
Economy & Efficiency Commission

Meeting Minutes

MINUTES OF THE ECONOMY AND EFFICIENCY COMMISSION

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11, 1992
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 Gunther Buerk opened the meeting a 9:30 a. m

II. INTRODUCTIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

There has been two new Commissioners appointed to the E & E Commission. Dr. Mike R. Gomez, Supervisor Molina's appointee, is a Dentist in Los Angeles. He expressed his delight in being nominated to serve on the Commission, as he is interested in being involved in making a positive change in Los Angeles County Government, and Mr. Richard Barger, Supervisor Antonovich 's appointee, who is a partner in the law firm of Barger & Wolen, was unable to attend today's meeting due to an out-of-the-country commitment.

III. APPROVAL OF COMMISSIONER'S ABSENCES

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

George Bodle
Gunther W. Buerk
Marsha! Chuang
Louise Frankel
Dr. Alfred Freitag
Dr. Mike Gomez
Jonathan Fuhrman
Marvin Hoffenberg
Chun Y. Lee
Carole Ojeda-Kimbrough
Robert H. Philiposian
Efrem Zimbalist, III

COMMISSIONERS EXCUSED:

Fred Balderrama
Richard Barger
Jack Drown
Abraham M. Lurie
Daniel Shapiro
Randy Stockwell
Betty Trotter

GUESTS

Mr. Larry Monteilh, Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors

STAFF

Ms. Cathy Carr, Interim Director
Ms. Robin Kincaid, Office Manager\Executive Asst.

The absences of Commissioners Balderrama, Barger, Drown, Lurie, Shapiro, Stockwell and Trotter, were excused by vote of the Commissioners present.

Dr. William C. Waddell, representing the Productivity Commission was also in attendance.

V. NEW BUSINESS

COMMISSIONER ATTENDANCE

The issue of Commissioner's absences was raised at this time. (This item was scheduled for discussion under NEW BUSINESS on today's agenda). Commissioner Fuhrman inquired as to the definition of excused absences vs. unexcused absences.

The office has been using the following for unexcused vs. excused absences. An unexcused absence is usually due to one of four reasons: 1) A Commissioner fails to respond to inquires regarding her\his attendance at a meeting and does not show up; 2) A Commissioner does not show up for a meeting that he has previously acknowledged attendance; and, 3) A Commissioner does not show up for a meeting, and did not notify the office of the reason. An excused absence is usually: 1) A Commissioner keeps the office informed of her\his schedule in advance {usually calls the office if she\he will be unavailable for a certain length of time, and provides a reason}; and, 2) A Commissioner calls the office to cancel her\his attendance before the start of the meeting, and provides a reason.

Chairperson Buerk stated that for the sake of emergencies, or important business matters, a Commissioner may need to be excused from a meeting. However, it was noted that some Commissioners, after a period of time, may tend to lose interest and therefore not attend meetings as frequently as they had in the past.

The Executive Office sends quarterly attendance sheets to the Commission Office basis, which are completed by staff detailing each Commissioners absence during the quarter. The form is returned to the Executive Office where it is made available to the Supervisor's Offices. A more lengthy report (recording a 9 month study of attendance for each Commissioner) was completed by the office and mailed to the respective Supervisor Offices. (Samples of attendance sheets are included in this packet) The report was acknowledged by the Supervisors and the Commission Office was informed that regardless of the number of meetings a Commissioner attends, it is the Supervisor's decision who will, or will not, serve on a particular Commission.

Commissioner Franke! believes that there should be some type of policy outlining attendance procedures.

Commissioner Philibosian reiterated that only the Supervisors can remove a member. The Commission does not have the authority to assume a disciplinary role.

Chairperson Buerk suggested that the full Commission may want to ask the Chairperson to talk with the Commissioner(s) who exceeds three consecutive absences, and suggest that he consider resigning if she\he will be unable to attend future meeting, and to provide the services required on behalf of the Commission.

Commissioner Zimbalist stated that there may be legitimate business or personal reasons a Commissioner can not attend a meeting. He believes that public censor without knowing the background of the Commissioner(s) absences would be premature. Commissioner Zimbalist did note however, that he would support a policy that would allow for written notification to the respective Supervisor(s) noting their appointee's absences.

Commissioner Philibosian inquired as to how often the quarterly attendance report is sent to the Executive Office. It was noted that the attendance report is sent to the Executive Office once it has been received and completed, which is usually on a quarterly basis.

Chairperson Buerk believes the most appropriate decision that the full Commission could make would be to send a letter to the Supervisor(s) advising them that their appointee(s) has been absence from three consecutive absences. Once the letter has been sent to the Supervisor(s), it is their call on what action, if any, should be taken.

Commissioner Zimbalist entered the motion that a letter be sent to the Supervisors advising of three consecutive absences, with a copy to the appointee. Commissioner Freitag seconded the motion which was unanimously carried by the Commissioners present.

It was also noted that a more precise definition of excused vs. unexcused absence be specified when the operating procedures are revised.

Chairperson Buerk announced that Commissioner Trotter is being re-appointed as Vice- Chairperson of the Commission. It was also noted that this is the first time Commissioner Trotter has missed a meeting.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes of the February 12, 1992 full Commission meeting were approved.

V. NEW BUSINESS (continued)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SEARCH UPDATE

Commissioner Zimbalist stated that he met with Bruce Staniforth to discuss the position and the proposed salary\contract. Mr. Staniforth said that he is extremely interested in the position, however, he was uncomfortable with the salary being offered. He felt the salary being offered did not adequately allow for time off. In comparison to Mr. Staniforth's current package, the offer the Commission made would represent a decrease in his salary. Since the contract is based only on salary (no benefits, perks, etc.), the Commission's offer would need to include an additional percentage amount in order to be compatible with his current salary.

Commissioner Zimbalist believes that if the Commission offered a 5% increase, Mr. Staniforth would be more likely to accept the offer. The CAO's office was consulted and were agreeable to an increase. He asked the Commission to grant him the authority to talk with Mr. Staniforth and offer to increase the limit on his assurance, in advance, that he will accept the offer.

The motion was entered to grant Commissioner Zimbalist the authority to talk with Mr. Staniforth and offer to increase the limit on his assurance, in advance, that he will accept the offer. The motion was second and unanimously carried by the Commissioners present.

Commissioner Zimbalist also noted that Mr. Staniforth 's situation is that he will be pension vested on April 26th, and therefore, could not start working full time for the Commission until the 1st of May. Mr. Staniforth does, however, have some time off available where he could possibly work for the Commission on a part-time basis before May 1st.

PENSION STUDY

During the March 3, 1992 Board meeting, Supervisor Antonovich entered a motion to have the Productivity Commission conduct a study on the County's policies and practices governing retirement- eligible salary and benefits, including a detailed background on the development of these programs. Supervisor Edelman amended the motion to include the E & E Commission in the study. The motion and amendment were unanimously carried by the Board.

Chairperson Buerk stated that the study will be done in conjunction with the Productivity Commission. The first step will involve meeting with the Productivity Commission to sort out the division of tasks, and form the E & E Commission's task force. Commissioner Freitag has agreed to chair the task force for the E & E Commission. One volunteer is needed from each Supervisorial District to serve as task force members.

Commissioner Hoffenberg inquired as to the Commission's budget status, and if there is a need for monies to be approved by the Supervisors. Ms. Carr stated that in the past there hasn't been a "solid budget" for the Commission, as funds came under the Executive Office's budget. The Commission's current expenditures for fiscal year 1991-92 is \$249,000. This figure is based on the previous fiscal years budget (which was the same amount). To date, almost half of the \$249,000 has been spent on staff and the executive director search process (advertisements and an executive search firm). It is expected for fiscal year 1992-93 the amount allotted to the Commission will not change. Any amount

exceeding the budget amount will have to be requested from the Board or CAO's office.

Commissioner Frankel inquired as to the \$249,000 amount budgeted for the Commission, noting that in the sunset report the amount quoted was around \$500,000. Ms. Carr noted that the amount quoted in the sunset report included everything from staff salaries to office space.

Commissioner Zimbalist believes that the Commission's budget estimates should not have been formulated without consulting the Commission first, in order to get a more accurate amount of what it cost to staff and operate the Commission. He believes that the Commission should voice their concerns as to the amount the Commission would actually need for fiscal year 1992-93. Considering not only operational cost, but the consulting fees that will be accrued in the future, the \$249,000 amount budgeted may be under-estimated.

It was noted that the current fiscal year will end on June of this year and the Commission will be able to function on the current amount. It was suggested that the CAO's Office be notified that the Commission may need additional monies in fiscal year 1992-93 to cover its revised operating expenditures (new director, possible consulting fees, etc.).

Chairperson Buerk stated that the Commission can contract for studies under \$50,000 through the Auditor-Controllers office, without going through the formalities, if the amount is in the Commission's budget.

Commissioner Philibosian stated that the CAO's office has a budget director who can allocate monies for consultant studies, pending appropriate approval.

Commissioner Hoffenberg inquired who will staff the pension study, and if Mr. Staniforth or Ms. Carr will be on hand during the transition. Chairperson Buerk stated that Ms. Carr has agreed to stay on to interface with the new director, and make the transition a smooth one. Once the director is on board, he will direct the study.

Commissioner Frankel suggested that Charley Kaufmann, who is familiar with pension issues, be considered as a possible resource to consult on the study.

VI. PRESENTATION

Mr. Larry Monteilh, Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors

Subject: Interaction with other County Departments, the public and the Board of Supervisors, and Responsibilities to department's during the budget process.

Mr. Monteilh has been employed with the County for 30 years. He has spent 10 years in management in the Executive Office of the Board of Supervisors, 11 years as Assistant Chief Deputy Treasurer and Tax Collector, and 9 years as Executive Officer of the Board of Supervisors.

Some of the Executive Office's responsibilities include publishing notices, preparing agendas, maintaining official records, providing administrative, clerical and staff services to the Board, as well as to selected commissions and County departments.

In addition to overseeing these responsibilities, Mr. Monteilh also serves as administrative officer of the Assessment Appeals Boards, which sit as boards of equalization for the County. He is also the filing officer for the Economic Disclosure Statements filed in accordance with the Political Reform Act of 1974, and acts as the Proprietor of the Hall of Administration.

The Executive Officer responsibilities include acting as administrative head of the department and serves as Clerk of the Board of Supervisors. The Executive Office has four major operations:

Board Operations which is managed by a Deputy Executive Officer, who has responsibility for the Board agenda process for Tuesday and Thursday Board meetings, which include the agendas, communications and minutes of the Board, as well as maintaining the official records of the Board. Administrative and Commission Services which is managed by a Senior Executive Officer, who has responsibility for Commissions, Fiscal Services and Special Services and Personnel. The Senior Executive Officer also has proprietorship of the Hall of Administration and acts for the Executive Officer in his absence.

Assessment Appeals & Management Services which is managed by a Deputy Executive Officer, who has responsibility over the Assessment Appeals Division, Civil Service Commission, and Management Services.

Information Resource Management which is managed by a Deputy Executive Officer, who has responsibility for analyzing, planning, developing, and coordinating the use of automation-related systems. They also provide support services to the Executive Office and all Board Offices.

Mr. Monteilh noted that the E & E Commission's budget is, and always has been, part of the Executive Office's budget. He confirmed the budget amount that Ms. Carr mentioned (\$249,000) as being the correct amount budgeted for the current fiscal year 1991-92. The Commission's support needs are also provided by the Executive Office.

Dr. Waddell inquired as to the number of people who staff the Executive Office. Mr. Monteilh stated that there are 240 budgeted positions in the department, 125 of those are in the Executive Office. The Board Offices have approximately 20-25 positions each. He noted that the expenses are divided equally between the Board Offices. Salaries in the Board offices run approximately \$1.5 million per office. Services and supplies run between \$45-\$50,000 per office. The majority of the expenses incurred by the Executive Office due to a large number of activities.

Commissioner Frankel noted the report that Commissioner Trotter is working for better public access to Board decisions, and inquired of his perception of the meetings, and if there was a time limit for the Board to take action on certain items. Mr. Monteilh stated that every attempt is made to clarify actions of the Board, so that when the statement of proceedings and minute orders are compiled the actions taken are recorded accurately. He also noted that some County Codes do state time-frames for certain items, e.g., elections, and zoning hearings.

Commissioner Zimbalist inquired as to the greatest challenge Mr. Monteilh has faced in his position as Executive Officer. Mr. Monteilh stated that accommodating five different personalities on the Board proves to be his greatest challenge. He noted that he and his staff treat all of the Supervisors equally, and what is done for one Supervisor is done for the others.

Chairperson Buerk asked Mr. Monteilh to explain his relationship with County Counsel and the CAO. Mr. Monteilh stated that the three of them spend a lot of time together on various issues involving the Supervisors\County. His staff is much more involved with the County Counsel's office in preparing the agenda.

Commissioner Ojeda-Kimbrough stated that she has been trying to obtain an organization chart and has run into problems. Mr. Monteilh stated that there is a publication, available in the Information Office on the third floor, and is believed titled Los Angeles County-Its People and Government, It includes an organizational chart that shows County elected officials, and gives a summary of each County department, who heads the department, and the function of the department. (Copies of the organizational chart is included in this packet).

Commissioner Fuhrman inquired if the Commission can obtain a copy of the quarterly report on the Commission's expenditures. Mr. Monteilh offered to send a copy to the Commission Office.

Chairperson Buerk noted that one of the functions of the new Executive Director will be to keep track of the Commission's expenditures and to give a report to the full Commission at the monthly meetings.

Commissioner Chuang inquired as to the relationship between himself and the CAO, and if one has authority over the other. Mr. Monteilh stated that all department heads report to the Board, and so does the CAO and himself. The CAO has control over the budgets. The Executive Office has control over the administrative operations of the Board. They interact as needed.

Commissioner Fuhrman inquired as to the institutional change requested by the Board, where departments are placed under the control of the Supervisors. Mr. Monteilh stated that the change has been instituted, and that departments are now under a Committee Chairman However, no one Board member has any direct authority over any department, even under their chairmanship. Each department head is still responsible to the Board as a whole. There is a list that shows which departments are chaired by which Supervisor. (Copies are included in this packet).

Commissioner Zimbalist inquired if there is a method the County uses to coordinate strategies that affect multiple departments, and if so, who coordinates. Mr. Monteilh stated that the Supervisors will delegate that responsibility, and usually it's delegated to the CAO's Office.

Chairperson Buerk inquired as to the outlook for the County in the future. Mr. Monteilh stated that the County is in for a major shift on the Board, in terms of philosophy, and that will reflect, over time, how and where the resources are allocated. He believes that social programs may receive more funding over the next few years.

Commissioner Hoffenberg inquired as to the changes in national, state and local funding relationships. Mr. Monteilh believes that the County will continue to struggle to maintain the level of funding it receives.

Commissioner Zimbalist inquired how a change in the size of the Board could affect the Executive Office's operation and the decision-making process. Mr. Monteilh noted that the effect would increase the work load of the Executive Office by approximately 20-30%.

Chairperson Buerk thanked Mr. Monteilh for taking the time to address the Commission.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

PUBLIC ACCESS TO BOARD'S DECISION-UPDATE

The task force has met with some key personnel in the public resource area and are gathering information. At the April 1st meeting, Commissioner Trotter will give an update to the Commission.

It was noted that the task force still needs members to serve. If you are interested, please contact Chairperson Buerk.

PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION REPORT

Dr. Waddell, a Commissioner with the Productivity Commission, gave a brief overview of the Productivity Commission. Dr. Waddell stated that the Productivity Commission meets every six weeks. Their format has been, on alternative meetings, to meet at different departments. The last meeting was held at the Department of Public Social Services. DPSS aided 900,00 people in November, 1989, whereas in November, 1990 they assisted 1.3 million people.

The Productivity Commission recently received a request from the Board to study excessive use of overtime in the County, specifically the Probation and Internal Services Departments. This project has been placed on hold for a few weeks due to time constraints conflicting with other projects.

The Commission has completed a Board request study looking into the use of retreats for the current and past three fiscal years, and to review the County's retreat policies and provide recommendations, together with an implementation plan. (Copies of the report are included in this packet).

The Productivity Commission has not yet appointed a chair to serve on the pension study task force that has been given jointly to the E & E Commission and the Productivity Commission.

The Commission has operated the last year on a business plan. This plan is being reviewed to reflect projects supporting the goals.

Commissioner Zimbalist inquired as to the Productivity Commission's mission statement. Dr. Waddell noted that there is a written mission statement. In essence, it states that the Productivity Commission's mission is to promote an organizational culture within the County that concerns support and recognition for quality of performance, etc. Dr. Waddell noted that it isn't in the Productivity Commission's long term interest, nor in their charter to find fault with a department. (Copies of the Productivity Commission's mission statement are included in this packet).

Commissioner Fuhrman questioned the Productivity Commission's procedure of not pointing out the shortcomings of a department in their studies, as he believes that the Board can not take the appropriate steps without knowing the true scope of the picture. Dr. Waddell noted that the Productivity Commission's function is not to point out a department's shortcomings, but to encourage productivity and productivity improvements. He feels that a lot of progress has been made in earning the confidence of department heads. Once a year the Commission holds a luncheon for recognition of 10 projects, out of 300-350, that were submitted by County employees. He believes the Productivity Commission would not be effective if it pointed out departments faults.

Chairperson Buerk thanked Dr. Waddell for his report.

SECURITY TASK FORCE REPORT

Commissioner Frankel stated that the Office of Security Management is under the Justice and Public Safety Branch within the CAO's office. Lt. Patrick Soll has recommendation and advisory authority only.

In response to questions, Lt. Soll noted that there are four departments that have their own independent security functions (all other departments are decentralized). They are the Department of Health Services, which has 11 different units; Department of Public Social Services, which has 3 different units: Museums which has 2; and, Internal Services which has one unit. An independent study recommended that DPSS consolidate its 3 different units into one single department.

Commissioner Frankel also noted that the courts had been slow to adopt the reporting process, (completing the security incident form and returning to the Office of Security Management) even though there had been incidents at the Criminal Courts Building. The courts have now begun to complete the forms which will make it easier for the OSM to keep track of the number of incidents to make the necessary adjustments in personnel.

There is no set amount in a centralized budget. Budget priorities are determined by the various departments. It was noted that the Executive Security Program has initiated set cost priorities. New vehicles no longer have bullet proof

glass, but a mylar coating, which brings the cost down from \$22,000 to \$400.

Lt. Patrick Soll's and Sergeant Jerry Greene's two year term will end in early February, 1993. The Office of Security Management is staffed from the Sheriff's department. The staffing is on a two year rotation basis. Michael Henry, Assistant Administrative Officer of the Justice and Public Safety Branch has recommended, due to the complexity of many of the projects the Office has become involved in that Lt. Soll and Sergeant Greene be returned to the Sheriff's department at different times. It was suggested that Sergeant Greene return in June or July of this year, and that Lt. Soll return in February, 1993.

Commissioner Frankel entered a motion to endorse Mr. Henry's recommendation by writing a letter to Robert Edmonds, Undersheriff of the Sheriff's Department. The motion was second and carried unanimously by the Commissioners present. Commissioner Frankel also noted that a letter praising Lt. Soll's and Sergeant Greene's efforts also be sent to the Sheriff's Department.

Commissioner Hoffenberg inquired if incentives were offered to employees in the Sheriff's Department to fill the two positions in the Office of Security Management. Commissioner Frankel noted that the desirability of the positions offers challenges, and serving in the Office of Security Management does go on their records, and could possibly enhance their advancement potential.

INTEREST STUDY SURVEY

Chairperson Buerk stated that with the liability and pension studies assigned to the Commission by the Board, it may be best to put the self-initiative studies on hold. He did however, suggest that Commissioners review the interest study survey result sheet, as it gives a general idea of what the members feel are of interest. Chairperson Buerk also noted that once the new director is on board, the Commission's resources can be reviewed and that one of the interest study subjects can be done.

Commissioner Hoffenberg stated that according to the penal code the county organization to whom the Grand Jury make commendations must report back to the CAO within 90 days. Usually by the time the report is completed the current Grand Jury is no longer exist. Therefore, no follow up on the report is done. He suggested that the Commission take on the role of following up on those report recommendations.

Commissioner Fuhrman stated that revenue enhancement would be a good study for the Commission. He noted that the County Assessor's Office has a significant backlog in placing property changes on the new tax rolls. He suggested the Commission review the degree of the backlog, and if there is additional funding the Board could provide to cut into the backlog, which could generate significant additional revenues for the County. Commissioner Fuhrman also noted that with so much attention drawn to the County's spending habits of late, it would be a good ideal to look into the Controller's office and its overall operation.

Chairperson Buerk suggested the two areas of interest Commissioner Fuhrman mentioned be added to the interest study sheet.

Commissioner Hoffenberg noted that the 1990-91 Grand Jury had looked into the operation of the Assessor's Office. The report basically noted the problems encountered in interfacing with other organizations involved in processing tax changes. It was also noted that several million dollars each year was lost due to late notice tax changes. However, with the election of the new Assessor changes are in place that would speed the processing of paper work.

If any Commissioner is interested in reviewing the 1990-91 Grand Jury's Final Report, a copy is available in the Commission Office.

Commissioner Freitag and the Commissioners present, offered a noted of thanks to staff for the "packets" that are mailed to the Commissioners. These "packets" include articles of interest concerning the County, as well as other communication pertaining to the Commission.

VIII. COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS FROM VISITORS

None

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by vote of the Commissioners present.

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