



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, February 11, 2026 | 5:00 PM
25 Van Ness Ave, Room 610

COMMISSION ROSTER

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

I. CALL TO ORDER: DISCUSSION

President Diane Jones Lowrey called the meeting to order at 5:10 pm. Ms. Dominique Blakely performed roll call and confirmed that 5 of 7 Commissioners were present (quorum). Ms. Blakely read the Ramaytush Ohlone Land acknowledgement.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: DISCUSSION AND ACTION

The Commission reviewed and approved the minutes from the regular Commission meeting on January 27, 2026.

January 27, 2026, Minutes— (Roll Call Vote) Andrarry (motioned)/Miry (seconded) – 5 ayes, 0 nays – Unanimous

No Public Comment.

Commissioner Comment:

President Jones Lowrey opened the meeting with a welcoming speech. She highlighted current issues affecting women, girls, and non-binary individuals, including challenges related to health access. She also noted her participation in a recent statewide meeting with other commissions and brought the following legislative bills to the Commission's attention:

- SB 642: Pay Equity Enforcement Act
- AB 432: Menopause Care Equity Act
- AB 81: Veterans: Mental Health – requires studies on mental health among women veterans in California

She also reminded commissioners of the guiding words they wish to uphold as the Commission moves forward, including accountable, transparent, respectful, organized, and representative.

III. PROP E COMMISSION STREAMLINING TASK FORCE COMMITTEE: DISCUSSION

President Diane Jones Lowrey provided an update on the Commission Streamlining Task Force, which submitted its recommendations to the Board of Supervisors on January 30th. She explained that the stated goal of the recommendations is to improve efficiency and advance governance across the City's Boards and Commissions.

President Jones Lowrey reminded the Commission that the recommendations specific to COSW propose reducing the Commission's chartered powers and downgrading it to an advisory role. She outlined the next steps, noting that the recommendations will be reviewed by the Board of Supervisors, and confirmed that COSW's joint statement had been submitted to the Board. She emphasized the importance of continued outreach by Commissioners and the community to ensure their voices are heard during this process.

Commissioner Rihal requested that the appropriate contacts for the Board of Supervisors be shared.

No Public Comment.

IV. DIRECTOR'S REPORT: DISCUSSION

Executive Director Aroche began by acknowledging the challenging times we are living in, highlighting the experiences of women navigating reproductive health access, survivors working toward economic stability, and women in custodial settings seeking dignity. She recognized the ongoing uncertainties and systemic issues affecting mothers and their families.

She also observed that it is Black History Month and emphasized the importance of acknowledging the contributions and resilience of Black women that have shaped the community.

Executive Director Aroche then provided the Department's report, highlighting the continued work of DOSW, including collaboration with the Mayor's Office, the Board of Supervisors, and city partners. She also highlighted the Department's reproductive justice work and noted that partners have emphasized the importance of explicitly incorporating the turnover in child health into the Department's efforts.

She shared that several Supervisors have expressed interest in supporting a review of the City's implementation of the Family Medical Leave Act and that the Department anticipates conducting this review and developing policy recommendations within the next calendar year.

Executive Director Aroche shared that the Department is closely monitoring and engaging in ongoing discussions regarding a Citywide women's agenda within both the Board of Supervisors and the Mayor's Office, with the goal of ensuring alignment and coordination with the Department's strategic priorities.

Director Aroche shared difficult news regarding the City's financial outlook, as communicated under the guidance of the Budget Director. She highlighted a significant budget challenge, including approximately \$100 million being reconsidered for staffing and another \$300 million under review across city departments, which could potentially result in program cuts.

Lastly, she provided an update on her visit to the Young Women's Freedom Center, expressing how impressed she was with how their site reflects both the history of the organization and the people it serves. She emphasized that the Department would continue to collaborate with and support them.

Commissioner Comment.

Vice President Rivera inquired about promotion and media materials for the upcoming Women's Agenda hearing, asking whether Commissioners would receive these materials to support outreach.

Executive Director Aroche confirmed that more information would be shared at a later time.

No Public Comment.

V. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR EVALUATION: DISCUSSION

President Diane Jones Lowrey provided a brief update on the Executive Director evaluation process. She noted that the goals in the previously shared draft represent high-level, big-picture objectives that outline the areas in which the Commission hopes the Executive Director will lead. She also shared that the plan is to hold a closed session in April to discuss the Director's performance review and provide feedback.

No Commissioner Comment.

No Public Comment.

VI. NEW BUSINESS:

**A. DEPARTMENT PROPOSED BUDGETS FOR FY 2026-28:
DISCUSSION AND ACTION**

Executive Director Mawuli Tugbenyoh summarized the budget and its process, further explaining the \$5.5 million reduction for the Agency of Human Rights, per instructions from the Mayor's Office. He noted that while the agency must work to meet this target, the goal is to minimize impact and disruption to programming and to maintain current staff levels.

CFO Samuel Thomas presented an overview of the Agency of Human Rights (AHR) budget, providing context on the City's two-year budget deficit. He reviewed the Mayor's priorities, including clean and safe streets and city revitalization.

Mr. Thomas explained that the budget is being reorganized under AHR, which will also update the three-letter code for staff. He noted an attrition adjustment, requesting \$380K for grants and \$40K for hosting events. He highlighted that the largest line item in the budget is staff salaries.

He noted that the budget approved at this meeting will be submitted to the AHR budget submission to the Controller by February 23, 2026.

Executive Director Aroche provided clarity to Commissioners on what they were voting on, explaining that the DOSW Budget Detail slides for FY 2026-27 and FY 2027-28 reflect the numbers Commissioners are agreeing to. She noted that this budget does not include philanthropy work, behest payments, or other external funding.

Commissioner Comment:

Vice President Rivera inquired about the \$5.5M budget reduction and the urgency of the cuts. CFO Samuel Thomas explained that the Mayor's Office emphasized the reductions in a recent meeting.

Vice President Rivera asked whether the budget cut would affect DOSW. Mr. Thomas clarified that the reduction will come from AHR, under which DOSW operates. While AHR will continue to propose reductions, DOSW is proposing an increased budget for this year.

Vice President Rivera also sought clarity on specific costs, such as rent. Mr. Thomas confirmed that city departments are required to include rent in their budgets to cover leased spaces.

Vice President Rivera noted that the FTE count shows 6.84 for FY 25-26 and 6.0 for FY 27-28. Mr. Thomas explained that this change is due to an external grant that previously budgeted for staff, and there are no actual changes to DOSW staffing levels.

President Jones Lowrey requested revisiting the Mayor's Budget Priorities for Safe & Clean Streets and Economic Revitalization. She asked whether these are set goals from the Mayor or if DOSW established them.

Executive Director Aroche clarified that these are citywide goals set by the Mayor.

VP Rivera asked if there is guidance on specific areas or "hot spots" for funding. Director Tugbenyoh noted that this will be a challenging budget season.

Executive Director Aroche added that, due to the partnership with HRC, DOSW is focusing on vital and essential services to ensure support for gender equity. She reminded the Commission that this is the first phase of the budget process, and additional funding may become available in later phases.

Approval of the FY2026-27 through FY27-28 budget proposal— (Roll Call Vote) Miry (motioned)/Rihal (seconded) – 5 ayes, 0 nays – Unanimous

No Public Comment.

B. DOSW STRATEGIC PLAN PRESENTATION: DISCUSSION AND ACTION

Executive Director Aroche presented updates on the Strategic Plan, providing an overview of the three-year arc and highlighting revisions made based on feedback from the Mayor's Office.

- **Year 1 – Establish Accountability & Baselines**
- **Year 2 – Deepen Oversight & Policy Alignment**
- **Year 3 – Assess Impact & Set the Next Agenda**

Dr. Aroche further explained that the Mayor's Office will assume the accountability role, while DOSW will collaborate with other city departments to advance the work. She shared that the Mayor's Office applauded the department and Commission for their work on the Strategic Plan and noted that the Mayor's Office feedback was limited to the department's core functions and the name of the Accountability Steward.

She shared the new proposed names—Women's Advancement Stewards, Trust Stewards, and Gender Equity Steward—and opened the discussion for Commissioner feedback.

Commissioner Comment:

Commissioner Andary expressed appreciation for the breakdown of the three-year plan. Regarding the proposed revisions, she expressed concern about having a purpose statement that does not directly come from the Commission and opposed removing "Accountability" from the title of the Accountability Stewards, noting that she believes accountability should remain a central focus of both the Department and the Commission.

Commissioner Miry questioned whether specifying "state" and "federal" was intentional and expressed concern that the proposed edits to the budget advocacy language may shift focus away from local budget advocacy. She also requested additional clarification on the process and asked whether specific feedback had been provided by a representative from the Mayor's Office.

Dr. Aroche shared that the feedback process has been collective, involving all levels of the department's vertical reporting structure up to the Mayor, and that all parties shared the same sentiments regarding the suggested edits. She confirmed that local budget advocacy efforts will continue and clarified that the feedback was intended to emphasize the need to also engage with the federal government to address some of the funding reductions at the local level.

Commissioner Miry suggested explicitly stating "local," "state," and "federal" in the budget advocacy language. She also questioned whether, in working with other city departments, the Mayor's Office provides specific edits to their purpose statements or if this is unique to the department.

Dr. Aroche responded that she believes the process is the same for all departments. She explained that the guidance the department has been receiving is referred to as "deliverables." She noted that it is her understanding that anyone involved in the strategic planning process must work not only with their department's verticals but also with the Chief of Data and Strategic Assessment to ensure alignment with the Mayor's priorities.

Commissioner Miry agreed to not removing "Accountability" from the purpose statement.

President Jones Lowrey shared her perspective on the proposed change from "Accountability" to "Collaboration" in the purpose statement language. She explained that, based on Executive Director Aroche's explanation, the collaboration piece reflects the need to work with other departments to be successful. She noted that including it in the purpose statement ensures clarity about the department's approach. She also shared it feels like the Mayor's Office has expressed support for 98–99% of the Strategic Plan, which is an important consideration.

Commissioner Rihal asked whether the Mayor's Office had considered the department's role in accountability and if they had provided any assurances regarding this aspect.

Executive Director Aroche responded affirmatively, noting that the ongoing meetings with the Mayor's Office and their investment of time signal their support. She also highlighted that the Women's History Month event is being celebrated in partnership with the Mayor's Office, showcasing joint efforts, including the Maternal and Child Health initiative.

Vice President Rivera thanked Executive Director Aroche for the presentation and the clear visual chart. She inquired about the creation of a one-page overview. She echoed the importance of including the word "local" with "state, and federal" within the advocate language to highlight local efforts and clarify engagement. She also agreed with President Jones Lowrey on the need for collaboration in the staging of the next three years and beyond. Additionally, she noted the power in

the proposed title “Women’s Advancement Stewards” and expressed support for using this language.

Dr. Aroche confirmed that the department is working on a Strategic Plan and a summary document. She also encouraged Commissioners to make a decision regarding the suggested feedback in order to move the work forward.

Commissioner Andary clarified that she has no issues with the word “collaborate” and supports its addition, but she does not agree with removing “accountability” from the purpose statement or the department’s role.

Commissioner Rihal asked whether the documents would be updated to remove the word “accountability” throughout. She also inquired about staff feedback on the revision to the purpose statement and whether staff felt confident about the proposed change.

Dr. Aroche confirmed that where the document refers to the department’s “core role,” the word “accountability” would be changed. She explained that, as Executive Director reporting to two oversight bodies—the Mayor’s Office and COSW—it can be challenging to navigate competing decisions about how best to represent the department’s work. She acknowledged the functional aspects of the department and emphasized the importance of clearly communicating its direction during the budget process.

Executive Director Aroche further expressed that the department is interdependent on collaboration and that it is not possible to achieve its goals without it. She also recognized the value of input from the Commissioners.

Vice President Rivera sought clarification on whether the word “accountability” would also be removed from the actions presented in the slideshow, as it appears multiple times.

Commissioner Miry also requested clarification regarding revisions to “accountability” in the purpose statement and core role. Executive Director Aroche confirmed that the word would be revised.

Commissioners expressed agreement to move forward with approving the finalized Strategic Plan report and framework, with amendments.

President Jones Lowrey motioned to change "Accountability Stewards" to "Women's Advancement Stewards" in the core role title. Commissioner Miry seconded.

Vote to approve changing "Accountability Stewards" to "Women's Advancement Stewards" in the final Strategic Planning Report and framework— (Roll call vote) Jones Lowrey (motioned)/Miry (seconded) – 5 ayes, 0 nays – Unanimous

No Public Comment.

Commissioner Miry motioned to revise the language in item #2 of the Scope of Authority of the Advocate slide to read "Engage in local, state, and federal legislative and budget advocacy." Commissioner Andary seconded the motion.

Vote to approve the revision to include "local, state, and federal" in item #2 of the Scope of Authority of the Advocate slide — (Roll call vote) Miry (motioned)/Andary (seconded) – 5 ayes, 0 nays – Unanimous

No Public Comment.

Commissioner Miry motioned to revise the FY 2025–2028 Purpose Statement to include the language: "shaping policy, collaborating, and holding City systems accountable, and strengthening ..." Commissioner Andary seconded.

Vote to approve changing the shaping policy, etc. be updated in the final Strategic Planning Report and framework— (Roll call vote) Miry (motioned)/Andary (seconded) – 5 ayes, 0 nays – Unanimous

No Public Comment.

President Jones Lowrey motioned to approve the final Strategic Plan Report and Framework, incorporating the revisions just made. Vice President Rivera seconded the motion.

Vote to approve the final Strategic Planning Report and framework— (Roll call vote) Jones Lowrey (motioned)/Rivera (seconded) – 5 ayes, 0 nays – Unanimous

No Public Comment.

Commissioner Miry left meeting 7:30 PM.

C. COMMISSIONER UPDATE: DISCUSSION

Vice President Rivera updated the Commission on the upcoming Women's History Month event. She noted that the formal invitation for the event will be soon. She provided details of the event, including the recognition of five women in the following categories: Youth Award, Workplace Equity Champion, Equity Ally, Empowerment, and Woman Changing the World.

Commissioner Miry emphasized the importance of being mindful of the current news cycle, which has placed significant attention on the Epstein files. She noted that, in her line of work, this coverage can reactivate personal trauma for women. Commissioner Miry highlighted the importance of self-care in light of the ongoing exposure to the information being shared in these files.

Commissioner Andary reminded the Commission of an educational event on the "Future of Commissions in San Francisco," scheduled for March 11 at The Women's Building.

President Jones Lowrey shared information about the Human Rights Commission Black History Month Closing Event on February 24 and reminded Commissioners about the mandatory DHR trainings.

Commissioner Comment.

No Public Comment.

D. CONSIDERATION OF BYLAWS REVISIONS: DISCUSSION

President Jones Lowrey noted that the COSW bylaws were last updated in January 2023. She highlighted changes, including additional language regarding parental leave policy, meeting cancellations, and remote speakers, reflecting updates from the 2020 version of the bylaws.

President Jones Lowrey proposed establishing a committee to address questions regarding revisions to the bylaws, collaborate with the City Attorney, and provide recommendations back to the Commission.

She noted that this approach would allow the Commission to maximize its time during meetings and ensure a transparent process.

Discussion included topics such as term limits, frequency of meetings, and other potential updates. Two Commissioners, Vice President Rivera and Rihal, volunteered to serve on the committee.

Commissioner Andary requested to be sure that her edits be incorporated as the committee moves forward.

President Jones Lowrey asked for a work plan and a collection of recommended changes to be submitted by March 25, 2026. Commissioner Andary also requested that Commissioners email any additional edits to the Commissioner Secretary.

Commissioner Comment.

No Public Comment.

E. MAPPING OUT COSW 2026 PRIORITIES—TOPICS AND TIMELINE: [DISCUSSION](#)

President Jones Lowrey highlighted topics of interest from prior meetings, including the safety of girls in sports, gender equity in sports, and public-private partnerships.

She emphasized the importance of prioritization, noting that funding, philanthropy, and identifying additional sources of funding for the department are among her primary priorities. She recommended that the Commission select two of the four topics for focused attention in the calendar year.

Commissioner Rihal volunteered to work with Commissioner Miry on initiatives related to the safety of women and girls in sports. She also offered to contribute to menopause-related work, drawing on her expertise as a practitioner in this area.

Vice President Rivera expressed interest in working with President Jones-Lowrey on public-private partnerships and philanthropy. She also emphasized the importance of keeping the Commission informed about ongoing efforts on issues such as immigration.

President Jones Lowrey agreed with Vice President Rivera. She noted that there has not yet been considerable focus on public-private partnerships, behested payments, and fundraising, which remain important given the current budget. She suggested that, along with the safety of girls in sports, these areas could be priorities for the Commission to collaborate on with the department during this calendar year. She also recommended that the two committees bring their work back to the Commission for discussion.

No Public Comment.

VII. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT: DISCUSSION

No Public Comment.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 7:48 PM.