



Mayor
Daniel Lurie

City and County of San Francisco
Department on the Status of Women



San Francisco Commission on the Status of Women

MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, July 23, 2025 | 5:00 pm
San Francisco City Hall, Room 408

COMMISSION ROSTER

Commission President	Sophia Andary
Commission Vice President	Ani Rivera
Commissioner	Cecilia Chung
Commissioner	Diane Jones Lowrey
Commissioner	Dr. Shokooh Miry
Commissioner	Dr. Anne Moses (Excused)
Commissioner	Dr. Raveena Rihal

I. CALL TO ORDER: *DISCUSSION*

President Sophia Andary called the meeting to order at 5:07 pm.

Ms. Hannah Cotter performed roll call and confirmed 6 of 7 Commissioners are present (quorum). Ms. Cotter read the land acknowledgement.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: *ACTION*

The Commission reviewed and approved the minutes from the regular Commission meeting on April 23, 2025 (with amendments) and June 25, 2025 (with no amendments).

Vice President Rivera expressed interest in voting no to approve the minutes, given her absence from the regular meeting in June.

Commissioner Chung asked to amend a specific section of the April 23 minutes to clarify that she had previously Chaired on the Health Commission Finance and Planning Committee.

Approval of the minutes from the regular April 23, 2025, meeting (with Amendments).

(Roll Call Vote) Rivera/Miry – 6 ayes, 0 nays – Unanimous

Approval of the minutes from the regular June 25, 2025, meeting:

(Roll Call Vote) Jones Lowrey/Miry – 5 ayes, 1 nay

No Public Comment.

III. PROP E COMMISSION STREAMLINING COMMITTEE: *DISCUSSION AND ACTION*

President Andary provided an update to the Commission regarding two important upcoming dates. The first date is Friday, August 8th, which is the deadline for submitting a questionnaire about the history and operations of the Commission on the Status of Women. The second date is October 15th, when the Commission Streamlining Taskforce will hold a meeting. President Andary asked the Commission to vote on granting her the authority to collaborate with the Commission Secretary to complete the questionnaire. She noted that the final completed questionnaire will be shared with the Commission once it is finished.

President Andary states that without volunteers for a subcommittee, she would remain the liaison for the Taskforce at this time. She will also continue to forward motions throughout each stage of the Taskforce's charge, so as to invite opportunities for Commissioners to establish a subcommittee at that time. President Andary notes she intends to have another Commissioner join her to complete these asks from the Commission Streamlining Taskforce, rather than being the sole representative. As for the looming August 8 deadline, the Commission must vote whether to grant President Andary authority to be the lead for the Commission and complete the questionnaire. She notes that the question regarding subcommittees may be revisited at a future meeting.

The Commission agreed to continue the vote on who will attend the October 15 meeting to the September Commission meeting.

President Andary requests the authority to work with the Commission Secretary to complete the questionnaire due on August 8 and potentially meet with the Commission Streamlining Taskforce for input.

No Public Comment.

(Roll Call Vote) Miry/Jones Lowrey- 6 ayes, 0 nays- Unanimous.

IV. DIRECTOR/DEPARTMENT HEAD RECRUITMENT COMMITTEE: *DISCUSSION AND ACTION*

Commissioner Jones Lowrey expresses gratitude for being part of this process and prepares to share a summary and timeline. She begins with her close work with Tina Lim at the Department of Human Resources (DHR). Ms. Lim has been reviewing resumes for minimum qualifications. Commissioner Jones Lowrey notes that a supplemental questionnaire is also part of the process for those candidates who meet minimum qualifications. The application materials are subsequently forwarded to the hiring committee to review.

Commissioner Jones Lowrey shares insights into the steps taken to develop a rigorous and transparent hiring process, including DHR training and the creation of a supplemental questionnaire for applicants.

Commissioner Andary asks whether the supplemental questionnaire was developed with DHR or is an existing document.

Commissioner Jones Lowrey notes that the supplemental questionnaire is based on the job description and asks for additional information about how applicants will approach the job and ensure it is a fair process. Again, this is for candidates who meet the minimum qualifications.

Commissioner Jones Lowrey moves to the timeline, underscoring the important effort by Ms. Lim and Acting Director Yeung to ensure the position is filled in a timely manner.

The hiring team will review applications up to the 15th of August. Commissioners will need to complete their training. The interviews will take place on August 27th. Once candidates are selected, they will be forwarded to the Mayor. Commissioner Jones Lowrey wondered whether a single candidate may be forwarded if they stand out from the applicant pool, but neither she nor Ms. Lim was sure whether this was possible. DHR representative Paul Greene responded that it is up to the Commission to submit up to 3 candidates to the Mayor.

President Andary proposes a motion to approve the updates related to the timeline and logistics of the Department Head recruitment and hiring plan, as well as the proposed close session on August 27.

Commissioner Rivera motions, and Commissioner Miry seconds the motion.

Public Comment

Dr. Joe Macaluso from the Department on the Status of Women notes that the recruitment process currently in place requires only one person to rate the supplemental questions reviewed. He recommends having more than one rater for the supplemental questions. This ensures the aggregate votes at the end of the process. Doing so ensures there is no question about the selection process or a conflict of interest.

Commissioner Miry proposes an amendment to include up to three raters for the supplementary questionnaires to be volunteered from the Commission. Adding that these three raters review the initial supplemental questionnaire responses rather than those of the final candidates forwarded by the hiring committee.

Commissioner Miry adds that, given the concerns about transparency and competence, she would like to be responsive to those concerns by being as open as possible, even if such a process requires an additional meeting. And again, Commissioner Miry proposes having a minimum of three commissioners rate all supplemental questions.

Finally, Commissioner Miry adds that she would like to ensure it is on record that an attempt was made to interject three Commissioners into the process.

Commissioner Chung expresses agreement with Commissioner Miry and asks whether the aggressive timeline could be extended to accommodate the proposed review process.

Interim HRC Director Tugbenyoh requests clarification on whether the Commission is seeking to extend the recruiting timeline or maintain the current timeline with additional meetings scheduled within the next few weeks.

President Andary withdraws the initial motion.

Commissioner Miry moves to accept the timeline and logistics of the Director Department Head recruitment and hiring plan as presented, with the addition of a minimum of three commissioners to rate the supplemental questionnaires, even if this process pushes out the timeline. Adding no more than two weeks to each phase of the timeline presented by Commissioner Jones Lowrey.

Interim HRC Director Tugbenyoh suggests that Acting Director Yeung would prefer to transition to the new Director sooner rather than further delaying the timeline.

There is no second for the motion by Commissioner Miry.

The motion fails.

Vice President Rivera motions to accept the timeline and logistics of the Director/Department Head recruitment and hiring plan as presented. And on August 27, a closed session will be held to interview candidates, at which point all Commissioners will review supplemental questionnaires of those top candidates.

(Roll Call Vote)- Rivera/Jones Lowrey- 5 ayes, 1 nay.

V. DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

DISCUSSION

Interim HRC Director Tugbenyoh highlights two updates for the Commission.

The first being an update from the Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development (MOHCD) regarding the Gender Based Violence and Prevention and Intervention Request For Proposal (RFP) issued on May 14 and closed on June 4th. While the Commission was hoping to hear from MOHCD, staff was unable to attend in July and will be presenting at the August meeting. The Department is working on June invoices.

The second being an update from Department Research Analyst, Dr. Alfredo Huante on the 2025 Gender Analysis of Commissions and Boards Report. He presented the draft survey seeking the Commission's feedback.

Commissioners Comment:

Commission Rihal asks whether the two grantees who missed the deadline were able to make the subsequent RFP.

Ms. Cotter from the Department on the Status of Women notes that those two grantees in question did make the deadline for a second RFP focused on housing. However, Ms. Cotter did not have the results regarding that RFP.

Vice President Rivera expresses her frustration and disappointment that MOHCD could not be present and suggests that it is a disservice to the GBV portfolio.

Ms. Cotter notes that the Department has previously presented on the initial RFP process, and only the two outstanding grantees from the housing-related RFP remain unknown currently.

Commissioner Chung echoes Commissioner Rivera's concerns, given the recent public comment shared with the Commission.

Ms. Cotter notes the Department will provide that information for the next Commission meeting.

Citing the informational material, Vice President Rivera notes that for June submissions, 40 were expected, 31 were submitted. Therefore, she asks about the outstanding 9 submissions.

Febbie Valderrama clarifies that 38 invoices were submitted in June, and there are only two outstanding. She notes that these two organizations are Jewish Family and Children's Services and the Glide Foundation.

In response to questions from Commissioners, Ms. Cotter notes that at this time, there is no jeopardy of loss of funding for these two organizations.

Presentation:

Dr. Alfredo Huante reminds the Commission of the 2023 Gender Analysis on San Francisco Boards and Commissions Report, in which they expressed many suggestions for future iterations of the report. Therefore, Dr. Huante invites Commissioners to provide feedback on the 2025 Commissions and Boards Survey.

Commissioners Comment:

Commissioner Rihal expresses surprise over the absence of "South Asian" as an ethnic/racial category, given the recent Mayor's South Asian Heritage event.

Commissioner Jones Lowrey asks the Department to consider how the Commission can help raise awareness of this survey and report among other City departments. She notes that in a recent conversation with the Mayor's Office staff, they had never heard of the Boards and Commissions report.

Commissioner Chung asks why we are not asking questions related to age and preferred primary language.

Commissioner Rivera asks whether the survey will be provided in multiple languages, to consider adding Latina/o/x/e, and whether this may be an important place to capture geographic representation or whether it is captured elsewhere.

President Andary seconds the idea of capturing information about geography and age. Adds that additional information on whether respondents own or rent and whether they are employed or retired.

Commissioner Miry suggests that public body members are required to include much of this information in Form 700 and wonders whether this information could be pulled from there. Doing so would prevent having to ask respondents about which supervisorial district they reside in. Instead, that information could be gleaned from addresses provided on Form 700.

Dr. Huante recorded each Commissioner's feedback and noted he would seriously consider their suggestions in the survey design. Generally, he noted the importance of keeping the survey as short as possible to encourage a high response rate.

No Public Comment.

VI. NEW BUSINESS :

A. PRESENTATION:

DISCUSSION

Dr. Erin Wilson from the Center for Public Health Research presents on Data from the National HIV Behavior Surveillance Study, 2024.

Dr. Wilson begins by noting that in the U.S., trans people experience violence at twice the rate of cisgender people. Much of her work focuses on Black trans women who face a disproportionate amount of violence across the U.S. and San Francisco.

She notes that while California and San Francisco are perceived to be a safe haven for gender diverse populations, trans gender adults were 7 times more likely to report physical violence in the last year than cisgender adults.

Violence is related to co-occurring health epidemics among trans women.

About a quarter of trans women face homelessness at any given time. Housing is a prevention for so many health issues, including violence. When trans women are unhoused, they are significantly more likely to experience violence.

Dr. Wilson noted the unprecedented rise in anti-trans bills over the last two years. This rise in anti-trans legislation is correlated with a decline in mental health for the trans population across the U.S.

Dr. Wilson shared the results of a survey of the trans population in San Francisco. When asked the reasons for moving to San Francisco, the majority of trans women surveyed cited their view of San Francisco as a safe city for trans people as the primary reason for moving. Respondents also cited moving to San Francisco to seek gender affirming care.

The survey also captured powerful information regarding the negative experiences of trans women using the MUNI transit system, as well as their interactions with law enforcement.

Commissioners Comment:

Commissioner Rihal expresses disappointment that San Francisco is not a safe city for trans women. Asks whether erasure of data at the federal level is trickling down to impact city-level data collection.

Dr. Wilson notes that San Francisco has long collected Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) information and so it has not impacted data collection at the local level. However, the cancellation of federal grants, including her National Institute of Health (NIH)-funded grants, remains a challenge that everyone is dealing with and will continue to be an ongoing issue.

Commissioner Chung notes that while such erasure at the federal level may not necessarily be “trickling down,” it is having a worldwide impact. She notes countries walking back support for trans people and denying gender affirming care for trans patients.

Vice President Rivera notes that organizations like USAID have cut support for trans patients. Points to the impact of such cuts, including the rise in trans people moving to seek gender affirming care, pointing to the important work of EL/La Para Trans Latina.

Commissioner Chung notes how important EL/La Para Trans Latinas who face violence as trans people and as immigrants.

Vice President Rivera asks Dr. Wilson how to engage in a cultural/narrative shift. What would that look like?

Dr. Wilson estimates that there are 3,000 trans women in high need of services in the City. Expresses her desire to see an audit to assess where resources are going to which services, such as housing. Dr. Wilson notes that housing 3,000 people should be an attainable goal.

No Public Comment.

B. POTENTIAL HEARING/TOWNHALL MEETING:

DISCUSSION

President Andary calls on Commissioners to consider whether they would like to hold a hearing or a town hall to respond to community concerns expressed over the previous months. She notes that such a discussion may take place now or during the September meeting. Still, it must be limited to something

specifically addressing the community's concerns to determine whether holding the event is necessary or beneficial. Specifically, what would the town hall be about? It must be focused and maintain actionable items.

Commissioners could consider whether they want to vote on something now, what kind of meeting, and/or the frequency of such meetings. For example, a meeting with MOHCD and the GBV portfolio. Another potential meeting previously proposed was to explore how to institutionalize a process for the community to raise issues and concerns for future discussions.

Commissioners discussed the different formats a public meeting could take and what potential topics could be.

Commissioner Miry notes that while she understands the ideal situation of having a new director in place before holding a town hall, she underscores the fact that community concerns were initially expressed back in April. Cites the urgency of comments expressed by grantees that are recorded in the minutes from that time. Commissioner Miry suggests that one does not need to be a psychologist to understand the value of providing the community a forum to voice those concerns. Notes that she feels uncomfortable pushing the potential meeting months after the initial requests by longtime partners.

Commissioner Chung adds that holding a meeting sooner would enhance transparency.

Vice President Rivera suggests that community concerns are clear and the issue at hand is making time on the calendar. Suggests potentially having longer regular meetings by having this as an ongoing action item. She offers that the structure must change.

Commissioner Miry reiterates that she is uncomfortable with not taking any action between now and the August meeting. Therefore, she requests that Department staff come up with plans for a town hall meeting to address the concerns that the staff have received from our community partners. Additionally, Commissioner Miry asks the staff to present to the Commission a proposal for a schedule that they feel is realistic and at a time that is realistic to address those topics.

Interim HRC Director Tugbenyoh notes that having an extended regular meeting could be a challenge and asks the city attorney to weigh in, adding that ensuring clearly defined topics/issues would be paramount. He offers his experience with the Human Rights Commission, holding what they call community meetings. These are held at any time and can cover a range of topics. Therefore, the Department could hold a community meeting, which staff could run, and invite a Commissioner or two. The findings could then be presented to the full Commission.

Vice President Rivera requests a presentation on the format of a community meeting, based on the outline provided by Interim HRC Director Tugbenyoh. President Andary asks that this presentation include potential topics based on topics brought up by the community.

Commissioner Miry emphasizes urgency. Notes that such a community meeting could occur before the next commission meeting, and without having to be forwarded for a vote.

Commissioner Miry states for the record her embarrassment that community members who work with survivors on a daily basis attended a regular Commission meeting in April, asking for a forum to air concerns and grievances, and there has been no action. She again requests that the department provide the community with a forum and then return to the Commission to share their findings.

Commissioner Jones Lowrey notes that while urgency is noted, it is also important to be prepared for any subsequent responses from the community. Suggests that such forums not be performative and that the community meeting reflect the community's expectations.

Vice President Rivera summarizes the Commission's ask that the Department invite MOHCD to the August regular meeting and that the staff present on a community meeting and an operation/ best practice/how a community meeting could work. As well as how to streamline suggestions for topics.

Public Comment:

Carolyn Sedeko is a resident of San Francisco and a sports consultant in the City. Invites the Commission and the Department to include a presentation on the Positive Coaching Alliance's Bay Area Equity Coalition. This consists of both the Oakland and San Francisco Specific Equity Coalition. Points to equity gaps noting that girls of color, LGBTQ plus folks and families cannot engage in SF sports programs for many inequitable and unfair reasons.

Deputy Director Joe Macaluso from the Department on the Status of Women reminds the Commission that they can add meetings in a particular month without extending regular meeting hours.

VII. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

President Andary invites proposals for future agenda items aside from those two already mentioned for August. Reminds Commissioners that there will be a future discussion on officer elections.

Commissioner Miry requests a future agenda item to revisit equity in sports. Previously, a presentation had been conducted by Kim Turner on the subject. She suggests that such a presentation could be made in September to coincide with the new school year.

Vice President Rivera asks for clarity regarding the election of officers. President Andary explains that there would be an opportunity for someone to motion to name a president. If the person were to accept the nomination, then a vote would take place. Same process for vice president. Notes that it is a one-year term.

Commissioner Rihal wonders whether this election may be postponed. Deputy City Attorney Clark says the bylaws note that the term is for one year, but reminds the Commission that the bylaws are the Commission's and implies that the Commission can change them if it sees fit.

No Public Comment.

VIII. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Beverly Upton from the Domestic Violence Consortium thanks the Commission for bringing forward the presentation on violence against trans women. Updates the Commission that the porting process continues to move forward, and notes that they have already had their first quarterly meeting with MOHCD. Finally, she thanks the Department for prioritizing the final gender based violence invoices.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 8:04 pm.