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Economy & Efficiency Commission Meeting Minutes

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING ECONOMY AND EFFICIENCY COMMISSION

WEDNESDAY, MAY 5, 1993
KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION
500 West Temple St., Los Angeles, CA 90012

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

Chairperson Buerk called the meeting to order.

II. APPROVAL OF COMMISSIONER'S ABSENCES

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Gunther Buerk, Chair
George Ackerman
Judith Brennan
Jack Drown
David Farrar
John FitzRandolph
Dr. Alfred Freitag
Jon Fuhrman
Dr. Mike Gomez
Chun Lee
Carole Ojeda-Kimbrough
Roman Padilla
Robert Philiposian
Efrem Zimbalist, III

COMMISSIONERS EXCUSED:

Fred Balderrama
Marshal Chuang
Louise Frankel
Daniel Shapiro

Randy Stockwell
Betty Trotter, Vice Chair

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT :

Richards Barger

III. CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

MARCH 3 and APRIL 7, 1993 COMMISSION MEETINGS

Commissioner Buerk asked if there were any amendments or objections to the March minutes. There were none.

Resolved that: the Commission approve the minutes of the March Commission meeting.

Motion was seconded, voted, and approved.

Chairperson Buerk asked if there were any objections to the April minutes.

Commissioner Brennan requested a correction be made on page 8, paragraph 4, in remarks attributed to her, changing the word "Commission" to "Executive Director."

Resolved that: the Commission approve the minutes of the April Commission Meeting of the Committee of the Whole as amended. Motion was seconded, voted, and approved.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES STUDY STATUS

Commissioner Barger, being absent, Mr. Staniforth reported that he had contacted the Director of Field Studies at UCLA and as of this date, UCLA had not made a proposal as to how they could participate in this study. Mr. Staniforth has followed up to see if they are interested.

Commissioner Drown suggested that the Task Force might consider going to USC.

Chairperson Buerk directed Mr. Staniforth to contact USC to determine if they would be interested in participating.

PENSION FOLLOW-ON STATUS

Commissioner Freitag reported that the Task Force had met with Frank Smith, independent counsel and with the consulting firm, W.F. Corroon on a conference call.

Mr. Staniforth followed up after the Task Force Meeting with a conference call between himself, the CAO's Office, Corroon, and Frank Smith. Corroon requested additional information from the CAO's Office, which was just received in the last few days. He has received an initial draft of the first portion of the document. It is more of a statement of approach, than a report. After reviewing the information from the CAO's Office, Corroon will prepare their initial draft for Task Force review.

LIABILITY AND RISK MANAGEMENT STUDY STATUS

Commissioner Lee was not present for the last Task Force meeting and asked Mr. Staniforth to bring the Commission up to date on the Task Force's actions.

Mr. Staniforth reported that the Task Force had met with the consultants from McGladrey & Pullen and ARMTECH. The consultants reviewed their work up to that date, which consisted of interviews and the collection of materials. An initial draft has been delivered this week and the Executive Director will meet with McGladrey and Pullen later in the day on May 5th to discuss some changes. This revision will then be distributed to the Task Force for their review and comment. The changes contemplated concern style and approach. A draft should be delivered to the Task Force soon. The draft is currently 61 pages in length.

PROPOSITION A\ CONTRACTING STATUS

Commissioner Trotter was absent. Mr. Staniforth reported that he is working on a final draft incorporating the Task Force's comments. The current draft is 25-30 pages. When this draft is completed, the Task Force will make more revisions if necessary.

Commissioner Zimbalist suggested that the Task Force meet with some contractors to get some feedback on the recommendations.

Mr. Staniforth had said no contractors had been contacted. The Board directed the Commission to "review and report" on current procedures.

Commissioner Padilla spoke of some form of outside review. If the document is opened to a few contractors instead of a full public review, it would create some perception problems.

Chairperson Buerk felt that one open public session with the purpose of obtaining public comment would be a good idea and asked the Task Force to consider this approach.

COUNTY BUDGET AND ECONOMIC GROWTH TASK FORCE

Chairperson Buerk suggested that the Commission consider the Task Force update and the New Business Item at the same time since they are so closely related.

Commissioner Philibosian reported that the Task Force met three times in three weeks in the development of the letter on legislative advocacy being proposed to the Commission. The report is a unanimous recommendation from the Task Force. He mentioned one change to the report, page 2, the third and fourth paragraph should be moved up the page to be appear below the list of reports. In addition, several non-substantive editorial changes will be made.

Commissioner Fuhrman stated that this is the first of several steps. The focus at this phase is more directed to the State level due to the immediacy of the legislative calendar. In later actions, the Task Force will focus more directly on the County perspective.

Commissioner Padilla felt that the Commission should clarify its role from a seemingly traditional role of looking at the bureaucracy. The Commission felt it was important to look at this broader issue. He felt that the workers compensation is an overall problem of economic development to the County. In regard to legal reform, it is not at the heart of the issue. He passed around some recommendations from the Center for Continuing Study of the California Economy, which highlight the broader issues that he felt needed to be addressed.

Commissioner Brennan felt the primary concern of the Commission at this point should be getting this letter out the door.

Commissioner Zimbalist felt that workers compensation was one of the biggest issues, if not from a financial point of view, from the perspective that business may consider that the system is rigged against business. People lose faith in a government when it responds in this manner.

Commissioner Padilla offered the following motion:

Resolved that: The Commission clarify the role that the Task Force has taken. Their present report concerns the State agenda, future research should include recommended actions for the County.

Motion failed for lack of a second.

Commissioner Philibosian stated that the Task Force raised these very issues. He felt it best to make a motion to approve the report of the Task Force and if someone wishes to make amendments, so be it. He made the following motion:

Resolved that: the Commission approve the report of the Task Force.

The Motion was seconded and discussion followed.

Commissioner Brennan offered an amendment.

Resolved that: On page 4, "Legal Reforms are at the heart of the matter..", Change "heart of the matter" to "a major factor ..."

Motion was seconded and approved.

Commissioner Padilla offered an amendment:

Resolved that: on Page 3, paragraph 3, state that other issues are equally relevant and the list of issues presented is by no means exhaustive.

Motion failed for lack of a second.

Commissioner Philibosian offered an amendment:

Resolved that : a paragraph be inserted that states " From time to time The Commission will continue to offer recommendations to the Board of supervisors to improve the economic climate of Los Angeles County and the State of California."

Motion was withdrawn.

Commissioner Ojeda-Kimbrough was concerned about the environmental permitting process. She offered an amendment.

Resolved that: On page 6, the paragraph that begins "Restructuring and shortening the process..." to "Restructuring, reducing bureaucratic layers, and shortening the process..."

Motion was seconded and approved.

Commissioner Brennan offered an amendment.

Resolved that: page 6, paragraph 2, underline the word "seventy-two."

Motion was seconded and approved.

Commissioner Padilla offered an amendment:

Resolved that : on page 8, under Recommendations, third line, "...will create.." to "...help to create..."

Motion was seconded and approved.

Motion to adopt the report as amended was seconded and approved with Commissioner FitzRandolph abstaining because his recent appointment had not enabled him to become familiar with the issue.

UNINCORPORATED AREAS BUDGETING TASK FORCE

Commissioner Gomez stated that there is little, if any, budget for this Task Force to perform their work. He expressed concern over the present work-load of the Commission. He is Chair of a Task Force and there is little time in the near future during which anything could be accomplished.

Chairperson Buerk felt that this was a matter that should be brought up at an Executive Committee Meeting.

Mr. Staniforth asked Mr. Wayne Bannister from Urban Research Section of ISD to make a presentation about the capabilities of his section and the possible information available within the County.

Mr. Bannister introduced himself as head of a Urban Research Group within ISD. His background is in urban planning. His group performs studies for different departments. Their largest study was a half million dollars examining the impact of illegal immigrants on the County. This study was completed in four months.

His section has done research for the Fire Department concerning the impact of the budget on unincorporated areas. They have worked with the Tax Assessor and Registrar-Recorder/ County Clerk on tax rate areas in unincorporated areas and are familiar with that structure. He felt that his group could quickly look at the various costs and revenues associated with unincorporated areas. The problem is the complexity of the issue.

Chairperson Buerk felt that the next step would be for the Task Force to meet with Mr. Bannister and outline what they are looking for and how to obtain that information. He thanked Mr. Bannister for speaking before the Commission.

V. INTRODUCTION

Chairperson Buerk introduced a new Commissioner, Mr. John A. FitzRandolph, appointed by Supervisor Edelman. Commissioner FitzRandolph gave a brief summary of his background which included The Constitution Revision Commission in Sacramento, Assistant to Speaker Bob Moretti, and Assistant to U.S. Senator John Tunney. He is presently Dean of the Whittier School of Law. For the past eight years, he has served as Chair of the Los Angeles County Commission on Local Government Services.

VI. PRESENTATION

Mr. Staniforth reported that during the March Commission Meeting, there was a presentation on security issues from representatives of the Sheriff's Department personnel in the CAO's Office. Several of the points in that presentation dealt with issues that Mr. Rod Cooper, Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation wished to address.

Mr. Cooper spoke about security issues and how they affect his Department. He was joined by his Personnel Officer, Ms. Smith who is involved with the development of security personnel within the Department. Mr. Cooper has been involved with specialty police forces and parks for over 20 years.

The presentation to the Commission addressed the issue of "turf battles" between different department heads. Turf is not the issue; mission is the issue. Mr. Cooper is charged with security of 135 facilities and the management of 85 officers to carry this mission. The Department hires personnel in the classification of Police Officer III, which is the highest Police Officer classification within the Safety Police Series. These are law enforcement personnel making 500 arrests a year; they are not guards. It is a specialty law enforcement situation.

The Department has looked to centralization, the Sheriff's Office, and other solutions for cost savings. He expressed his difficulty with having someone else enforce security, while leaving the Department with full responsibility. This solution would not provide his Department with more services at a lower cost. If the specialty police are taken away from his jurisdiction, he is still left with the same overhead structure for the remainder of the Department.

If the Officers in his Department are centralized into a separate department, the overhead necessary to support that department will be duplicative. There should always be attempts to improve services and coordination. Consolidation will not necessarily improve services. The department conducts surveys of the public and consistently receives an 85 approval rating. Safety is the number one priority for the department. If a park is unsafe it is unusable to the public. The public does not think about safety if a park is safe.

Mr. Cooper stated that POST (Police Officer Standards of Training) is a state agency that certifies training for law enforcement personnel.

Chairperson Buerk thanked Mr. Cooper for his presentation and stated that his remarks would be considered in future discussions with the Security Task Force.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

See the County Budget and Economic Task Force Update for economic proposals to be recommended to the Board of Supervisors

Commissioner Padilla passed around an article concerning GAIN, a program that the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) runs to get people off of welfare. In Riverside County, their program increased its welfare population's income by 55% over 2 years whereas Los Angeles County has had an increase of 4%.

Resolved that: The Commission should send a letter to the Board asking the DPSS to research the program in Riverside County to determine if there are elements of the program that could be emulated.

The Motion was seconded and approved.

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT

PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION

Dr. Waddell reported on the Productivity commission's last meeting. County Counsel spoke to the Commission about the legal factors that constitute conflict of interest. The other topic concerned the County-wide marketing effort which was reported on at the last meeting. There are regulations at the State level that the County cannot charge more for a particular service than its cost. The problem arises when the County charges for a service at cost and often underbids and undercharges in relation to the private sector. There is legislation that states the County can charge to make a profit. Each situation has to be addressed separately.

p>IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m. with the agreement of the Commission.

Respectfully Submitted,



Bruce J. Staniforth
Executive Director

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