

May 18 Hearing on OPenGov contract

From Ted Loewenberg <tedlsf@sbcglobal.net>
Date Mon 5/11/2026 5:02 PM
To CivilService, Civil (CSC) <civilservice@sfgov.org>

 2 attachments (228 KB)
Civil Service Commission_26.pdf; tedlsf.vcf;

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Commissioners,

I cannot attend the May 18 meeting, where you will discuss concerns surrounding the City's contract with OpenGov. Herein are my thoughts on the matter, asking you to carefully consider your actions. Via email, please let me know if I can answer any questions on this.

Sincerely,

Ted Loewenberg

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TO: San Francisco Civil Service Commission

May 11, 2026

[Kate Favetti, President](#)
[Jacqueline P. Minor, Vice President](#)
[Vitus Leung, Commissioner](#)
[Adam Wood, Commissioner](#)

Dear Commissioners,

As an interested San Francisco resident and taxpayer, I have been following Mayor Lurie's efforts to make over the Planning Department permitting system. I have been a user of that system, as well as a critic, hoping that the City would act to improve the permitting process by re-engineering the entire workflow. Property owners, construction companies and developers need to have a permitting system that is efficient, effective and predictable. The current system possesses none of these characteristics. The result is the process is expensive, causing lengthy delays, while the successful outcome of permit applications are dreadfully few.

It seemed like the revisions envisioned by the Mayor would be aimed at solving these shortcomings. However, the contract with OpenGov for this work looks like it will limit the City's capabilities to operate and maintain a new system, and short of needed functionality. The Professional & Technical

Engineers union, Local 21 has documented to you many of the problems OpenGov's services, how they were procured, and how they fall short of the specifications of the project. More importantly, these city workers have the skill, experience and knowledge to build a new system using less expensive software services, which already have a record of successful implementations. Their experience already exceeds that of the Mayor's contractors, and can build greater function than OpenGov can deliver.

Read their packet of materials. You will see so many details questioning the decisions being made on the project that you really only have one option on acting on this matter on May 18: STOP this contract until a thorough investigation into the many charges made are resolved. How was the vendor selected, by whom, and for what reasons? Will OpenGov deliver a system that has less function than what can be had if created by San Francisco's civil service employees? Are the future maintenance needs economically addressed, so that operation and updates as well as upgrades can be performed without significant expenditure to a provider of proprietary software? What would happen if OpenGov closes its operations , thus stranding the City with an obsolete permitting system?

In short, what are the risks of proceeding while spending millions of dollars with a system of minimal quality?

Please consider this carefully. As representatives of the people of San Francisco, your oversight of the contracting process is crucial to spending taxpayers' dollars for the greatest benefit of City. Our elected officials rely upon your expertise and judgement. So, do the right thing, for "we, the people."
Sincerely,



Ted Loewenberg
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San Francisco, CA

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"It's got to come from the heart, if you want it to work."