

Third Paragraph:

Under Proposition ___, beginning in year five after voters approve ~~full funding~~ ***a new tax or amend an existing tax to fully fund the measure***, the Police Chief must report to the Commission the SFPD's recommended number of police officers for the City every five years instead of every two years. After year five, the Commission would also be required to adopt a minimum number of full-time police officers, which may not be reduced by more than 5% per year, unless two-thirds of the Commission votes to make a larger reduction.

Fifth Paragraph:

If in the future the voters approve ~~full funding~~ ***a new tax or amend an existing tax to fully fund the measure*** for police staffing and recruitment, Proposition ___ would create a fund that would last for at least five years and could continue for up to 10 years. It would require the City to set aside enough money in that fund each year to recruit police officers. The fund would have \$16.8 million in the first year, and would change for the next four years depending on the number of police officers SFPD needs to hire, but would not exceed \$30 million per year. If there is a budget deficit or economic emergency, the amount in the fund could be set at the previous year's level. The City may continue the fund for up to ten years without further voter approval.

Last Sentence:

If the voters do not approve ~~full funding~~ ***a new tax or amend an existing tax to fully fund the measure*** in the future, these changes in police staffing and recruitment would not go into

effect.

We believe this small but critical amendment will bring much needed clarity to an otherwise extremely confusing issue in voters understanding of the measure. Thank you for your consideration.

Best,
David

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