

## **EFFORT UNDER WAY TO STRENGTHEN SAN FRANCISCO OPEN-GOVERNMENT LAWS**

**Monday, May 23, 2016** – Veteran open-government activists, including two former Chairs of the Sunshine Ordinance Task Force, today filed formal notice with City Hall that it intends to place an initiative to strengthen San Francisco's Sunshine Ordinance on this November's local ballot.

“The Sunshine Ordinance has not been amended by the voters since 1999. It needs to be updated and strengthened to reflect advances in technology, to correct ambiguities and generally to increase the effectiveness of San Francisco's open-government laws and processes,” states the notice that the organization, San Franciscans for Sunshine, (who also authored the successful 1999 Sunshine ballot measure G) filed with the city Department of Elections.

Once the text of the initiative receives form and content approval from the city attorney's office, which is expected to take about 15 days, San Franciscans for Sunshine will have until July 11 to collect at least 9,500 signatures from registered San Francisco voters.

The initiative would, among other things, mandate live televising or video streaming of all policy body meetings in City Hall and tighten rules on public records backup, storage, access and deletion.

It would also remove the 11-member watchdog commission that the ordinance establishes from oversight of the Board of Supervisors and the city attorney, would authorize the commission – now called the Sunshine Ordinance Task Force – to hire its own full-time staff and would increase citizen involvement in appointing the commission's members by raising to nine from four

the number of members nominated by outside public interest organizations.

Allyson Washburn, the task force's outgoing chairwoman, is chairwoman and treasurer of the SFS steering committee. Signing the notice of intent with her were Maxine Anderson, who with Washburn is active in the League of Women Voters, and Richard Knee, who served on the task force for 12 years and remains active with a number of sunshine advocacy organizations.

Other former task force members on the steering committee include Bruce B. Brugmann, Kristin Chu, Doug Comstock and Heather Sterner. New task force member Leuwam Tesfai and returning member Bruce Wolfe also are on the steering committee.

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