
Economy & Efficiency Commission Meeting Minutes

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING ECONOMY AND EFFICIENCY COMMISSION

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 3, 1998

THE BRAVE BULL RESTAURANT-- SAN GABRIEL, CA

Editorial Note: Agenda sections may be taken out of order at the discretion of the chair. Any reordering of sections is reflected in the presentation of these minutes

I. CALL TO ORDER OF THE COMMISSION MEETING

With the presence of a quorum of commissioners Chairman Abel called the Commission meeting to order at 10:30 A.M.

II. APPROVAL OF COMMISSIONER'S ABSENCES

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

David A. Abel
Fred Balderrama
Hope J. Boonshaft
Ben Breslauer
Gunther Buerk
David W. Farrar
Michael Jimenez
Chun Lee
Tony Lucente
Carole Ojeda-Kimbrough
Roman Padilla
Robert Philiposian
H. Randall Stoke
Julia E. Sylva

COMMISSIONERS REQUESTING TO BE EXCUSED

Richard D. Barger
John Crowley
Jonathan Fuhrman
Chris Hammond
William J. Petak
Marc A. Seidner
Tony Tortorice

COMMISSIONERS NOT REQUESTING AN EXCUSE

None

QUALITY AND PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION LIAISON

Jaclyn Tilley Hill

It was Moved, Seconded and Adopted: The Commission members noted above be excused.

III. CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

It was Moved, Seconded and Adopted: The minutes of the November 5, 1998 Commission Meeting be approved as corrected.

VI. PRESENTATION -

[Mr. Raphe Sonenshein, Executive Director of the City of Los Angeles Charter Reform Commission](#)

[Topic: Status of the Commission's Charter Reform Report](#)

VII. NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Staniforth informed the EEC of a conversation he had with Supervisor Knabe's staff on the possibility of conducting a follow-up study on the accountability/municipal services issues raised in the 1996. This included the possibility of expanding the review to cover contract cities matters. If the EEC is predisposed towards such a study, the next step is to undertake discussions with Supervisor Knabe's staff to arrive at a set of study objectives. This proposal would then be reviewed by the Commission Task Force.

Commissioner Padilla asked whether Supervisor Knabe would be willing to recommend funding. Mr. Staniforth responded that would depend on the scope of what was being requested. Chairman Abel commented that a couple of meetings ago they had discussed what Mark Baldassare is doing with public policy issues in the State of California and for Los Angeles County. Any EEC efforts should be in keeping, or compatible with, research that is being undertaken.

Mr. Staniforth stated that the Chief Administrative Officer is creating a new section in his office and hiring a new Assistant Chief Administrative Officer to respond to the EEC report regarding municipal service delivery to unincorporated areas. This group could provide the Chief Administrative Officer additional guidance on the problems in this area. Commissioner Philibosian asked Mr. Staniforth if the EEC has the resources and ability to assist in these efforts. Mr. Staniforth responded that Supervisor Knabe's staff wanted him to bring up the topic today to find out if the EEC was predisposed to undertaking a study. If the answer is yes, he would sit down with the Supervisor's staff and come up with a proposal.

Commissioner Padilla questioned whether there is there a systematic way of establishing quality control and of determining the comparability of services that the County delivers in two different cities.

Commissioner Buerk mentioned that he feels very strongly about the issue of municipal service delivery for the unincorporated area. He felt that this is an important part of the County's responsibility. He hopes to get to the point where there is a separate budget dealing with these services. Chairman Abel commented that this is an issue of how the County delivers services-- both to unincorporated areas and contract cities. Commissioner Buerk responded that the contract situation is different because a city has the option of deciding what it will specify in a contract that it negotiates with the County.

Chairman Abel agreed that it is different, but these are still services being delivered by the County to either unincorporated areas, which have their own requirements, needs, and issues, or to contract cities. Looking at the delivery of service issue, it would all be county services that are being delivered.

Commissioner Buerk responded that he would like the EEC to make sure that the full scope of this issue gets considered. For instance, on the liability issue, the cities are more responsible for expenses in dealing with County problems than are the unincorporated areas. Chairman Abel responded that in terms of governance, allocation, and the efficient use of resources, it is still the County that is being discussed. Commissioner Buerk agreed that it is still all part of the service delivery issue, but it is important to separate the two and not lump them together. With regard to the budget, it is important to keep an organizational separation and to look at how much it costs to provide services to a city versus the unincorporated area.

Chairman Abel suggested that maybe Commissioners Padilla, Buerk, Philibosian, and Sylva could form a committee to see if an some agreement can be reached as to exactly what the scope would be. This could then be brought to the EEC as a task force.

Citing the County Fire Department's relationship with the City of Monterey Park, Commissioner Balderrama brought up the issue of why the County charges a significant overhead on these services. He does not feel that this occurs in the private sector and that its existence makes it more costly to contract with the County. Chairman Abel referred the issue to the task force.

Commissioner Hill mentioned that she thought it important to take an overview of the entire County and the service delivery issues. Of concern to her is how those cities can retain the level of services and the contracts they have now. In the cities of Whittier, Santa Fe Springs, and La Mirada many services are up for grabs because these communities do not want to assume these liabilities. The County should be concentrating on the retention of the current service contracts in place now and how they can be enhanced by being more competitive. Chairman Abel said he hopes that this is taken into account since the retention of the service contracts is a large part of the issue.

Commissioner Padilla asked if Supervisor Knabe had a specific concern. Mr. Staniforth responded that Supervisor Knabe's staff spoke in general terms. Part of the Supervisor's interest was in the area of contract cities. Commissioner Hill stated that she thinks that for years providing services to contract cities were a given. With the concerns of these cities being potentially liable for million dollar settlements, they are considering other options.

Commissioner Padilla commented that the cities had a liability trust fund in which they would pay a percentage of the amount contracted with the Sheriff. This fund would then be used in paying judgements. A concern of the cities lies in the difference in payout for high-crime cities as compared with lower-crime cities. Chairman Abel reminded the Commission of the committee's assignment and that they are tasked with the follow-up on this question.

V. OLD BUSINESS

1. Debt Collection Project (Commissioner Jimenez, chairman)

Commissioner Jimenez brought up the issue of collections to determine how that topic is being addressed with the CAO. Commissioner Padilla said that it is normal for the process to move slowly once the recommendations have been made. Perhaps one of the problems is that none of the proposed entities is moving forward due to a lack of leadership.

VII. NEW BUSINESS (Cont.)

Chairman Abel brought up the formal nominating process for the Chair of the EEC in January 1999. Commissioner Sylva mentioned that she liked Mr. Staniforth's suggestion to have each member of the Nominating Committee contact four or five members of the EEC to inquire as to interest in running for Chairman. Chairman Abel commented on the potential for a third term, citing that he has already served two. Chairman Abel responded to a question of Commissioner Lucente and Commissioner Padilla that he would be willing to be Chairman for one more year, assuming that someone has interest in being the Vice-Chair, or unless there is someone who wants to be Chairman the upcoming year.

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

IX. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion from the floor, Chairman Abel adjourned the meeting at 12:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted.



Bruce J. Staniforth
Executive Director

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