

1 [Jesse Capin Smith Day - February 28, 2025]

2
3 **Resolution declaring February 28, 2025, as Jesse Capin Smith Day in the City and**
4 **County of San Francisco, in recognition of his many years of outstanding service and**
5 **dedication to the City and County of San Francisco and his well-deserved retirement.**
6

7 WHEREAS, Jesse Capin Smith joined the City Attorney's Office as a Deputy City
8 Attorney 32 years ago, beginning a storied career first as a real estate and economic
9 development lawyer and later overseeing all the City Attorney's Office's legal advice and
10 transactions work, including opinions to the Mayor, Board of Supervisors, and other City
11 officials, departments and commissions; legislation and memoranda; and legal advice
12 regarding every aspect of City government; and

13 WHEREAS, Jesse joined the City Attorney's Office in 1992 as a Deputy on the Real
14 Estate & Special Projects Team, later the Real Estate & Finance Team, and then served as its
15 Team Leader; and

16 WHEREAS, City Attorney Louise Renne selected Jesse to serve as Chief Assistant
17 City Attorney in 2000; and since then he has led the City Attorney's Office through three City
18 Attorney administrations, as the longest tenured Chief Assistant in the Office's history; and

19 WHEREAS, Jesse's impact on the City Attorney's Office and San Francisco cannot be
20 overstated; in all matters, he led by example, always thorough, thoughtful, and creative, with a
21 clear understanding of the legal and ethical issues, larger context, and ultimate goals of the
22 City Attorney's clients; and

23 WHEREAS, He created the City Attorney's standards and processes for advising City
24 agencies and officials, ensured continuity when there were changes in City government, and
25 consistently worked for the good of the City and County of San Francisco; and

1 WHEREAS, As Chief Assistant, Jesse meaningfully impacted every significant effort
2 the City Attorney's Office has undertaken in the last 25 years: with a background in real
3 estate, he had a hand in the major projects that have shaped our City skyline, including
4 Mission Bay, the Giants ballpark, the Warriors arena, and the City Hall retrofit and renovation;
5 and using his creative and practical problem-solving, Jesse championed public-private
6 partnerships like the San Francisco Boys & Girls Club in Hunter's Point; and

7 WHEREAS, Jesse always met the moment, a steely and strategic thinker ready to
8 meet the challenges of our time—whether it was helping spearhead cross-team efforts to hold
9 the Trump Administration accountable, prioritizing public integrity work to ensure City
10 government is held to the highest ethical standards, saving Laguna Honda Hospital from
11 closure, or most recently, acting as the key architect of San Francisco's response to COVID-
12 19, it is not an exaggeration to say Jesse's efforts leave an indelible mark on the City
13 Attorney's Office, on San Francisco, and on the legal profession; and

14 WHEREAS, Jesse has been a mentor, teacher, and moral and intellectual model to
15 generations of attorneys and professional staff in the City Attorney's Office; he is living proof
16 that a person can be incredibly talented and remarkably kind – a combination that makes
17 Jesse so extraordinary; and

18 WHEREAS, He is often the first to reach out to colleagues in the City Attorney's Office
19 and many other departments to celebrate joyful moments, or to offer empathy and support
20 when someone faces personal challenges; and

21 WHEREAS, Jesse had a particularly outsized impact on this Board of Supervisors,
22 supervising all the legal advice the Board has received for a quarter century, approving every
23 confidential memorandum the Board received, and shepherding the City Attorney's response
24 to every crisis the Board has confronted; and
25

1 WHEREAS, Even City officials who have not worked with him directly have benefited
2 from Jesse's moral clarity, legal acumen, and steady hand behind the scenes in the City
3 Attorney's Office; and

4 WHEREAS, The City Attorney's Office, the Board of Supervisors, and the City as a
5 whole are immeasurably better for Jesse's service; and

6 WHEREAS, Jesse intends to retire in late February 2025, leaving us with the weight of
7 his absence but also with the gift of his legacy; now, therefore, be it

8 RESOLVED, That in celebration of Jesse's outstanding accomplishments and
9 contributions to the City and County of San Francisco, the Board of Supervisors does hereby
10 declare February 28, 2025, to be Jesse Capin Smith Day in San Francisco.