

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
ECONOMY AND EFFICIENCY COMMISSION
DECEMBER 6, 1989
ROOM 839, KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION

Editorial Note: The following minutes were taken from the tape of this meeting. Unfortunately, the tape does not normally identify the speaker and subsequently, with the exception of the Chairman, it is often not possible to identify individuals by name. Where individuals were identified we have done so.

I. **CALL TO ORDER**

With the presence of a quorum, *Acting Chairman Peever* called the meeting to order.

II. **APPROVAL OF COMMISSIONER ABSENCES**

Acting Chairman Peever asked for a motion to approve absences for Commissioners Joe Crail, Louise Frankel, Lauro Neri. It was Moved, Seconded, and Adopted: **The members requesting an excuse are excused.**

III. **OLD BUSINESS – TASK FORCE REPORTS**

County Organization

The *Executive Director John Campbell* presented an overview of County Government, noting that there are six independent elected officials. The Sheriff, the Assessor and the District Attorney are all elected at large. The Superior Court with two hundred and fifty (250) judges are also elected County-wide. The Board of Supervisors are elected by district. Judges in the 27 Municipal Courts are also elected by district. Each Municipal Court is independent of the other twenty-six. Although the justice functions are dominated by the Sheriff and District Attorney, there are a number of justice functions under the authority of the Board of Supervisors, such as the Public Defender, the Probation Department, etc. The Court System is also involved in the justice function. There are thirty-seven departments under the authority of the Board of Supervisors.

The County is a political subdivision of the State, thus the County has to coordinate its activities and responsibilities with State government. For any county department, the odds are that there is a corresponding department within State government which controls, in many respects, what the County can actually do.

Children's Services

Acting Chairman Peever began by saying that he has been the Chairman of the Children's Services Task Force for two years. There are five basic recommendations that the Task Force had recommended to the Board of Supervisors:

1. Create a Family Services Department combining all the social services activities currently in three departments, into one.
2. Create a "Multi-Jurisdictional Counsel" to deal with family service issues heading by a member of the Board of Supervisors as Chair, and composed of the key county departments, including appropriate other State and city departments within the County
3. Clarify the roles of the Children's Services Commission to ensure that the Commission was effective and not interfering with other activities.
4. Adopt program budgeting and management assistance in the Children's Services Department.

5. Propose a series of recommendations to the Board of Supervisors to simplify the establishment of new commissions and to educate commissioners on the roll and activities of the County.

The CAO supports most of these recommendations, except for two key differences: first, the CAO does not agree with the recommendation to consolidate departments. The CAO does not think the timing is appropriate. The Task Force believes, however, that the Board of Supervisors should revisit the possible consolidation of Children's Services. The other difference is on the recommendation concerning the "Multi-Jurisdictional Counsel". Since the submission of the recommendations to the Board the state has passed legislation (997) which would establish a Multi-Jurisdictional Counsel having to do with Children's Services within counties on a voluntary basis. The Task Force has considered this and has recommended that the County of Los Angeles participate since it provides a number of benefits that would not be otherwise be available.

Task Force on Security Systems

Executive Director John Campbell introduced Commissioner Louise Frankel as having chaired the Task Force on Security Systems since undertaking the original study in 1984. The Security Systems recommendations were adopted by the Board six years ago. Since then, there has been little or no action taken on those recommendations. *Commissioner Frankel* stated that she saw a tremendous need after having interviewed twelve departments about their security programs. She found twelve different ways to manage security, all of which, in her opinion, were unprofessional. There is obviously a great need for direction to these departments because they were buying equipment which was neither economical nor efficient. In addition, the equipment failed to coordinate with equipment at other facilities leading to a failure to be able to communicate with other facilities.

There was a significant difficulty with the Mechanical Department, which was the overseer of the county guards, since there was previously no contracting of private guards. There were areas the Commissioner saw problems and areas where she saw the need for some central control of security which had some authority. Someone was needed who really knew what security was; someone who could help design the systems, oversee the operation, and who could make recommendations. *Commissioner Frankel* had hoped the County would get someone with those qualifications, but instead the County had hired a security consultant on a contractual basis, someone who had no authority since he was strictly in an advisory capacity. The departments may call on him, or not, or, they can continue to do whatever they want, including consulting with someone else.

Commissioner Frankel noted that it would only take a few terrible incidents at any one of the County facilities to create a crisis in the government, an expense to the tax payer, and a tragedy to those involved. She felt that this approach is impoverished in terms of serving the County well. *Commissioner Frankel* stated that she would recommend that the Commission submit additional recommendations to the Board with the objective of revising how the Board of Supervisors directs its security consultant and the general policy toward the security system in the County. In *Commissioner Frankel's* opinion there has to be some type of exemption to how the responsibility for security can be established which would create a better system with centralized control and an increased unanimity of approach.

Antelope Valley Rehabilitation Center Health Services

Commissioner Shapiro outlined the problems saying that the Antelope Valley Rehabilitation Center uses what they call a "patient based" theory of treatment. It's a medically based treatment in the treatment of transients and indigents that need medical attention. There are medical facilities on-site that provide service at a nominal cost, somewhere between \$35 and \$75 dollars a day. However, the current trend in treatment is called a "social model", which uses the Alcoholics Anonymous approach - basically a self-help approach. This approach is less expensive and reduces the estimated cost to approximately \$17 per

day. The problem is that it is resisted by the existing personnel who have a vested interest in maintaining the medical model.

There are pluses and minuses with the "social based" system. For example, since Antelope Valley Rehabilitation Center has medical facilities a tuberculosis patient whose occupying a \$750 dollar a day bed at a county hospital can be transferred to a \$35 to \$75 dollar per bed at the Rehabilitation Center. This will free up a bed at the county hospital for someone with a more serious problem. That's not necessarily a savings, but rather a better allocation of resources. This option would not be available using the "social model".

It is a complicated issue aggravated by the bureaucratic inertia of a group of people who are strongly committed to a service. There is no question that these people are a dedicated, hard working and quality group of people, but the real question is whether or not County Health Services can deliver the same service at a substantially less cost. This would increase the availability of that service beyond the current population that is now being serviced. *Commissioner Shapiro* commented to the manager of the Antelope Valley Rehabilitation Center, "If I can treat twice the number of people, but for the same amount of dollars, isn't that really where our obligation lies."

Asset Management

It has been discovered that in the last six months the Community Development Commission, at the request of the Department of Public Works and the Department of Health Services and the Chief Administrative Office (CAO), has done some preliminary work on a number of county properties. The commissioners of the Economy and Efficiency Commission were shown a development feasibility study they had done for the Department of Public Works addressing the San Gabriel Valley Flood Control properties. There are forty-four (44) properties, of which, nine had been identified as having had a medium to high potential for development. They did estimates of land value based upon contiguous properties and came up with about five million dollars (\$5,000,000) projected at about 10% return. This would result in five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000) in income per year to the county. But they have also done preliminary work on two of the airports, a piece of property from Parks and Recreation, Harbor UCLA Hospital and others.

Acting Chair Peever asked commissioners for volunteers to chair this Task Force. The purpose is to continue to make progress and develop recommendations for the Board of Supervisors.

Contracting Systems and Policies

Executive Director John Campbell presented this report to the Commissioners. A key area of interest was how to deal fairly and effectively with the impact of contracting on employees. The county has done a lot of contracting, but what's new is that they're talking about contracting for work that is presently done by county employees. This approach will impact numerous jobs.

Staff dealt with the question of incentives and, in particular, the relationship of the contracting program to its objective - the productivity of county functions. Much of the incentive for contracting is ideological and political. From a management perspective contracting should result in productivity improvements. And yet, there's not necessarily any linkage between the two within the county. There should be information that the Board of Supervisors gets on a regular basis about the contracting program and effects. The Board of Supervisors adopted those recommendations, as well as those of the CAO, regarding the process of decision-making on contracting and the impact to employees.

Executive Structure

Executive Director John Campbell reported that there have been seven interviews: two educators from the School of Public Administration at U.S.C., two ex-Los Angeles County officials, including an ex-CAO and a consultant and a private citizen who were active in the 1976 effort to re-organize the county.

There has been significant data on how other counties are organized in the U.S. and California, together with a review of previous ballot measures and attempts to re-organize county organizations including arguments, both pro and con, for the various alternatives. Staff attempted to evaluate this information to determine the best response to the problems. These are rated as to how effectively the current structure or a modification of the current structure involving further organizational consolidations, appointed executive, elected executive or something not yet considered, can address these problems. The progress of this Task Force, plus a number of other issues, has been reviewed with four of the Supervisors, with the fifth set for next month. From that point the Task Force will have to decide how to proceed, what key things are going to have to be accomplished in the next five to ten years and then how to structure affect the county's ability to accomplish these objectives.

The next step is to ask department heads some tough questions: how do they make decisions on a day to day basis; what is their relationship with each Supervisor; what leadership do they get; what is their relationship with Washington, D.C., with Sacramento, with the Southern California Council of Governments (SCCG); how often is performance reviewed; and do they really get into whether there is leadership and whether some is needed.

The Executive Committee Report

Acting Chairman Peever commented that the main thing that has been done is meeting with the Supervisors which is the first of a series of annual meetings to ensure they understand:

1. what is being worked on, and
2. to make sure we understand what they're interests and priorities are to be sure that we're working on things that are of high priority and of interest to them, and
3. to obtain any other advice and counsel that they wish to share with us.

There have been four meetings so far: one in September, two in October, one in November and one in December. These meetings have been a minimum of an hour in duration and sometimes longer than that, depending on the Supervisor's interest. The meetings resulted in good input and an endorsement of the work of the Commission. While the supervisors don't always agree with what is suggested, they do appreciate the work and effort of the Commission's reports.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

Acting Chairman Peever asked Executive Director Campbell if there was any new business that the Commission needed to consider and he answered in the negative. *Acting Chairman Peever* continued by asking if there were any comments, suggestions, or does anyone have anything else to add? No comments were offered.

V. ADJOURNMENT

Acting Chairman Peever adjourned the meeting