

**LOS ANGELES COUNTY
CITIZENS ECONOMY AND EFFICIENCY COMMITTEE**

ROOM 139, HALL OF ADMINISTRATION/500 WEST TEMPLE/LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012/625-3611, Ext. 64605

M I N U T E S

FULL COMMITTEE MEETING

DATE: Wednesday, February 4, 1970
TIME: 9:30 a.m.
PLACE: Hall of Administration, Room 864

Robert Mitchell,
Chairman

Raymond Arbuthnot
Dr. John C. Bollens
Davis Brabant
John D. Byork
Maurice Rene Chez
Roc Cutri
Dr. Warren S. Jones
Mrs. Ray Kidd
Harlan G. Loud
P. S. Magruder
Kiyoshi Maruyama
Irvin Mazzei
L. E. McKee
Ferdinand Mendenhall
Louis Rogers
George Shellenberger
Mrs. Benjamin Erick Smith
William Torrence
Gus A. Walker
Burke Roche,
Executive Secretary

Members Present:

Robert Mitchell, Chairman
Joseph Bishop
Dr. John Bollens
Davis Brabant
Maurice Rene Chez
Roc Cutri
Mrs. Ray Kidd
Harlan Loud
P. S. Magruder
Kiyoshi Maruyama
Irvin Mazzei
L. E. McKee
George Shellenberger
Gus Walker

Members Absent:

Raymond Arbuthnot
John Byork
Dr. Warren Jones
Ferdinand Mendenhall
Louis Rogers
Mrs. Benjamin Erick Smith
William Torrence

GUEST SPEAKER - Dr. William N. Cassella,
Executive Director of the National
Municipal League

Mr. Mitchell called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m. He introduced Mr. Joseph Bishop as a new member of the committee. Mr. Bishop, as retiring Foreman of the 1969 Grand Jury, will serve on the committee for one year.

Mr. Mitchell said this is the last meeting of Phase I of the Charter Study in which the committee has asked experts from other areas of the country to testify on the Charter issues. Mr. Mitchell then asked Dr. Bollens, Chairman of the Charter Study Task Force, to introduce Dr. Cassella.

Dr. Bollens said that Dr. Cassella is Executive Director of the National Municipal League, a citizens organization established in 1894 for the improvement of local government. Dr. Cassella studied at the University of Illinois and at Syracuse University. He completed his studies with a doctor's degree in political science from Harvard University. He has taught political science and public administration at the University of Missouri and at Columbia University. He is a consultant to the Committee for Economic Development and to the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations to the United States Bureau of the Census. He has been a member of the staff of the National Municipal League since 1952, and last year he became the League's Executive Director.

Dr. Cassella said that, among the three Charter issues the committee was studying, he had been asked to concentrate on the question of representation, specifically the problem of the size of the Board of Supervisors. He said he would like to make one or two comments, however, with respect to the chief executive and to the status of department heads, the two other issues under study by the committee.

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He said he agreed with all other preceding speakers that the County should have a chief executive with broad appointing and dismissal powers over the department heads and others in the County government. As to the method of selection, he said local tradition should have a strong influence on determining whether the executive is elected or appointed. In New York the tradition is for an elected chief executive. In California the tradition is for an appointed chief executive. Dr. Cassella said, therefore, that his preference would be for an appointed chief executive in Los Angeles County.

Dr. Cassella advocated that the chief executive should have broad appointive and dismissal powers, and he should not be subject constantly to obtaining the advice and consent of the governing body. He should be able to appoint anyone whom he believes to be competent to do the job. If he is improvident enough to appoint people who are objectionable to the governing body, this is sufficient cause to dismiss the chief executive. That should be the Board's sanction.

Regarding the issue of representation, Dr. Cassella said he rejected categorically any suggestion that a city or county governing body should be very large, elected from small wards. Dr. Cassella then summarized the trend in a number of other states. In states where counties generally had large ex officio governing bodies, in some cases consisting of 50 to over 100 members the trend has been to reduce them drastically to less than 30 members.

Almost everywhere these changes have been accompanied by the county boards relinquishing their executive role.

Regarding Los Angeles County, the size of the Board depends to a great extent on the role assigned to the Board. If the Board is to cease to be an administrative-executive body, then it is quite in line with experience in other places to increase the size substantially. If, on the other hand, it is to continue to be an administrative Board, a governing commission with both legislative and executive powers, then it is hard to justify any substantial increase in its size. But if it's role is essentially that of being a deliberative body, a policy making body, then it should be enlarged to eleven or more supervisors.

Another factor which should affect the size of the Board of Supervisors is the role which the County itself in the future will play as a local government agency. That is, should County government be making policy and passing rules or should it be a service delivery system conforming to policies developed by other government agencies? In the latter case there is little justification for increasing the size of the board.

Dr. Cassella concluded his remarks with a brief comment on the East Palo Alto Municipal Advisory Council, whose activity was described by Mr. Marty Tarshes, San Mateo County Manager, who previously testified before the committee. Dr. Cassella said this type of neighborhood advisory council may have considerable merit. He said however that if such a council is established, the rules by which it is governed and the authority assigned to it should be very clearly spelled out.

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Dr. Bollens opened the question period by asking Dr. Cassella if he believed there was a direct relationship between size of population in the area governed and the size of the governing body. Dr. Cassella said no, he did not believe there is or should be an absolute ratio.

Dr. Bollens asked if he thought five supervisors could adequately represent more than 7 million people. Dr. Cassella said that if you consider the Board of Supervisors exclusively as the only representative enterprise for everything that goes on in Los Angeles County, then obviously it is not an adequate representation system. However, if the State Legislature makes policy relating to many things the County does, the representation question is put in a different light. He said also that for the unincorporated areas Mr. Tarshes' recommendation for a community advisory council has considerable merit and provides more effective representation in these areas.

Mr. Mazzei asked that, inasmuch as there are two districts in Los Angeles County that have very large minority populations, should not some assurance be given to them for representation for the welfare of the community. Dr. Cassella replied that he did not favor expansion of the Board simply to insure the election of a supervisor identified personally with a minority group.

Mrs. Kidd asked if eliminating the advice and consent requirement of the Board to the chief executive's appointments would not dilute the power of the Board. Dr. Cassella said it definitely would not dilute the power of the Board because it is a change in how the power is exercised. He said that whenever the Board is displeased with the appointments of the manager they can dismiss him.

Mrs. Kidd asked if some of the duties of the Board are eliminated, such as advice and consent, then why should you increase the size of the Board? Dr. Cassella said that if the Board becomes essentially a deliberative and policy making body, then it is an advantage to have as many views as possible reflecting community opinion so that all facets of an issue are debated and considered.

Mr. Brabant asked Dr. Cassella for his observations on the value of the civil service system. Dr. Cassella said he believed in the merit system principle. He said however he thought there was too much protection in civil service, and that these protective procedures should be made more flexible.

Mr. Bishop asked if protection were taken away, would not the executives become very cautious in making decisions for fear they could be eliminated? Dr. Cassella said that at the top positions security and tenure are not usually an important factor in whether a person accepts the position. He recommended, however, that when a top executive in the County is replaced, he should be allowed to return to the level from which he was promoted.

Dr. Bollens thanked Dr. Cassella for his remarks and his assistance to the committee in its charter study.

Mr. Mitchell adjourned the meeting at 11:30 a.m.