

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

December 1, 1976

Dr. Robert J. Downey
Chairman

Members Present:

Robert Downey, Chairman
George E. Bodle
Catherine Burke
John Byork
Anne Collins
Mario Di Giovanni
Carolyn Ellner
Jerry Epstein
Douglas Ferguson
Milton Gordon
Mary Jane Kidd
Leo Majich
Luis Ruiz
Warren Schmidt
George Shellenberger
Gloria Starr
Larkin Teasley
Bryan Walker

Members Absent:

Margaret Carr
Richard Gunther
Robert Ruchti

George E. Bodle
Catherine Graeffe Burke
John D. Byork
Margaret Paterson Carr
Anne S. Collins
Mario Di Giovanni
Dr. Carolyn L. Ellner
Jerry Epstein
Douglas W. Ferguson
Milton G. Gordon
Richard S. Gunther
Mary Jane Kidd
Leo A. Majich
Robert Ruchti, II
Luis A. Ruiz
Dr. Warren H. Schmidt
George Shellenberger
Gloria Starr
Larkin Teasley
Bryan Walker

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

Dr. Downey called the meeting to order at 9:40 a.m.

West Los Angeles County Resource Conservation District - Burke Roche reported that a taxpayer group in Santa Clarita Valley asked him to look into their proposal to the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) to dissolve the West Los Angeles County Resource Conservation District. It has authority to levy a tax up to two cents, and it has continually overestimated expenses so that it now has a surplus of \$220,000. It has made pledges of money to different organizations for various things such as tree planting, seminars, development of a park, and now is considering putting in a library. LAFCO has postponed making a decision on the request to dissolve the district until December 8. In the meantime, the LAFCO staff has filed a report saying that the district is performing its function and should be continued. Burke Roche asked commission authorization to appear at the December 8 LAFCO meeting and present his findings.

George Bodle moved that the Executive Secretary be authorized to attend the meeting and present his findings; motion seconded by Luis Ruiz and passed unanimously.

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Citizens' Advisory Committee on Salaries and Compensation Practices - Robert Downey reported that the Task Force on Management and Finances recommended in its May report that the County establish a committee of citizens outside the County to advise the Board of Supervisors on salaries and benefits at budget time. In a letter to the Board, Harry Hufford supported the recommendation and identified some criteria as to the type of individuals who might serve. He asked Burke Roche and John Campbell to identify candidates for consideration. They are submitting the following names for commission approval: Willard Carr, Chairman of the State and Local Government Committee, Chamber of Commerce; Keith Jones, Staff Consultant for Merchants and Manufacturers Association; and Frank H. St. Denis, Director of Personnel Services, Hospital Council of Southern California. All have expertise in the areas necessary to perform on the proposed committee.

Leo Majich moved that the three names be submitted to Harry Hufford; motion seconded by Dr. Di Giovanni and passed unanimously.

Dr. Downey instructed Mr. Roche to advise Harry Hufford and to write a letter to the Board of Supervisors regarding the recommendations.

Catherine Burke suggested that such a conventional approach not be followed the next time the staff starts a search for candidates. She is concerned that panels of experts are sometimes blinded by their own expertise. She said she would also like to see consideration given to women and minorities.

Evaluation and Determination of Commission Study Priorities - Robert Downey said that everyone had received the previous staff report on commission studies. After that report was mailed, Supervisor Ward requested a meeting with his appointees to the E & E Commission (EEC). Dr. Downey asked Warren Schmidt to report on the meeting with Baxter Ward.

Warren Schmidt reported that Supervisor Ward's main concern was the budget. The discussion also centered around the need for an incentive for department heads to come in with smaller budgets. Across-the-board cuts penalize the efficient department and reward the inefficient one.

Milton Gordon said that he was acquainted with A. Alan Post, State Legislative Analyst. He has a staff of approximately 100 people who monitor the State departments throughout the year. This seems to be the same function which Baxter Ward wants the EEC to perform.

The members discussed the possibility of establishing an independent budget analyst either in the County or added to the EEC staff. They asked the staff to comment.

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Addendum to Report on Commission Studies - Mr. Roche explained that the staff had prepared an addendum to the previous report listing three alternative approaches to a study of the budget; 1) a review of the entire budget - for which the commission does not have staff capacity; 2) a review of a group of related departments such as law enforcement, public protection, or general government; and 3) a review of a single department.

John Campbell said that the Board and the management structure have policies, which are not too explicit, which generate costs. One example is the small offices which serve constituents throughout the County. These are costly, and there is a need to look into those general policies which create costs, regardless of where they occur in the budget.

Warren Schmidt said that he was concerned that the commission didn't spread itself too thin. He suggested that the task force first start with an overall look at the budget. Some areas may evolve from this which need to be looked at in depth. A new task force could be spun off for that purpose. Catherine Burke agreed and added that, as they get into the study, the task force may consider adding someone to the staff to operate as a legislative analyst.

Leo Majich moved that the task force adopt study plan #2 - review of a group of related department - and the category should be general government. The motion was seconded by Jerry Epstein.

Dr. Downey polled the members. The majority felt that the task force should begin with an overall view of the budget. This approach, they felt, would identify the policies, or lack of policies, responsible for the present situation. It could also identify areas for in depth study.

Warren Schmidt suggested that the Supervisors be advised that a task force had been appointed to study the budget, that a member of the commission will contact the Legislative Analyst for recommendations on how that function can be implemented in the County, and that the commission will be updating its past recommendations so that the Board can see the implication of those recommendations on the budget.

Leo Majich withdrew his previous motion with consent of the second. He moved that the task force start on study #1 - an overall view of the budget. In the meantime, the Task Force on Management and Finances will continue its work and will monitor the recommendations adopted in the last report.

George Bodle asked that Warren Schmidt's suggestions also be included. Mr. Majich agreed. Jerry Epstein seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously.

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Dr. Downey appointed the following members to serve on the Task Force on the County Budget: Mario Di Giovanni, Chairman; George E. Bodle, Vice Chairman; Anne Collins, Carolyn Ellner, Jerry Epstein, Douglas Ferguson, Milton Gordon, Luis Ruiz, Warren Schmidt, and Bryan Walker. He said that this would leave the Management and Finances Task Force intact, and since Dr. Di Giovanni was on both task forces, he would be the liaison.

The meeting adjourned to executive session at 11:23 a.m. to consider a personnel matter.