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Economy & Efficiency Commission Meeting Minutes

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING ECONOMY AND EFFICIENCY COMMISSION

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 1994
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 at 9:50 a.m.

II. ATTENDANCE

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Fred Balderrama
Gunther Buerk
Richard Barger (late arrival)
Robert Philibosian
Louise Frankel
Jonathan Fuhrman
Chun Lee
Carole Ojeda-Kimbrough
Roman Padilla
Randy Stockwell
H. Randall Stoke
Tony Tortorice
Betty Trotter

COMMISSIONERS EXCUSED

David Farrar
John FitzRandolph
Dan Shapiro
Julia Sylva
Albert Vera

Others present:

Shane McCloud, Deputy, Supervisor Dana's office, Victoria Fouce, Deputy, Supervisor Antonovich's office; David Bloom, Reporter, The Daily News.

Moved. Seconded and Approved: The Commission members noted above be excused.

III. CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

Chairperson Buerk asked for any amendments, corrections or objections to the proposed Minutes from the June 1, 1994 Commission meeting.

Moved, Seconded and Approved: The Minutes of the July 6, 1994 Commission Meeting be approved.

IV. INTRODUCTIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Newly appointed Commissioner H. Randall Stoke was introduced and asked to provide a short statement regarding his background and experience.

Vice Chairperson Trotter announced that she had a copy of the ballot measure for the County Charter Amendment on Compensation for elected County officers other Supervisors for anyone who may be interested.

V. OLD BUSINESS

Chairperson Buerk advised that the order of the agenda would be changed at the request of Commissioner Fuhrman to present the MIS Task Force report first.

A. Management information Systems.

Task Force Chairperson Fuhrman reported that Commissioners Tortorice and Shapiro are also members of this new Task Force. There has been one meeting of the Task Force so far and preliminary agreements regarding the direction of the Task Force have been discussed. The Task Force wanted to provide the County with specific comments in areas of concern to the Task Force. Commissioner Fuhrman passed out an information sheet setting forth the preliminary direction points as follows:

1. Use Legislative Analyst's report as framework for a review
2. Emphasize county-wide perspective, vs. total departmental autonomy.
3. Strongly support current efforts to draft county-wide goals, strategies, guidelines and standards.
4. Reduce costs through economies of scale, commonality of networks and hardware, volume pricing agreements.
5. Emphasize importance of project/contract management.
6. Support Information Technology Oversight Committee (ITOC) role of providing county-wide perspective and executive reviews.
7. Support Data Processing and Telecommunications Advisory Committee (DPTAC) role for providing independent technical peer review.

Commissioner Fuhrman commented on each point and expressed the rationale for inclusion. He advised that the CAO is currently engaged in an effort to address county-wide goals, strategies, guidelines and standards for information technology.

The "Draft of an Information Technology Plan" has been issued by the CAO's office. They have requested that comments be submitted by August 18, 1994 but have extended the comments time. It is their intent to bring a final copy of the Plan to the Board for formal approval sometime in October, 1994. This will provide the framework for more detailed strategies to be developed by mid-year 1995.

The County has resurrected a committee formed in 1990, known as the Data Processing and Telecommunications Advisory Committee, with two appointments from each Supervisor. The appointees are information services professionals. This committee which has met twice so far is designed to function as an external technical peer review group.

Chairperson Buerk inquired if Commissioner Fuhrman could provide a timetable for the progress of the Task Force's work, to include the timing for a report to the Commission.

Commissioner Fuhrman responded with an estimate of the time frame. He also offered for review a memorandum to the CAO's office. The memorandum contains six basic recommendations (copy on file). He estimated that a report to the Commission could be completed by January or February, 1995. Chairperson Buerk asked why it would take that long, if the Task Force is working from the "blueprint" provided by the State of California's Legislative Analyst's

report. He responded that it would be desirable to speak with Information Services professionals and with people in the user departments to get their input as well.

Commissioner Tortorice stated that the Task Force wanted to examine organizational structure and professionalism issues as well.

Chairperson Buerk agreed that these were important issues, but asserted that it would be unwise to make any recommendations to the CAO prior to the Commission completing its work on the subject. He suggested that it may be useful to recommend that the time be extended, that input from other Commissions, that the Economy and Efficiency Commission advise the CAO that it is working on a report, and request that the CAO not "close the door" before the report's completion.

Commissioner Philibosian commented that the Commission has never before had a Task Force make recommendations to a County department.

Moved, Seconded: The Chairperson prepare a brief letter stating that the Commission is interested in all of the issues before the CAO in this area, and the Commission will be commenting.

Discussion: Commissioner Stoke suggested that the CAO is seeking specific areas of concern that the Commission may have and perhaps it would be appropriate to mention what these are.

Chairperson Buerk responded that he sees no problem providing a general description of the areas of concern and that they will be addressed in the final report. He said they should not preclude any findings that may be developed by the Task Force.

Commissioner Barger supported Commissioner Stokes suggestion.

Commissioner Frankel said that the letter should mention the concerns, but should not lock the Commission into those specific ones.

Commissioner Padilla recommended that the areas of concern should be consistent with those outlined in the Legislative Analyst's report.

Commissioner Stockwell suggested that the letter simply describe the facts that the Task Force has been formed and has come up with some preliminary observations that do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the entire Commission but which seem to have some credibility. He also recommended that a way be found to accelerate the report to get it considered in a timely manner.

Motion to Amend the Motion, Seconded and Approved: The letter include brief commentary and background of the six issues identified by the Task Force as subject areas, without conclusions and without specific recommendations.

B. Liability and Risk Management.

Task Force Chairperson Lee reported that the Task Force had a meeting the day before to go over the revised schedule submitted by ARMTech to determine if the Commission could accept it, or find someone else to complete the project. The Task Force has agreed to give them the opportunity and a letter will be sent today setting forth conditions for continuation. Commissioner Barger advised that the conditions include payment for the time billed to date, but that no more payment will be made until the final report is received and adopted by the Commission.

Commissioner Fuhrman inquired if the CAO has responded to the Commission recommendations. Mr. Staniforth reported that we have a draft of their letter that will likely be filed next week or the week after. It appears from an initial review that they have, for the most part, responded to all of the Commission's concerns and recommendations.

C. Department of Health Services--Reengineering.

Task Force Chairperson Tortorice reported that a consulting firm (Harvey Rose Accountancy Corp.) has been selected through the RFP process. The consultant is ready to begin the project, but the contract has not yet been executed. He reported that there have been a number of questions raised by the Productivity Investment Board (PIB). They are concerned with the detail presented in the Commission proposal, and wanted to discuss the RFP process. The PIB must approve the \$100,000 loan suggested by the Board of Supervisors to augment the \$65,000 from the Commission's budget.

Chairperson Buerk explained the nature of the PIB and the action of the Board to have the Commission seek these funds.

Commissioner Tortorice discussed with PIB members the possibility of the Commission extending the RFP process and not use the master agreement list established by the County. He recommended that the Commission approve the selection of the Harvey Rose firm which has related experience and is a reputable and respected company. Commissioner Tortorice reiterated that the study is to be a relatively small implementation project to demonstrate what can be done on a larger scale to reengineer County departmental operations.

Moved, Seconded: The Task Force be directed not to reopen the bidding process and approve executing the contract with the Harvey Rose Accountancy Corp.

Discussion: There was a general discussion regarding the funding alternatives available.

Chairperson Buerk recommended that an attempt be made to work out any differences with the PIB in a non-confrontational manner as the preferred alternative. The other viable, but less desirable alternative, is to return to the Board and advise that the PIB loan was not approved and request that the money be allocated from some other fund.

Vice Chairperson Trotter recommended that Chairperson Buerk speak with the Chairperson of the Quality and Productivity Commission about the problem.

Commissioner Padilla suggested that if it can be demonstrated that the loan will accomplish savings and that it will be paid back, it will alleviate concerns and override objections.

Commissioner Tortorice explained that when he was employed by the County he had done PIB loans and explained the normal processes it takes for approval. He indicated that the data the Task Force has so far should be able to demonstrate this to be a viable project, but it could not be stated with specificity how much can be saved.

Chairperson Buerk suggested that it could be approached by funding the first phase of the project with the \$65,000 from the Commission budget. Then, when the project develops more specific data, the PIB be approached for the \$100,000 to complete a second phase. He asked how the arrangements for paying the consultant are structured and if the \$65,000 is enough to enter into the contract.

Mr. Staniforth indicated that it was not. He reiterated that the project was initiated by Board directive and that if the \$100,000 PIB loan is not available, the Board would have to provide the money from another source, or instruct the Commission not to proceed.

Mr. Stockwell asked if it was not appropriate to wait until the request is turned down and then, if necessary, return to the Board.

Chairperson Buerk reiterated that it would be best to attempt to negotiate the matter first.

Motion to Amend the Motion: To approve executing the contract with the Harvey Rose Accountancy Corp, contingent on obtaining approval of the loan amount funding.

Discussion: Commissioner Tortorice recommended that a letter be sent to Harvey Rose instructing them not to proceed any further until the contract is approved.

Commissioner Philibosian asserted that the consultant should not be doing any work prior to the contract being executed, as it creates difficulties that simply waste time. He also expressed his concern that Task Forces should not be doing such things in anticipation of Commission approval.

Commissioner Barger suggested that a letter be written to the consultant reminding them that the contract has not yet been signed, and that they should not get too far along with their work.

Commissioner Tortorice clarified that it was his understanding that, given the motion on the floor, it would not be necessary for the Task Force to come back to the Commission for approval of the contract subsequent to the PIB's approval of the \$100,000 loan.

Motion, Second and Approved: Approve executing the contract with the Harvey Rose Accountancy Corp, contingent on obtaining approval of the loan amount funding.

Chairperson Buerk asked that the agenda be modified to permit the guest presentation to be next, He advised that following the presentation there would be a discussion to clarify the procedure on contracts.

The Commission recessed for three minutes, and reconvened.

VI. PRESENTATION

Presentation by Dr. James L. Powell, President, Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County.

Mr. Staniforth provided an introduction and background information about Dr. Powell (resume on file).

Dr. Powell introduced two of his colleagues, Leonard Navarro, Deputy for Administrative Operations and Dan Cohen, Chief Scientist. Dr. Powell advised that he had been with the Museum for just over two months and that his colleagues were here to respond to questions he may not be able to answer.

Dr. Powell indicated that he understood the Commission's charge and would be providing any assistance that may be needed.

Dr. Powell recounted facts about the Museum of Natural History. It is the third largest museum of natural history in the United States, and if the new Peterson Automotive Museum is included it can be argued that it is the second largest, following the Smithsonian and the American Museum of Natural History, and perhaps the Field Museum in Chicago. It is the most distinguished natural history museum on the Pacific Rim.

The museum is a major Los Angeles area asset and attraction, and it plays a major role in solving the crisis in science education. The mission and purpose of the museum is as follows:

The Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County acquires, conserves and interprets for present and future generations. collections of objects pertaining to natural and human history that document our planet from its origin to the present day.

The Museum serves both the local and international community through a variety of public and academic programs that include exhibitions, education, research and publications.

These resources are made available so that society may learn from the past, better understand the present and plan for the future.

It is necessary to preserve the materials inherited from the past in order to learn from the past. In recent years the museum has become involved with addressing major issues of the environment. The museum has a vital public trust to ensure the preservation of these items. In regard to the collections, these are the raw materials that are used to achieve the museum's mission. It is important that they be retained in the collection, because once they are lost, they may never be returned. In some cases, there is a contractual obligation to maintain items in the collection under the conditions wherein they were acquired. It is also important to preserve the collections for the benefit of the people who follow us in the future.

The uses to which the collections are put include: research, public value and sources for exhibits.

In research, the collections document the past and provide information about organisms that may be extinct or nearing extinction. Bird eggs and fish collections have proved useful in studies of pollution and contamination. Collections provide a means to examine geographic evidence without the necessity of world travel. Newly discovered species can be verified by examination of collections of similar types. The value of collections is manifest in the identification of items brought in by the public. This museum also performs the rescue of stranded marine mammals. The collections are useful in the education process by providing "hands-on" experiences. Information contained in collections is used in industrial applications, e.g., oil exploration. The public can also gain an appreciation for the origin of items from the collections, of the great museums. These collections are the source of materials for exhibits and exhibitions.

In regard to the issue pertaining to the Commission's study, Dr. Powell summarized it as, "What might we need in the future that has been collected in the past?" The problem with this is that no one really knows.

Dr. Powell identified some of the options that might be available for the study. He has provided the Commission a fact sheet indicating how much is being spent on leasing space. At present they are spending approximately \$330,000.

At a recent Board meeting a figure of \$1.2 million was mentioned, which Dr. Powell surmised was the \$330,000 plus the amount spent on all the research programs. Another issue was the possibility that the Museum could give some of their collections and research programs to local universities. He advised that such transfers have been occurring lately, but in the reverse, i. e., the universities have been giving their collections to the Museum. This can be explored, but he believes that it will be unlikely that they will be willing to take on the additional burdens of maintaining such collections. It is also dubious that they will be willing to add to their research efforts. This results from getting negative press about the amount of money spent on research, in lieu of teaching.

In closing, Dr. Powell left the Commission with two thoughts. First, the Natural History Museums are the final repositories of the actual materials of our world. And finally, the Museum facility is about a decade behind in the use

of information technology, resulting in an inefficient and uneconomical operation. As a scientific institution, they should not be bringing up the rear in the use of this kind of technology.

Dr. Powell then responded to questions from the Commissioners.

Chairperson Buerk asked how items for collections are selected and prioritized; where does the Museum budget come from, and why should the County pay for a facility that is used by people from all over the country and the world.

Dr. Powell responded that space and intellectual limitations often dictate what may be collected, and selection and retention decisions are made conservatively. Collections and specimens are disposed of, or loaned out all the time, particularly when duplications are found, or when they do not meet museum quality standards. Judgments must be based on science and scientists must be involved. The agreement with the County provides that the County will provide for 25 years, with inflationary adjustments, the base level of funding provided last year, which is \$9.1 million. The private Museum Foundation is charged with raising 80 percent of this, which is \$7.2 million.

He continued, advising that 82 years ago the County decided that it would have a great museum - and for most of the time since then, the County has provided 100 percent of the funding. It changed when the Foundation became active 10 to 15 years ago. There are other approaches, i.e., some charge more for admission. At present the admission to the Museum is \$6.00 for individuals and \$15 for classrooms. (The Peterson Automotive Museum is slightly more).

Dr. Powell said that a goal of his is to work with USC and the other museums in the area to make Exposition Park an extraordinary attraction.

Commissioner Tortorice asked if operational and overhead cost information was available, in addition to the leasing cost data. Dr. Powell replied that such information is available and can be provided to the Commission. It is a fact that a number of collections are housed in the Museum's own buildings. Commissioner Tortorice asked if they had looked at the use of "digital and image storage" as a more efficient tool. Dr. Cohen replied that they had looked at this for some applications, but that this is a computer generation beyond the present capability.

Vice Chairperson Trotter asked how the governance of the Museum works. Dr. Powell explained that each member of the Board of Supervisors appoints three Governors, making a 15 member Board of Governors. There is also the private Museum Foundation Board of Trustees--and the Foundation made Trustees of all the Governors. The Budget is approved by the Board of Supervisors for the portion funded by the County, and the Foundation Board of Trustees approves the portion provided from the Foundation. He reported that in the past there had been two business offices and two personnel offices, which have now been merged into one, which has reduced staff requirements by two positions.

Vice Chairperson Trotter asked if any funding comes along with collections which are donated by the University or others. Dr. Powell reported that Mr. Robert Peterson made a multimillion dollar gift toward the Peterson Automotive Museum, but Dr. Cohen advised that collections donated from the universities normally do not come with funding.

Commissioner Stoke requested that the Board's charge to the Commission be reviewed; and then inquired about endowments and how theirs compares to other major museums, such as the Smithsonian. He also asked if the Museum's policy statement was an internal working document or if it had been approved by the Board of Supervisors. Dr. Powell responded that the Smithsonian is endowed by the U.S. Congress and it is considerably larger. He added that the policy statement is an internal working document at present. He continued that another of his goals for this year is the development of a strategic plan.

Commissioner Stoke commented that he appreciates that the Foundation can establish this kind of broad mission statement, but wondered if it is appropriate for an agency that uses public tax monies. He continued, stating that the Commission should make a distinction between the Museum and the Foundation as the work proceeds.

Dr. Powell responded that the Board of Supervisors has already answered the tax money question by committing to a 25 year funding agreement, and would hope that this does not have to be revisited. Commissioner Stockwell asked whether the funding sources and expenditure areas could be tracked for the Task Force. Dr. Powell briefly reviewed the various other sources of funds, which amount to about \$5 million.

Commissioner Frankel observed that Los Angeles is a major metropolitan center which needs to have cultural resources like the Museum. However, she would like to have the Task Force see the details of how the monies raised are spent.

Commissioner Padilla asked about the scope of philanthropic money that goes to the Museum. He also asked for a discussion of funding for research vs. funding of exhibits. Dr. Powell reported that there is an endowment of about \$30 million, most of which is Berkshire Hathaway stock which does not produce very much income. About \$2 million was

raised last year. Dr. Powell said that he has thought a lot about the case for basic research. Many technological advances have resulted in the past several decades from the conduct of basic research. When the question of research is asked at colleges and universities in the context of teaching vs. research, with the neglect of research the institution's current knowledge base becomes out-of-date and much less useful.

V. OLD BUSINESS

E. Contracts.

Chairperson Buerk returned the discussion back to the administration of contracts, and recommended that the Executive Committee be directed to come up with procedures on how the commission should handle contracts. There being no objections, the recommendation was ordered by the Chair.

F. Proposition "A" Contracting Follow-up.

Task Force Chairperson Trotter reported that the report which was submitted in June, 1993 was acted on by the Board in August, 1994. The portions dealing with Health Care requirements were received and filed. The other specific suggestions are to be reviewed by the CAO for current relevance and report back on what should be happening on recommended changes. Since that time, she and Mr. Staniforth have met with CAO staff members who have indicated that they are going over records and will report back sometime in the future.

Chairperson Buerk asked if there was not a time frame for response, Commissioner Trotter replied that the time frame was 90 days from the date of the Board action.

G. Unincorporated Areas Services

Task Force Chairperson Padilla reported that the Task Force last met on July 13, 1994 and the major issues discussed included:

1. the extent the County uses its influence to change policies on annexations and the policy of delivering services to unincorporated areas;
2. the opportunities the County has to contract with other agencies such as cities and special districts, other counties and private contractors, and
3. the issue of the equality and how municipal services are defined.

The next meeting is scheduled for September 13, 1994. One of the issues of concern, which has been delaying the project is the availability of staff time, and Mr. Staniforth has a candidate interview scheduled on Thursday September 8, 1994. The target date for the completed report to come to the Commission is now December, 1994.

H. County Economic Growth.

Mr. Staniforth read a statement prepared by Task Force Chairperson Philibosian who had to leave the meeting early.

If the Executive Director is able to find a consultant, Task Force will (1.) review the outcome of last year's recommendations; (2.) update those recommendations as needed in the three areas addressed. Workers' Compensation Insurance, Permit Streamlining, and Civil Court Law Reform; (3.) make recommendations in the three subject areas. The timeline is September and October Task Force work and report drafting. November 2, 1994 presentation of the draft report to the E&E Commission. November 3, 1994 refer final report to the CAO for Legislative Review pursuant to the new directive from the Board of Supervisors. December 6, 1994 presentation of the report with CAO's analysis to Board of Supervisors. January, 1995. beginning of Legislative Session. Advocacy by the Board of Supervisors; Continuing monitoring by the E&E Commission.

Chairperson Buerk asked if the consultant being interviewed would be suited to do this kind of work as well, or can a search begin for someone who can. Mr. Staniforth responded that this will take someone who is a Legislative expert. The one coming in for interview is a public policy person. Chairperson Buerk requested that an Executive Committee be scheduled in the near future and this can be taken up again at that time.

Mr. Staniforth advised that Commissioner Vera's ideas on methods for capturing sales tax revenues within the county, which was referred to the Task Force, was to have been taken up in a meeting this afternoon, however, Mr. Vera, who is the Mayor of Culver City had to be present at a Sister City function today. The meeting will have to be rescheduled.

I. Jury Management.

Task Force Chairperson Trotter reported that the draft report is not yet ready for circulation to the Task Force. She advised that she will be gone for two weeks and will be gone for the next commission meeting, but hopes to see the

draft before she departs. Follow up will continue and the report should be ready for the November Commission meeting.

J. Real Property Management.

Mr. Staniforth reported that two members of the Task Force had met with real property personnel in the County, but the Task Force has directed no further action to date. Chairperson Buerk reported that he was advised by Task Force Chairperson Shapiro that the Property Management people were excited by the prospect of being able to renegotiate some of the leases. However, many of the leases are subsidized and, thus, all the savings that could be realized would not necessarily come to the County, but to the Federal government. He advised them not to be discouraged by this fact, as any tax dollars saved, County or Federal, are well worth the effort. He reiterated that the potential for savings in this area is great and the Task Force should continue to pursue their goals.

Commissioner Padilla inquired if the Task Force had considered the practice of hiring an outside party to be paid a percentage of the savings realized. Chairperson Buerk asked that this suggestion be included in the minutes and the Task Force be asked to take it up. Commissioner Stockwell observed that a problem with the County, as in the case of data processing, is that information is so dispersed that it is difficult to adequately address issues and make substantive headway.

Commissioner Frankel suggested that it may be useful to get the Board to declare a moratorium on any County department buying, building or leasing another facility until they look at what they already have. Chairperson Buerk suggested that this idea be passed on to the Task Force for consideration.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Museum of Natural History.

Task Force Chairperson Trotter reported that the tour of the Museum storage facilities was very interesting and useful. The Museum is not, by any means, working under luxurious conditions. Historical materials are located in caged areas, with no climate control and difficult access. A work plan has been worked up and the Task Force will be pursuing the goals in the project.

Commissioner Tortorice suggested that the Task Force might ask a person with expertise in warehouse management to review the Museum storage practices.

Commissioner Trotter reported that we have the opportunity to employ the services of an expert in the field, Dr. George Davis, but observed that since several of the Commissioners left the meeting early, there is no quorum to approve a contract.

Chairperson Buerk advised that an action by a Committee-of-the-Whole can approve the signing a contract with Dr. Davis, and have it ratified at the next meeting.

Mr. Staniforth advised that this would be a purchase order contract of less than \$25,000. The cost is estimated to be in the area of \$5,000 to \$15,000. He reviewed Dr. Davis' credentials and qualifications.

Chairperson Buerk requested that in the future, any contract matter be placed toward the front of the agenda in order to avoid this problem; and the contract with Dr. Davis be placed on the October agenda. Further, he expressed his intent to send a letter to all Commission members urging them to make enough time available to be present between 9:30 a.m. and 12:00 noon.

Commissioner Stockwell recommended that the issue of contracts of less than \$25,000 be brought to the Commission to determine if a lower dollar amount be set for contracts that require quicker action by a Task Force. Chairperson Buerk said there will be Executive Committee review of contracts procedures.

B. Amendment to the Commission Operating Procedures: Policy on Commission Recommended Legislative Positions.

The Commissioners reviewed and discussed the draft amendment and approved, as a Committee-of-the-Whole, the change in the procedures as they conform to County policy. Final approval will be scheduled for the October meeting.

C. Commission on Local Services request for Liaison.

Mr. Staniforth explained that this commission was interested in the kind of work the E&E Commission is doing and they would like to establish the same kind of relationship that exists with the Quality and Productivity Commission. Chairperson Buerk responded that he will explore if there is a Commissioner who is interested in this and report at a

future meeting.

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT

In the absence of Quality and Productivity Commission liaison, Robert Hertzberg, Vice Chairperson Trotter reported that she had not been aware of any meetings since her report on this commission at the last meeting.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:30 p.m..

Respectfully Submitted,



Bruce J. Staniforth
Executive Director

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