

# Citizens committee for CBAs in limbo

Panel purged by city administrator rendered helpless on a technicality

By MARK HEDIN

**N**OW THAT SIX deep-pocket newcomers to the mid-Market are more than three months into the process of “giving back” as part of the community benefit agreements they signed to qualify for the Twitter tax break, the committee that was the community’s sole voice in the process has been sidelined on a technicality. For how long is unclear.

“June’s probably a wash,” Ivy Lee, an aide to District 6 Supervisor Jane Kim, said in mid-May while discussing efforts to reconstitute the Citizen’s Advisory Committee, “but hopefully July.”

The panel’s next order of business was to review the first quarterly reports submitted by the \$1 million-plus payroll companies required to execute a CBA: Twitter, Yammer, One Kings Lane, 21Tech, Zoosk and Zendesk.

Four members of the unpaid CAC were informed the day before the May meeting that they had been “deemed to have resigned” due to unexcused absences from

**“It was never clear what we were supposed to do.”**

Mara Blitzer  
CAC SEAT 9

meetings of the committee, which was formed in 2011 to advise the city administrator on the framework of benefits, review the draft agreements and take public input on them. The committee has no authority to accept or reject the agreements or order specific changes, only to make recommendations based on community feedback.

The city’s power play blindsided many CAC members, most of them unaware of the procedure that has cost the committee dearly in lost time as the CBAs are starting to be implemented.

Bill Barnes, the city administrator’s chief liaison between the tech companies and the CAC, on the advice of the city attorney’s office wrote the panel May 1 that four of its members had to reapply for their seats through the Board of Supervisors Rules Committee if they wished to continue serving, explaining that the city attorney had determined the CAC had not followed procedure in excusing absent members. Four unexcused absences, triggered the purge, although the minutes show that, by that standard, at least three of the miscreants had been out of compliance since November.

“I was surprised,” said Brad Paul, one of the disenfranchised. “It wasn’t explained to us, how unique it was, the way that we had to vote to excuse an absence.” Paul missed six of 2012’s dozen meetings and three of the four this year.

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THE EXTRA TAKES HOME 8 AWARDS

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WHO IS ON THE CAC?

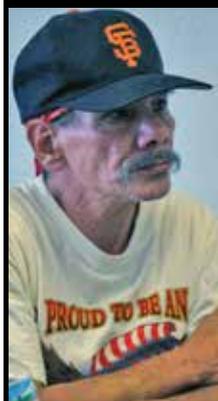
The incumbents and applicants

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‘SHORTY’ LEGASCA DIES AT 69

They called him ‘Mayor of 6th Street’

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CENTRAL CITY

EXTRA

SAN FRANCISCO

LAFAYETTE COFFEE SHOP



Lafayette Coffee Shop on Hyde Street, a relic from the Tenderloin’s past, is 60 years old, outliving others in the central city, though it has middle-class counterparts in other districts.

## LAST OF ITS KIND

Eatery’s faithful have been dining here for decades

STORY AND PHOTOS BY TOM CARTER

**W**HEN MIMI YEE’S way-cheap Manor House restaurant on Jones Street closed March 1, scores of bereft customers drifted away like wind-blown leaves. Some trudged to the west side of the Tenderloin to Lafayette Coffee Shop, 250 Hyde St., where the owners say their business is up.

Lafayette’s business card — a stylish contrast to cardless, bare-bones Manor House — pictures a chunk of prime rib, mashed potatoes, gravy and a pile of canned corn. It trumpets, “Good Food Friendly Environment Since 1925,” the year Kezar Stadium went up. The city’s population, 96% white then, was climbing to 600,000. Bread cost 9 cents a loaf.

Confirming the Lafayette’s seminal year wasn’t easy. Records in the Main Library’s sixth-floor San Francisco room showed the five-story building that houses the restaurant was built in 1907. The restaurant’s space was a retail store in 1913. The city directory that goes back to the 1800s first mentions the Lafayette Coffee Shop on Hyde in 1953. Owned then by Nick Reckis, the coffee shop was next door to Lafayette Cleaners, space that’s now part of the Midori Hotel. City restaurant records show that George Kodros took it over in 1969.

Lafayette has a palpable feel of even older days. Its round neon sign in front, old-timey white lettering on a brown background —

mentioning at the bottom, of course, prime rib — is the first hint of a time warp. You enter, passing on the right the cash register and its CASH ONLY sign. Just beyond, in front of the grill, is the Formica counter and its eight stools. Behind them, filling out the restaurant, are 10 comfortably worn, deep red Naugahyde booths, the signature of the place.

This is 1950s straight up, though the imaginative regular customers suggest their haven has legs into the ’40s or ’30s. Who really knows? For sure, it’s such a classic that it’s not hard to imagine Humphrey Bogart, a loose liplock on a dangling Camel, sliding onto a stool, asking around for some creep who owes him a C note.

The Lafayette has been used often as a backdrop diner for the old times, the owners say, most recently a year ago by local documentary filmmakers. Another historic addendum: The Lafayette, next door to the Cadillac grocery, is across the street from the former Wally Heider studios where the Grateful Dead, Jefferson Airplane and Van Morrison recorded in the late 1960s and ’70s.

MEI’S REIGN

On a Monday morning about 11 a.m., Mei holds forth in a stentorian voice that can peel the peach wall paint. The Lafayette is clearly the waitress’ empire. She’s ruled here for 27 years. Short, and gruff as a drill sergeant, she can also at any second rock the place with peals of laughter.

“Everybody knows me,” she says abruptly. “Like Mimi!” With that, eyes dancing, she throws her head back and laughs like there’s no tomorrow. Four customers, scattered in corners, hunker over their food, pay no attention until one glances up to bark:

“I’ll have a root beer, Mei!”

“Coming, coming!” she shouts back.

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