

# *ECONOMY AND EFFICIENCY COMMISSION*

Arthur J. Peever, *Chairperson*  
Efrem Zimbalist, III, *Vice Chairperson*

Alfred P. Balderrama  
George E. Bodke  
Gunther W. Buerk  
Ann King Cooper  
Joe Crall  
Jack Drown  
Emma E. Fischbeck  
Louise Frankel  
Dr. Alfred J. Freitag  
Chun Y. Lee  
Robert J. Lowe  
Abraham M. Lurie  
Lauro J. Neri  
Robert H. Philibosian  
Daniel M. Shapiro  
Randolph B. Stockwell  
Wally Thor  
Betty Trotter  
Robert L. Williams

## MINUTES

### FULL COMMISSION MEETING

FEBRUARY 6, 1991

HALL OF ADMINISTRATION, 864-A

#### I. CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chairperson Efrem Zimbalist, III opened the meeting at 9:35 a.m.

#### II. PRESENTATION

E. Leon Spaugy, Agricultural Commissioner/Director of Weights and Measures

Subject: Overview of the Objectives and Functions of the Department of Agriculture & Weights and Measures, and Current Topics of Interest

Mr. Spaugy discussed the major functions of his Department, and some of the issues they currently face. The major points were:

- o 1990-1991 will most likely be most memorable for the problems caused by the continuing drought than for the December freeze. One of the effects upon his Department will be less activity for weed abatement, which is almost entirely cost recoverable from charges to property owners. Dust erosion will also be a result, and he is currently working with County Counsel on a proposed ordinance which would require permits for activities which tend to add to this problem, such as onion growing and sheep grazing.
- o The Departmental budget for the current fiscal year is \$15.5 million, with cost recovery of \$10.3 million, for a net County cost of \$5.2. Personnel complement is 312.
- o The Consumer Protection Bureau (see organization chart attached) has full cost recovery for civil actions, but not criminal actions it brings against violators. They are currently working with County Counsel to propose changes which would allow for cost recovery in criminal cases.

Only 1/3 of the routine inspection costs are recovered, because the fee schedule is unrealistically low for large sellers who have numerous weighing and measuring devices. They would like to increase this percentage, but there is opposition from merchant associations.

Mr. Spaugy believes there is a very large benefit to consumers from the Weights and Measures Bureau's activities, and would like to expand the unit's purview to agricultural areas, but this proposal has encountered delay from industry associations.

Fines levied go to the General Fund, so there will be no perception of Departmental self-interest.

- o The Department's Environmental Protection Bureau's most visible programs have been the Med Fly and Mexican Fruit Fly eradication. Exclusion is the first line of defense, with inspections at entry points and pathways. They have added four new inspectors to aid this effort.

The Laboratory Services unit is the only fully accredited government lab in the State. The Health Department's toxicology lab was merged with the Agriculture lab; and supplies testing services to both departments, and to private clients on a fee basis. It checks water samples, fruit and vegetable samples; and areas such as pesticide contamination for private clients.

The lab operates very efficiently, and has encountered some complaints from competing privately owned labs.

- o Commissioners Frankel and Fischbeck raised questions regarding pest destruction of Monterey pine and eucalyptus trees. Mr. Spaugy agreed that an ordinance or legislation should be proposed that would require timely removal of infected trees.
- o One of the Department's successes is the effort to eradicate or control the Ash White Fly, which is being addressed by the introduction of natural parasites and predators from the Mediterranean region. Control is expected in a three to five year time span.
- o Mr. Spaugy expects the impact upon agriculture from the drought will be reduced production of high water consuming crops such as alfalfa and cotton. He believes the long term solution is a market cost for water, which will result in more efficient irrigation practices and less high water consumption crops. This has been the case in Riverside County and other areas in the State.

- o The Agriculture and Weights and Measures Departments were consolidated into the current organization in 1984. There have been savings in overhead, and the new organization is working effectively. They have not been able to effect cross training between the agriculture and weights and measures inspectors because of the higher requirements for the former positions. They are attempting to hire more highly qualified weights and measures inspectors, however.
- o Plans for Med Fly control in 1991 call for release of large numbers of sterile flies, preceded by a minimal amount of preliminary bait spraying to eliminate any fertile females. It is felt this will be sufficient, from the assessment of current conditions. A small tax on commodities which harbor Med Flies is also under consideration to defray the costs of the control programs.
- o As indicated earlier, the Department is operating at close to 70% cost recovery, and is striving to increase that percentage.

Commissioner Zimbalist thanked Mr. Spaugy for his interesting and informative presentation.

### III. ATTENDANCE

Attendance list is on page 5. The absences of Commissioners Crail, Freitag, Lowe, Lurie, Neri, Peever, Shapiro, and Stockwell were excused by vote of the Commissioners present.

### IV. MINUTES APPROVAL

The minutes of the January 9, 1991 meeting were approved by vote of the Commissioners present.

### V. ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON

The run-off election for Chairperson between Commissioners Gunther W. Buerk and Betty Trotter resulted in the election of Commissioner Buerk, with all Commissioners voting either at the meeting or by mail ballot.

Commissioner Zimbalist congratulated the new Chairperson, and turned the meeting over to Commissioner Buerk.

Chairperson Buerk thanked the Commissioners for their support and confidence, and stated that one of his immediate goals is to increase the attendance and participation of Commissioners both at full Commission meetings and task force meetings. He plans to discuss this with each Commissioner.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

Task Force Reports:

Security Systems - Chairperson Frankel reported that the CAO has appointed the new County Security Manager (from the Sheriff's organization), Lt. Patrick Soll. The Task Force will meet with Lt. Soll within a few days to review the Commission's report and recommendations. The CAO has agreed to implement our recommendations, and there have been a number of letters issued by the CAO on security matters in the past few weeks. The Task Force plans to remain active in the follow-up efforts for implementation of the recommendations.

To this end, Commissioner Frankel made a motion that the Commission's report on Security Systems in Los Angeles County be sent to all County departments. This was seconded by Commissioner Drown, and approved by Commissioners present.

Asset Management - In the absence of Chairperson Stockwell, Charles Kaufmann reported that the Task Force held an organizing meeting on January 9th. Plans were reviewed and approved, and two general objectives were identified: the County's efforts for real property development, and the economic management of the County's real property assets. The Task Force will meet with the management of the Development Division of the Community Development Commission in March. The staff met with the Director of that Division preparatory to the March meeting.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

Chairperson Buerk and John Campbell reported on the preliminary results of an Executive Committee meeting held on January 22 to discuss what projects the Commission should be addressing in the coming year. There followed a discussion on which projects would be most appropriate and productive. A list of the projects under consideration will be sent to all Commissioners prior to the March meeting for discussion at that time.

VIII. RECOGNITION FOR OUTGOING CHAIRPERSON AND VICE CHAIRPERSON

On motion by Commissioner Trotter, seconded by Commissioner Drown, the Commission voted to extend thanks and appreciation to Commissioners Arthur J. Peever and Efrem Zimbalist for their leadership of the Commission in 1990.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

On motion, duly seconded, the Commissioners voted to adjourn the meeting.

ATTENDANCE

Members Present

Alfred P. Balderrama  
George E. Bodle  
Gunther W. Buerk  
Ann K. Cooper  
Jack Drown  
Emma E. Fischbeck  
Louise Frankel  
Chun Y. Lee  
Robert H. Philiposian  
Wally Thor  
Betty Trotter  
Robert L. Williams  
Efrem Zimbalist, III

Members Absent

Joe Crail  
Dr. Alfred J. Freitag  
Robert J. Lowe  
Abraham M. Lurie  
Lauro J. Neri  
Arthur J. Peever  
Daniel M. Shapiro  
Randolph B. Stockwell

Guest

E. Leon Spaugy, Agriculture Commissioner/Director of Weights  
and Measures, Los Angeles County