



January 19, 2021

Dear SPD Staff,

We have engaged the Berkeley-based Oppenheimer Investigations Group to conduct an objective assessment of our workplace, employee concerns, and our culture, and to provide recommendations on addressing these issues and improving our work environment. Please have a look at the OIG website, especially the [“Why OIG” section](#), to see what made us choose them as the neutral third party to address the situation at SPD.

There is absolutely no expectation or directive about the course their findings may take. Although they are a law firm, their focus is not litigation; rather they act exclusively in a neutral capacity, helping organizations through difficulties like ours. OIG’s role is not as an advocate for SPD management or their interests. The goal is simple, to objectively assess the facts.

[Zaneta Seidel](#) will be conducting the assessment, assisted by her colleague [Ashlyn Clark](#). Zaneta has extensive experience conducting impartial workplace investigations and assessments, including for other Bay Area nonprofits, where she has evaluated claims of harassment, bullying, retaliation, and other misconduct. She is invested in helping organizations address employee concerns in a meaningful and collaborative way. We think you’ll find Zaneta not only fair and impartial, but compassionate.

Zaneta and Ashlyn will conduct confidential 1:1 interviews with current and former employees, starting the week of January 25. They will then provide an anonymized confidential report, which will be shared with you, highlighting salient concerns and recommendations, due mid to late February. The conclusions reached in the assessment will be the basis for mediation, conflict resolution, and any actions by the board.

We looked at over a dozen different firms to provide this service, but in the end, only OIG had the deep competence, broad experience in performing this work, and the ability to start right away. Other firms were either booked up or lacked specific areas of expertise.

Again, we’re sorry it has taken this long, but it was critical to find professionals who were the right fit, and we are hopeful we’re finally on the road to rebuilding trust.

Zaneta will be contacting you shortly to schedule interviews. These are voluntary but we hope everyone will participate.

Thank you,

Alan, Cecil, Juliana, Laura, and Tonya, on behalf of the board

P.S. We remain committed to expanding the board to reflect new voices with expertise on social justice and the modern workers movement, and once again ask for your suggestions.