

**LOS ANGELES COUNTY
CITIZENS ECONOMY AND EFFICIENCY COMMITTEE**

ROOM 139, HALL OF ADMINISTRATION / 500 WEST TEMPLE / LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012 / 625-3611, Ext. 64605

M I N U T E S

FULL COMMITTEE MEETING

DATE: Thursday, October 9, 1969
TIME: 9:30 a.m.
PLACE: Hall of Administration, Room 864

Robert Mitchell,
Chairman
Raymond Arbuthnot
Dr. John C. Bollens
Davis Brabant
Max Candiotty
Maurice Rene Chez
Dr. Warren S. Jones
Mrs. Ray Kidd
Harlan G. Loud
P. S. Magruder
Kiyoshi Maruyama
Irvin Mazzei
L. E. McKee
Ferdinand Mendenhall
Louis Rogers
George Shellenberger
Mrs. Benjamin Erick Smith
William Torrence
Gus A. Walker
Burke Roche,
Executive Secretary

Members Present:

Robert Mitchell, Chairman
Dr. John Bollens
Davis Brabant
Maurice Rene Chez
Mrs. Ray Kidd
Harlan G. Loud
P. S. Magruder
Kiyoshi Maruyama
L. E. McKee
Louis Rogers
George Shellenberger
Mrs. Benjamin Erick Smith
William Torrence
Gus Walker

Members Absent:

Ray Arbuthnot
John Byork
Roc Cutri
Dr. Warren Jones
Irvin Mazzei
Ferdinand Mendenhall

GUEST SPEAKER - Bernard F. Hillenbrand,
Executive Director of the National Association
of Counties

Mr. Mitchell called the meeting to order at 9:28 a.m.. He explained that Mr. Hillenbrand, Executive Director of the National Association of Counties, would appear before the committee to discuss the County Charter issues. Mr. Roche was meeting Mr. Hillenbrand at the airport, and they were expected to arrive shortly. Mr. Hillenbrand was flying down from the State-Wide Counties Supervisors Association meeting at Squaw Valley where he had been the luncheon speaker the day before.

Mr. Mitchell said that this was the first meeting scheduled according to the plan proposed for the study of the County Charter by the committee's County Charter task force. He then asked the Chairman of the task force, Dr. Bollens, to review the study plans.

Dr. Bollens said that this was the first of six meetings to which experts from outside the Los Angeles area would be invited to appear before the committee. He said that Mr. Hillenbrand, who is headquartered in Washington, will give the committee the national view on several significant questions relating to county charters. Next week the committee will meet for a review and discussion session. He said that the meeting today was an information and questioning meeting. He said that, as Mr. Mitchell had previously suggested, the committee members will not engage in discussion among themselves in this meeting or any of these early informational meetings.

He said that Mr. Hillenbrand had been asked to speak on three major topics, and the same questions will be asked of Mr. MacDougall, who is tentatively scheduled to speak to the committee on October 22nd. Mr. MacDougall is the General

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Counsel and Manager of the County Supervisors' Association of California. He is Mr. Hillenbrand's counter-part in California. He will give the committee the state-wide view. The current plan is to have a meeting on October 29th to discuss Mr. MacDougall's presentation.

Four other people are tentatively scheduled as speakers, but none of them has confirmed the exact date as yet. Two of these speakers are appointed county managers. These are Carl Johnson, the newly appointed county manager of Sacramento County, who has served in comparable positions in counties in three other states; and, M. D. Tarshes who is the county manager of San Mateo County and who was Mr. Johnson's predecessor in Sacramento. Mr. Tarshes has also served in the chief administrative office in San Diego County, so he will be able to give us some comparisons and similarities and contrasts between the chief administrative officer operation and the county manager operation.

The final two speakers are John Spellman of King County, Washington (which includes the city of Seattle), and Lawrence Roos of St. Louis County, Missouri. They are both elected county executives and are powerful individuals in terms of the formal powers conferred upon them. So, Dr. Bollens concluded, we are starting out with a national picture and going on to a state-wide picture, and then getting individual pictures from four communities. Two within California, and two outside of California; two from the point of view of full fledged county managers, and two from the point of view of elected county executives.

At this point Mr. Roche arrived with Mr. Hillenbrand, and Mr. Mitchell asked Dr. Bollens to introduce him. Dr. Bollens said that Mr. Hillenbrand has served for a number of years as a senior staff member of what was then the American Municipal Association, and which is now the National League of Cities. A number of years ago he went over to the counter-part of the National League of Cities in the county field--the National Association of Counties--where he is Executive Director. In this position, he took an organization that was virtually dormant and has made it into a very active, vital force on the national level. He is one of the few individuals who can give the committee a national perspective on county government. Dr. Bollens said that we have asked Mr. Hillenbrand to discuss particularly the organization of the executive function, the authority and status of department heads, and the appropriate size of the Board of Supervisors.

Mr. Hillenbrand began his presentation with a brief discussion of the National Association of Counties, which has a membership of 850 counties.

Dr. Bollens then asked Mr. Hillenbrand to give his views on the various forms of county government, including the county manager, the chief administrative officer, and the elected county executive systems. Mr. Hillenbrand stressed the need in counties for executive leadership to meet expanding responsibilities. He said the most effective organization, particularly in the larger jurisdictions, was one in which the chief executive officer was elected, but he has a chief administrative officer under him who is responsible for the professional administration of the county departments. He said that this system insures the separation of executive and legislative functions. He said there is a need for such separation but that counties traditionally have not separated these functions.

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He said there is a strong trend throughout the country toward this form of organization. A number of counties in New York and other Eastern states have had an elected chief executive for over ten years. Most recently, the voters of King County, Washington have approved a new charter establishing an elected county executive.

According to Mr. Hillenbrand, the two principal advantages of an elected county executive are (1) it gives a strong personification and personal identity to the government; (2) it strengthens the political leadership of the county in relationship to the state and federal governments as well as other local governments.

In answer to the question whether any counties with an elected county executive had reverted to another system, Mr. Hillenbrand said absolutely not. They all appear satisfied with this form, and there was no case in the United States where a county has reverted to another system. He emphasized that the system produces extremely capable men--men who are outstanding in their positions.

Whether the chief executive of the county is elected or appointed, Mr. Hillenbrand feels that he should have the authority to appoint and dismiss department heads. He said that if a man is to be held accountable for managing the county, he must be able to select the men for the key policy positions under him.

In answer to the question whether the department heads under the chief executive should be exempt from civil service, Mr. Hillenbrand answered emphatically that they should be exempt. He said that the best protection against irresponsible discharge or demotion of exempt department heads are the press and the citizens generally. He did not believe there was serious danger of creating a political machine or increasing the bureaucracy in such a system because of the constant surveillance of government by the newspaper and television media.

On the issue of the appropriate size of the Board of Supervisors, Mr. Hillenbrand said he could not recommend a specific number of board members which is ideal for all counties. He said there is no consistent pattern whatsoever in the United States. Each county must determine this question on the basis of two guide lines: (1) The board should not be so large that it cannot operate effectively. If it is too large, there is a tendency for its deliberations to become cumbersome. The board should be small enough so that it can get the job done and its members can be clearly identified in the public mind. (2) The board should be large enough so that individual citizens can feel that their interests are effectively represented by their supervisor.

Mr. Hillenbrand concluded that the greatest need in local government is to make it increasingly responsible. He said that while some people talk about the trend toward bigness, there is also an equal trend--a very strong trend--toward smallness. People want neighborhood identification, and they want governmental units they feel they can control. The key is to establish the proper balance between the community services provided by the city and such regional services as air pollution control, water pollution control, solid waste management, and similar functions provided by the county.

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Mr. Mitchell thanked Mr. Hillenbrand for his very informative comments. He said the committee was indebted to Mr. Hillenbrand and was also very fortunate to have as Chairman of its task force Dr. Bollens who certainly is not a stranger to these problems. He also expressed his appreciation to the press and the television for their interest.

Mr. Mitchell adjourned the meeting at 10:45 a.m.