

LOS ANGELES COUNTY
ECONOMY AND EFFICIENCY COMMISSION

ROOM 163, HALL OF ADMINISTRATION / 500 WEST TEMPLE / LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012 / 974-1491

M I N U T E S

FULL COMMISSION MEETING

July 7, 1976

Dr. Robert J. Downey
Chairman

Gustave R. Anaya
George E. Bodle
Catherine Graeffe Burke
John D. Byork
Anne S. Collins
Mario Di Giovanni
Dr. Carolyn L. Ellner
Jerry Epstein
Milton G. Gordon
Richard S. Gunther
Mrs. Mary Jane Kidd
Leo A. Majich
Jesse L. Robinson
Robert Ruchti, II
Dr. Warren H. Schmidt
George Shellenberger
Mrs. Gloria Starr
Larkin Teasley
Bryan Walker

Burke Roche
Executive Secretary
John Campbell
Staff Specialist
Maxlynn Larsen
Commission Secretary

Members Present:

Robert Downey, Chairman
George E. Bodle
Catherine Burke
Margaret Paterson Carr
Anne Collins
Mario Di Giovanni
Carolyn Ellner
Jerry Epstein
Douglas Ferguson
Milton Gordon
Leo Majich
Jesse Robinson
Robert Ruchti
George Shellenberger
Gloria Starr
Larkin Teasley
Bryan Walker

Members Absent:

John Byork
Richard Gunther
Mary Jane Kidd
Warren Schmidt

Dr. Downey called the meeting to order at 9:40 a.m. He introduced Mrs. Margaret Carr, retiring Foreman of the County Grand Jury, who will serve on the E & E Commission for one year. She is replacing Jesse Robinson, the previous year's retiring Foreman. Dr. Downey read a letter from the commission, signed by him, thanking Mr. Robinson for his services and expressing the hope that he will keep in touch.

Burke Roche asked Mrs. Carr if she would point out the main recommendations in the final Grand Jury report. Mrs. Carr asked to defer until next meeting because of today's lengthy agenda and to give her time to prepare a report.

Management and Finances Task Force - Leo Majich, Chairman, said that he would not make his usual report because the tape of the presentation made to the Board of Supervisors was available and would be played.

The members listened to the presentation of the report "The New York City Crisis and Los Angeles County Government: Organization, Employment and Compensation" made by Leo Majich, the question and answer period that followed, and the Board's discussion. Dr. Downey reported that the Board had received and filed the report without taking any action on the recommendations.

Dr. Downey asked Burke Roche to comment briefly before playing the second tape.

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Burke Roche explained that during budget deliberations the Board scrutinized every item that could reduce the budget and eliminate the need for a tax increase. During these deliberations Supervisor Ward made the motion to eliminate all advisory commissions and committees in the County. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Schabarum but lost by a 3-2 vote. The tape begins with Supervisor Ward's motion and continues through the discussion.

After listening to the tape, the members discussed Supervisor Ward's suggestion on the first tape that the E & E Commission should make a budget presentation and also should comment on the agenda items each week.

Leo Majich said there was no way in the world the commission could do this with its limited staff. Dr. Ellner said it was her understanding that the CAO's staff and the Supervisors' staffs were there for the purpose of challenging the items on the budget, and it was the purpose of the E & E Commission to challenge the structure of the budget. Milton Gordon and Catherine Burke thought the commission should respond to Supervisor Ward saying that he has a good point, and if he provides an analyst to research the weekly agenda items, the commission will be prepared to carry out the suggestion.

Jerry Epstein congratulated Leo Majich on his presentation, which he thought was outstanding. He said that Supervisor Ward has many people at his disposal; the commission has only three staff people. He is requesting that extra jobs be done without providing the means to do them. He said it is very discouraging to spend so much time on a study that isn't even read. It is the same problem discussed before of getting the message to the people. He said that he sent 20 to 30 personal letters to business people and community leaders and enclosed copies of the Management and Finances report.

Dr. Ellner said that the Community Relations Task Force had been formed for the purpose of making the public aware of the commission reports. She said that it would pick up on this and go ahead to develop strategies for getting the message to the public.

Catherine Burke cautioned the members not to overreact. She explained that at budget time the Supervisors do not get a chance to read. It is a period of extreme strain for them.

Dr. Downey said that he was remiss in not explaining that the Management and Finances report was not a dead issue as far as two Supervisors' offices were concerned. The staffs from both offices have picked up on it, and they have been meeting with Burke Roche and John Campbell.

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Task Force on DPSS Commissions - Anne Collins, Chairman, reported as follows. Supervisor Hayes' and Supervisor Schabarum's offices had requested that, if at all possible, the report be released in time to incorporate any savings which might result into this year's budget. By the time the report was completed there wasn't time for the full commission to meet before the budget deliberations ended. Therefore, she and Burke Roche consulted with Dr. Downey and received his permission to send the report to the members with a cover letter explaining the reason for the procedure. It was then released to the Board offices at that time.

After its release, Supervisor Hayes brought in a motion incorporating the recommendations. However, the Board voted to delay any action until July 13. The report will be formally presented at that time.

Milton Gordon questioned the release of the report without first being reviewed and adopted by the full commission. He said that he was not questioning the content of the report, just the procedure followed in releasing it. He moved that no report be released until voted on at a full commission meeting. The motion was seconded by Gloria Starr.

Mr. Roche explained that this wording was already in the operating procedures of the commission. It was because of the emergency situation that the chairman of the commission and the chairman of the task force decided to release it in this manner.

George Shellenberger raised the point that when the reports are sent to the members for review before a meeting, there may be six to eight members absent from the meeting at the time the report is voted on. Yet the report is considered unanimously adopted by those present.

Dr. Ellner said that the commission elects a chairman who will exert leadership and who will act with discretion. She called for the question. The motion lost 15 - 1.

George Shellenberger moved that the report be approved; seconded by Anne Collins and adopted unanimously.

Mr. Roche added that the recommendations in the report were supported by the CAO, the Department of Public Social Services, and the Commission to Review Public Social Services. Only the Public Social Services Commission is in disagreement. Its members want to eliminate the staff and give the money to the commissioners in the form of stipends.

Task Force on 1976 Charter Amendments - Dr. Downey said that with the November election coming up he thought it would be worthwhile to appoint a task force to analyze and recommend what position the commission should take on the proposed amendments to the County Charter. He appointed Mario Di Giovanni, Chairman; Margaret Carr, Douglas Ferguson, Mary Jane Kidd, Gloria Starr, and Larkin Teasley.

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Dr. Downey announced that the members would be interested in reading an article on Personal Rapid Transit in this morning's Times. It was written by Catherine Burke.

Mario Di Giovanni said that he would like to make a plea as chairman of the new task force. He asked all members to please keep an open mind on the issues until the task force had a chance to study them. After all the information is in, it may change some minds.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.