



DIGEST

Around and About

THE BOARD of Supervisors, disturbed at the prospect of some 400 flights of helicopters and short-takeoff planes roaring low each day over County buildings in Civic Center, has asked the L. A. city department of airports to think again about the flight patterns planned for a downtown "metroport." The port, located east of Union station, would be used for shuttling passengers to and from L. A. International airport. At present the project is in the planning-and-talk stage. The Supervisors urged that the shuttling aircraft use a north-south approach along the Los Angeles river. City officials are reported reluctant because this approach would require costly removal of high-tension lines north of the proposed metroport.

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ERCOM ORDERS BIG ELECTIONS

THREE BIG elections involving more than 8,700 County hospital and custodial employees will be held — probably late this summer — to decide if they want County Employees union Local 434 and Los Angeles County Employees association to represent them in negotiating for pay and working conditions.

The employee relations commission (ERCOM) ended three months of hearings and discussion July 10 by declaring that the three units proposed by Local 434 and LACEA are appropriate. The commission directed the two organizations to confer with County management and ERCOM executive secretary Leslie Rothenberg in setting dates for the secret elections.

Only Local 434 will appear on the ballot for the two hospital worker units — one of 2,060 "institutional-support services" employees, the other of 4,400 "paramedical-technical" employees.

Local 434 and a new LACEA Local 601 will appear as a joint council on the ballot for the unit of 2,272 custodians.

All ballots will have a space to vote for no representative.

The "institutional-support services" unit includes 954 cooks, food service workers, waitresses, bakers and butchers; 484 institutional helpers and laborers; 395 laundry room workers; 59 pharmacy helpers; 39 lab attendants; 25 tram operators; 22 darkroom workers; and others.

The "paramedical technical" unit consists of 148 x-ray technicians;

125 medical technicians; 836 vocational nurses; 135 ambulance workers; 3,030 attendants; and others.

In the custodial unit are 2,000 custodians, 100 elevator operators, 33 window washers, 117 housekeepers, and 25 personal property workers.

ERCOM also ordered that an election date be selected for a unit of nearly 200 stationary engineers, dam operators and plant operators in hospitals, flood control and mechanical departments. The unit was proposed by Operating Engineers Local 501, which will appear on the ballot.

The Pace Picks Up

THE EMPLOYEE relations commission appeared to be emerging this week from the avalanche of organizing petitions that once threatened to bury it. ERCOM executive secretary Leslie Rothenberg told *The DIGEST* he believes the entire present backlog of petitions will have disappeared by next December and that many employee representation units will be able to begin negotiating with County management as to pay and working conditions.

The picture was far different only two months ago.

ERCOM had begun in mid-January accepting petitions from employee associations and unions to form units. A month later 51 petitions had been filed, and ERCOM had been able to complete its public hearings on only the first one.

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Around and About

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THE 300 or so County employees who serve on juries each year will have something extra to show for it starting this month. Director of personnel Gordon Nesvig has informed all departments that henceforth those who go on jury duty shall be permitted to keep the court-paid mileage fees of 15 cents a mile, one way, from the juror's home. Previously the mileage money along with the \$5 a day jury compensation was credited to the County, which in turn paid each employee his regular salary while serving on a jury. The new policy will mean an extra \$25 to \$35 in the pocket of the average employee-juror — or a total of around \$10,000 a year.

A SCHOOL for County custodians, designed to give them more chance for job advancement, will open next Monday (July 21). The twenty men selected for the first class will attend training sessions four hours a day for a month. The department's senior foremen will pick candidates for subsequent classes. Graduates of the program later will help train other custodial employees. Senior custodian Willie Matthews, a certificated teacher in L. A. city schools adult classes, will run the training effort. The department intends to follow up the training program by asking the department of personnel to create a new classification of custodian leadman with higher pay.

PACE PICKS UP

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Another month passed, and by March 25 a total of 83 petitions had been filed. ERCOM had completed hearings on seven of them and had yet to hold its first employee representation election. There were predictions that the lengthy ERCOM hearings would stretch into the 1970s.

At this point, however, the tide began to turn in ERCOM's favor, although it was hard to see them.

For one thing, the flood of incoming petitions began to dry up. During the six weeks following March 25 only ten new petitions were filed. The last one, No. 92, came into the ERCOM office May 7, and there has been none since.

More importantly, the representatives of employee organizations and County management, and the commissioners themselves, began learning how to use the new machinery that had been created for the first time by the employee relations ordinance passed last September but frozen into inactivity by a court suit until mid-January.

A third factor was a "palace revolution" within the Los Angeles County employees association which replaced an ordinance-resisting regime with officers who said they wanted to make the employee relations ordinance work.

Amid all these factors, the backlog of petitions and hearings began to dwindle.

ERCOM in many cases directed that petitions of organizations competing for overlapping groups of employees be considered in consolidated hearings.

Some unions and associations started withdrawing petitions, generally for technical reasons, or because the petition involved a department where the petitioner apparently had little chance of winning an election, or for some other motive.

thirty petitions had been withdrawn.

Eleven petitions had been disposed of by elections already held or pending.

ERCOM had ruled against two petitions (No. 3 for 75 sewer maintenance men and No. 6 for 196 x-ray technicians) on grounds that the proposed units were too small, or they would split civil service classifications of employees, something County management strongly opposes.

Thus, as of this week, the commission still faced 49 active petitions on which it must rule whether the sought-for units are appropriate groupings of County employees for negotiating purposes.

Decisions pending on 14

ERCOM has wound up its public hearings on 14 of these 49 petitions, and its decision is pending on whether the requested units are appropriate. This group includes:

No. 11 by Building and Construction Trades council for 2,007 carpenters, electricians and other crafts employees in several departments.

No. 12 by AFSCME for 561 equipment repairmen, maintenance men, garage attendants, locksmiths, millwrights, welders and others in several departments.

No. 26 by LACEA for 276 guards in eight departments.

No. 33 by AFSCME for 805 parks and recreation maintenance employees.

No. 54 by LACEA for about 5,000 maintenance men, truck drivers, garage and parking attendants, and others in road, flood control, mechanical and 24 other departments.

No. 55 by LACEA for 700 foremen and supervisors in hospitals, flood control, parks, mechanical and 24 other departments.

Engineers, architects

Hearings also have been closed and an ERCOM decision is pending on eight petitions involving County

As of last Wednesday (July 16)

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architects, engineers and related technicians. They are:

Petition No. 28 by California Association of Professional Employees (CAPE) for 1,205 technical employees in engineering, road, flood control and eight other departments.

No. 29 by CAPE for 431 supervising technicians in engineering, road, flood control and twelve other departments.

No. 30 by CAPE for 616 engineering and architectural assistants in engineering, road, flood control, real estate management and communications.

No. 31 by CAPE for 674 supervising professional employees in engineering, flood control, real estate management and communications.

No. 72 by LACEA for 703 supervising engineers and architects in engineering. APCD, real estate, health, road, flood and communications.

No. 73 by LACEA for 681 engineers, assistants, chemists and others in engineering, APCD, real estate, parks, road, flood, health and communications.

No. 80 by LACEA for 338 supervising engineers, inspectors, surveyors, planners and technicians in thirteen departments.

No. 81 by LACEA for 1,278 inspectors, engineering employees, artists, planning employees and technicians in 21 departments.

Hearings in progress

Consolidated hearings are in progress on three petitions involving 218 supervising deputy probation officers — No. 32 filed by LACEA, No. 51 filed by AFSCME, and No. 87 by the Supervising Deputy Probation Officers association.

Other hearings in progress are:

No. 21 by California Nurses' association for 2,451 nurses in hospitals, health, mental health, probation and sheriff's departments.

No. 38 by LACEA for 160 librarians in eight departments.

Rothenberg said the commission has scheduled hearings on the remaining thirty petitions so that all probably will be concluded by mid-

November. ERCOM's decisions on nearly all petitions should be forthcoming, he said, before Christmas, and he expects all employee representation elections will be completed by early 1970.

Hearings to come

The hearing schedule for the thirty remaining petitions follows:

July 24 and 25 — Consolidated hearing on five petitions — No. 41 by LACEA for 290 therapists and rehabilitation counselors in hospitals, DPSS and the sheriff's department; No. 45 by the Health Department Physicians association for 77 physicians; No. 64 by LACEA for 462 therapists, psychologists, pharmacists, dentists, dietitians and others in hospitals, health, DPSS, probation, sheriff's, veterinarian and mental health departments; No. 65 by LACEA for 262 supervisors among physicians, pharmacists, therapists and others in hospitals, personnel, DPSS and mental health departments; and No. 68 by the Association of Los Angeles County Dental Personnel for 120 dentists, assistants and technicians in five departments.

July 31 — Consolidated hearing for three petitions from LACEA — No. 22 for 152 investigators in the D-A's and public defender's offices, No. 70 for 803 sheriff's sergeants and lieutenants, No. 71 for 3,000 sheriff deputies and senior sheriffs — and two petitions from the Los Angeles County Professional Peace Officers association — No. 82 for 3,463 deputy sheriffs, marshals and D-A investigators I, and No. 83 for 1,177 supervising officers in the sheriff, marshal and D-A departments.

August schedule

August 1 — No. 49 by AFSCME for 69 agricultural inspectors and pest control employees.

August 7 — No. 52 by CAPE for 46 administrative engineering employees in eight departments.

August 8 — No. 58 by the Health Department Public Health Investigators association for 69 public health investigators.

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Around and About

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WILLIAM PRATER officially was named the new director of building services last Tuesday morning (July 15) as the Board of Supervisors unanimously chose him to succeed retired Robert Hardon. Prater was number one on a civil service promotional list. The job pays \$16,560 to \$20,628 a year. Prater, now 58, began working for the County in 1934 as an \$85-a-month janitor. Thereafter he was a window washer, foreman, and for the past 16 years was Hardon's assistant.

THREE PERSONNEL department analysts became "employment advisors" last Monday (July 14). As such they are available to counsel both present and former employees (especially those demoted or laid off through no fault of their own) as to reinstatements, transfers, reassignments and their rights on reemployment lists. Elizabeth Michael is advisor for social work, probation, administrative and related classes. Keith Ingersoll is handling employees in the crafts, mechanical, law enforcement, hospital and custodial areas. Carolyn Nicholson is advisor for clerical, accounting, data processing and similar classes. Further information is available in rooms 493 and 495, Hall of Administration — by telephone at 625-3611 extension 65492.

THE PACE PICKS UP *(Continued from page 3)*

August 14 — No. 59 by the Public Health Engineering association for seven industrial hygienists and a chemical engineer in the health department.

August 21 — No. 62 by LACEA for 160 supervising medical technicians, chief sanitarians and others in hospitals, DPSS, coroner, sheriff's, health and personnel departments — and two petitions by the Los Angeles County Health Department Public Health Sanitarians — No. 84 for 274 sanitarians, including nine hospital investigators; and No. 85 for 42 supervising sanitarians.

September

September 11 — Consolidated hearing on five petitions — No. 57 by Social Workers Union local 535 for 6,030 social workers, eligibility workers and others in DPSS and adoptions; No. 75 by LACEA for 4,910 social workers, eligibility workers, investigators and others in DPSS, hospitals and seven other departments; No. 76 by LACEA for 697 medical and psychiatric social workers, child welfare workers and others in DPSS and nine other de-

partments; No. 89 by County Employees Union local 434 for 410 medical case workers, medical social workers in the hospitals, DPSS, health and mental health departments, and No. 92 by the Association of Psychiatric Social Workers of Los Angeles County for 135 psychiatric social workers in hospitals and the mental health department

September 19 — Consolidated hearing on two LACEA petitions — No. 77 for 229 supervising professional social and welfare employees in DPSS, hospitals, health, mental health, probation, adoptions and community services departments; and No. 78 for 1,017 supervising social service and medical case workers and others in DPSS, hospitals, health and veterans affairs departments.

October

October 10 — No. 69 by the California Property Consultants association for 60 property investigators in DPSS.

October 17 — No. 74 by LACEA for 1,410 supervising clerical and administrative employees in nearly all departments.

October 24 — No. 79 by LACEA for 12,319 clerical and office machine workers, appraisers, storekeepers, telephone operators, EDP employees, inspectors, library assistants, weight inspectors, museum employees, golf starters and others in all County departments.

October 31 — No. 86 by the Los Angeles County Lifeguard association for 216 permanent and recurrent lifeguards.

November

November 7 — No. 90 by AFSCME for 214 housekeepers, cooks, food service workers and others, all in the probation department.

November 14 — No. 91 by the bookbinders local 43 (AFL-CIO) for 20 bindery workers in purchasing and stores.

Already certified

ERCOM has certified three employee organizations as negotiating representatives following secret ballot elections. They are AFSCME to represent 169 superior court clerks (petition No. 1); AFSCME to represent some 2,000 probation officers (petitions No. 4, 23, 47 and 50); and Local 434 to represent 57 pharmacists.

A mail-ballot election is presently under way among 2,000 firemen (petition No. 10 by Firefighters Local 1014).

Election dates pending

The commission is about to set dates for elections affecting four petitions. They include:

Petition No. 25 by LACEA for 262 sheriff's corrections officers.

No. 67 by LACEA for 460 deputy D-As, public defenders and law clerks.

No. 9 by Operating Engineers local 501 for more than 200 stationary engineers, dam operators and plant operators in hospitals, flood control and mechanical departments.

No. 8 by County Employees Union local 434 and LACEA — three separate units among 8,700 hospitals and custodial employees (see separate story on page 1).

Letters

To The DIGEST:

Concerning the story about County employees retirement fund in the last DIGEST — I object!!

The fund should be voluntary.

Income tax is paid yearly for money never in employees' hands.

I have children to support and need my \$61 a month now, not when I can't walk.

The interest rate on use of my money is too low. . .

I am a social worker I, not eligible for AID, food stamps, etc. and I can't support myself and children under this system.

PATRICIA FLESHMAN

County of Los Angeles

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