

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

April 13, 1977

Dr. Robert J. Downey, Chairman
Anne S. Collins, Vice-Chairman

Members Present:

George E. Bodle
John Byork
Margaret Carr
Mario Di Giovanni
Jerry Epstein
Douglas Ferguson
Milton Gordon
Luis Ruiz
Warren Schmidt
George Shellenberger
Gloria Starr

Members Absent:

Robert Downey
Catherine Burke
Anne Collins
Carolyn Ellner
Richard Gunther
Mary Jane Kidd
Leo Majich
Robert Ruchti
Larkin Teasley
Bryan Walker

George E. Bodle
Catherine Graeffe Burke
John D. Byork
Margaret Paterson Carr
Dr. 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

In the absence of Dr. Downey, who had the flu, and Anne Collins, who was in Mexico, the members selected George Shellenberger to chair the meeting.

Before distributing the ballots for nomination of chairperson, Mr. Roche explained that the by-laws did not provide for absentee nominations. Since the regular meeting had been postponed and since many members were out of town or had conflicts, he discussed with Dr. Downey the idea of telling the members who were going to be absent to send in an absentee nominating ballot. He would ask the full commission if it wished to accept them and if it wished to change the by-laws.

After a brief discussion, Warren Schmidt made the motion to accept the absentee ballots on a one-time-only basis and not to change the by-laws. The motion was seconded by Jerry Epstein and passed unanimously.

The ballots were then distributed and collected for nominations.

Report on Request for Additional Superior Court Judges - Burke Roche reported. Two weeks ago when the Board received the request for 34 additional judges, they referred it to the CAO, the Commission on Judicial Procedures and the EEC for report back in two weeks. The reason for the deadline is that the bill is coming before the Judiciary Committee of the Assembly soon, and the Board would like to have more information before that time.

After conferring with Dr. Downey and the members of the Executive Committee, it was agreed that he should go ahead and collect as much information as possible

and then draft a report for the Executive Committee to review. The by-laws of the commission provide for the Executive Committee to act in emergencies when there is not enough time to call a full commission meeting. The Executive Committee met on Monday, April 11, and approved the report.

On Dr. Downey's instruction, he called each member and briefed them and got their opinions on the conclusions in the report. The report was delivered to the Board of Supervisors Monday afternoon for the Tuesday meeting. However, the CAO ran into some difficulty and asked for a week's continuance. They are working on the budget, and this is a difficult time for them.

Milton Gordon expressed doubts about accepting the study with the time limitation. He suggested that in the future the commission should say that it can not do a first class job in the time allowed.

Warren Schmidt said he would like to support the spirit of what Milton Gordon had said. When this kind of quick effort thing is permitted, it diverts the very limited staff resources from the fundamental studies this commission is uniquely qualified to conduct. This study drained the man-hours from the budget study.

George Bodle agreed. He said that if the commission could refuse a request of this kind it should be done. However, he also reviewed the report with the Executive Committee, and he thought the conclusion reached was stated very well on page 3 of the report.

Mario Di Giovanni said he thought it was a fundamental report, and the reasons for the conclusion were good. Even though the study was made in two weeks, he said he doubted that the outcome would have been any different if it had been studied for two months. The members who reviewed the original draft were in unanimous agreement on the contents.

Luis Ruiz also attended the Executive Committee meeting. He said that two points influenced him (1) cost to the County for the additional judges would be \$444,540 this year, but the way things go in the system, this could be much greater several years from now; (2) Los Angeles should be measured in the same way the other counties are measured. There is no reason for it to be treated separately.

George Shellenberger thought the commission had every right to oppose this request on the basis there has not been a study made on court reform. He said there should be no support for more expenditures until the present machinery is operating efficiently. As a long time member of this commission, he knows that emergencies come along, and if something comes up which affects the economy and efficiency of the County, then the EEC should respond to it.

Burke Roche said he would like to review the report briefly. He summarized the report, pointed out pertinent points, and explained the attached Tables.

Warren Schmidt said he agreed with the idea of making a comment. He further stated that the EEC has always operated by making very careful, thoughtful studies, which almost always have had unanimous concurrence. He said the commission should differentiate between this type of crisis report and its formal in-depth reports. A crisis report (1) should make clear that there was not time enough to pursue the subject in-depth as it would like to do; (2) instead of making recommendations, it should say that here are some facts which should be considered; and (3) these are the kinds of questions which should be asked in considering the issue. He thought that in this way the commission could respond in the hopes of being helpful but would not be committing itself to something which had not been studied in-depth because of the time limit.

Gloria Starr thought the report was excellent. However, she agreed with Dr. Schmidt that in the future very careful consideration should be given before making such a commitment.

Douglas Ferguson agreed with the recommendations and the conclusion in the report. He added that it wasn't fair to ask anyone to conduct a study of this type in two weeks.

George Shellenberger said there was no action required on the report. He commended the staff for handling it in the way they did.

Burke Roche read a letter he had received from Frank Zolin, Executive Officer of the Superior Court, which asked the EEC to reconsider its report. It further stated that if the State-wide weights were applied to Los Angeles, they would still show a need for 14 additional judges. If they received 14 additional judges, it would permit the deletion of the seven court commissioners, which would result in a reduction of over half a million dollars in net County costs.

Mr. Roche said that he talked to Mr. Zolin after receiving the letter and told him if he could demonstrate anything contrary to the figures that he had seen, and if the figures appear valid to the CAO, there should be no objection.

Progress Report on the Budget Study - Mario Di Giovanni, chairman of the task force reported.

The task force has had a number of meetings. The last one continued after lunch, and they dealt with Workmen's Compensation, absenteeism, abuses of sick leave, craft wages differential, subsidies - such as RTD and the cultural institutions - decentralization of County services, stipends to commissions and committees, consolidation of departmental programs, and standardization. In another month's time he believes they will have a rough draft ready for the commission to study and make comments. He and the staff met with the League of California Cities to get their input on modifying the budget. They received some good information.

Burke Roche reported that he had been off on other projects, and John Campbell has had to do the principal work on the budget study. He is making very good progress, and Mr. Roche said he would like to commend him and the task force for the work they were doing. If the report is released just before the budget hearings, the commission review and formal presentation would have to be at a special meeting on May 25 or the regular meeting on June 1.

George Shellenberger suggested a farewell luncheon for Dr. Downey. The members agreed, and Mr. Roche is to follow up on the idea.

Board Motion on Department of Health Services - Burke Roche reported that the motion was brought in by Supervisor Hahn. It was a request to study the feasibility of separating the Health Services Department into four departments - hospitals, mental health, community health, and veterinarian. The motion requested the CAO to confer with the interested parties. Supervisor Hayes requested that the EEC be included in the request for a study.

Burke Roche read a letter from Harry Hufford regarding this motion. Mr. Hufford advised the commission that he had designated a member of his staff to work with the EEC on developing information on the subject.

Board Motion on the Civil Service Commission - Burke Roche reported that Supervisor Edelman brought in a motion requesting the County Counsel to prepare a charter amendment which would remove most of the responsibilities from the Civil Service Commission. The commission would be left with the administration of the merit system on recruitment and promotion. He requested the CAO, the Civil Service Commission, Employee Relations Commission, Los Angeles County Management Council, department heads, and the EEC to review the concept and report to the Board in 90 days.

The members discussed the requests. Margaret Carr said that she understood the Grand Jury was studying civil service this year. If it were so, this should be considered when discussing study priority. Mr. Roche said he would find out the status of the report.

Warren Schmidt reported that Catherine Burke had done a lot of work in this area, and it was very important that she be consulted.

Members discussed Margaret Carr's suggestion that a task force work with the CAO staff. Some members thought it was a very good idea and that the commission should take advantage of the additional staff. Others thought it might jeopardize the independence of the commission. No decision was reached.

The question was raised about making a choice between the two studies. Warren Schmidt said that it should be up to the Executive Committee to determine the priority of the studies. That was one of the duties envisioned for the committee when it was set up.

Resolution of the San Gabriel Valley Association of Cities - Burke Roche said that the resolution was asking that a study of urban cities be conducted at the State level, and the association would like the EEC to take formal action to support it. He had mailed copies to all members.

The members agreed that it would not be appropriate for the commission to take such action unless the Board of Supervisors requested that the commission comment on the resolution.

Luis Ruiz reported that he had received some documents which showed the County was competing with local communities for CETA funds to employ temporary personnel for the purpose of catching up on the backlog of billing for Medi-Cal and Medi-Care. He is to meet with Burke Roche and John Campbell to discuss it.

Mr. Roche asked what action the commission wished to take regarding the Board hearings on the additional judges. It was agreed that if Mr. Zolin could demonstrate that the substitution of judges for commissioners would prove cost effective to the County, there would be no reason for the commission to oppose it.

Mr. Roche reported that Senator Dills had brought in a bill to allow Superior Courts to use marshals as bailiffs and eliminate sheriff bailiffs. Jerry Epstein said that the commission should go on record as opposing this and should ask the supervisors to do the same.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:37 a.m.