



DIGEST

Around and About

AUDITOR-CONTROLLER Mark Bloodgood says he expects 20,500 Blue Cross and Blue Shield health plan subscribers will receive their refund checks by June 15. The refunds, ranging from \$2.10 to \$14.55, are the result of the federal wage-price freeze. Bloodgood said he is scheduled to receive the necessary computer tapes from the data processing department next Monday and hand writing of the 20,500 checks will take about another six weeks.

THE COUNTY has asked the federal communications commission to allot more radio frequencies so the County can expand its paramedic rescue program into all 27 fire districts. Under the present program, specially trained firemen in four stations respond to calls on heart attack and accident victims, administer first-stage treatment at the scene, and

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Volume 5 Number 5

CAO Proposes Tax-Cut Budget

CAO ARTHUR WILL proposed a hold-the-line budget to the Board of Supervisors last Tuesday (April 25) which, thanks largely to lower spending for welfare, would result in the first tax rate decrease in six years.

Will's 1972-73 budget recommendations call for a total general fund outlay of \$2.28 billion, which is 7 percent (\$173 million) less than in the current year's budget.

The CAO told the Board that declines in the welfare caseload during the past year make possible a net saving of \$47 million to the general fund in 1972-73, but he warned that the caseload is "volatile" and might require a second look if welfare spending turns upward in coming months.

Will also pointed out that the bill for the County's justice system

(courts, law enforcement) and for County health services will rise sharply in the coming year, more than offsetting the projected savings from welfare.

His budget showed a net rise of the County's cost (after deducting state aid and other outside revenue) of \$17 million, or 9 per cent, for the justice group and nearly \$42 million, or 28 per cent, for the hospitals. Will said that more than half of the added hospital costs is the result of 1971 changes in state law making many persons ineligible for Medi-Cal health care, so that the County must take care of them at its own expense.

As a result of the shift away from welfare spending, it will represent only half of the general fund outgo in 1972-73, compared with 58

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Nesvig to Unveil Pay Package May 5

DIRECTOR OF PERSONNEL Gordon Nesvig will present his 1972-73 salary recommendations to the Board of Supervisors next Friday (May 5).

Nesvig said his document will include agreements that have been negotiated and signed with employee representation units. Nesvig said agreements that are signed after May 5 but before the Board of Supervisors' salary hearings conclude in late May also will be recommended to the Board to be implemented on July 1, when the County's new fiscal year begins.

The Board is scheduled to open its salary hearings May 16. It must adopt a salary ordinance by May 31 if it is to go into effect on July 1.

As of press time (April 28), Nesvig said he had reached tentative agreements with 18 units representing 35,192 County employees.

The agreements, after being signed by County management and the negotiating employee organization, become effective only after they are approved by the Board of Supervisors.

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accompany the patients in ambulances to hospitals, following radioed instructions from medical personnel at Harbor General and St. Francis hospitals. The Board of Supervisors already has voted to expand the program to four more fire rescue units by June 20 when new teams will have completed their training.

THE OLIVE View hospital staff, scattered a year ago after the walls came tumbling down in the Feb. 9 earthquake, has begun reassembling as a work force in the County's recently acquired Midvalley hospital at Van Nuys boulevard and Saticoy avenue in San Fernando valley. Administrator Alvin Karp reported high morale among the 105 former staffers who had been recalled to Midvalley as of this week. Eventually, he said, another 500 will be employed at the hospital and nearby clinic and office buildings. Among the pre-earthquake staff of 1,200, Karp said 185 are still working at other County hospitals and nearly 500 are employed at four outpatient clinics in the valley and at facilities remaining at the Olive View complex.

COUNTY EMPLOYEES have pledged \$1.3 million to the AID charity for the coming year, a figure that drew a vote of commendation from the Board of Supervisors. The amount pledged is \$50,000 more than in 1971-72. Treasurer Harold Ostly, who coordinated the drive, said County pledges have shown a steady climb for the past 15 years.

THE CIVIL service commission, in accord with a new state law, has opened jobs as deputized clerks (mostly in the municipal courts and County clerk's office) to persons 18 years of age. The former minimum age for deputizing was 21.

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percent in this year's budget, Will said.

All other County departments will account for a less than 6 percent increase over their 1971-72 budgets, according to the proposed budget.

While the DPSS payroll would be nearly 3,000 less than that budgeted for 1971-72, a dozen other County departments would show substantial increases.

Among the justice group, the sheriff would be authorized to add 197 employees; the district attorney, 83; superior court, 42; public defender, 41; and County clerk, 31.

The hospitals staffs would be enlarged by 768.

Other departments with added

Retirements

THE MAN-wife team of Les and Frances Franck, who retired from the purchasing and stores department March 24, have received a scroll from the Board of Supervisors for long and dedicated service. Between them they served 69 years—35 for him, 34 for her.

Others who are retiring with more than 30 years service include Richard Auriemma, health department; Homer Halsey and Robert Parsons, fire; Boyce Magness, marshal; Virginia Hostutler, Rancho Los Amigos hospital; Eunice Norman and Bubbles Pryor, DPSS; and Helen Joyce Robinson, Harbor General Hospital.

The retirement board has received word of the death in Los Angeles of Harry McEndree, age 97, who was the second person to retire under the County system back in January 1938. The former tax collector employee then was drawing a retirement allowance of \$95 a month. Cost-of-living increases over the years had brought the allowance up to \$217 at the time of his death.

employees would be mechanical, 121; data processing, 211; fire, 43; parks, 90; and senior citizens affairs, 30. (The table on pages 3 and 4 gives a full department-by-department breakdown of positions and net appropriations.)

The CAO's budget showed a net decrease of 974 positions in general fund departments, compared with the 1971-72 budget, and a net increase of 98 budgeted positions in the County special districts and funds.

Will recommended higher budgets than last year for 86 categories of County spending, lower budgets for 47, and about the same expenditures for eight.

HEALTH SERVICES. The CAO said the rise in health services costs is mainly accounted for by the need to staff new facilities, notably Martin Luther King, Jr., hospital, by increased cost of medical supplies, the need to upgrade older County hospitals to meet licensing and accreditation standards, and to expand the methadone maintenance program.

JUSTICE SYSTEM. Will said that the \$21.7 million increase in spending for the justice system departments "represents a very serious budget problem for County taxpayers inasmuch as, of the three major functional areas of County government, this service receives the least amount of revenue from the state and federal governments for shared or mandated programs . . . Most additions are at 100 percent County cost."

Will said the needs for added manpower are arising from increases in major crime, higher court expense caused by changing laws and court decisions, funding of the recent addition of 12 judges to the superior court, and funding of the release-on-own-recognizance program.

He noted that probation costs

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have declined because changes in state law now result in fewer juveniles entering County institutions.

MAINTENANCE. Will pointed out that the building services, mechanical, communications, and other County service departments will have an increased burden in 1972-73 with the addition of 1.4 million square feet of new office space, including the criminal court and traffic court buildings, and 15 other County facilities that will open this year.

PAPER WORK. Will's letter to the Supervisors said: "A major concern in development of this budget involves the simple matter of paper work required throughout the administrative structure and a determination on our part to launch an all-out attack on this ever increasing burden. Increases this year of \$6.4 million for data processing services, increases over a period of years in each department's clerical and office structure, required support for federal and state partnership programs, to name a few, all combine to create a massive burden of both manual and automated clerical operations throughout the entire organization."

RISING COSTS. Will advised the Board his office is digging into the question of the unit cost of services the County provides. "A paradox appears to exist," Will said, "where costs are continuing to rise while population, birth rate, and other gross measures of need for County government services appear to be stabilizing."

Will said he will file a separate report later on the results of his office's study.

TAX RATE. Will estimated that, if assessor Philip Watson comes in this summer with a tax roll showing a rise of 3 percent in the value of taxable property in the County,

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Department by Department

THE TABLE below shows the net appropriations and number of positions in the 1972-73 County budget that CAO Arthur Will recommended to the Board of Supervisors last Tuesday (April 25). The amounts shown are before deducting revenue that departments receive from non-County sources, such as federal and state aid to welfare, hospitals, mental health, probation, and others. An asterisk * indicates a special district or special County funds, rather than a County general fund department. Figures have been rounded for easier reading.

DEPARTMENT	FUNDS (Mil = millions)	POSITIONS
Public Social Services	\$1,139 mil	14,543
Health Services		
Hospitals	\$ 272 mil	20,399
Health	\$ 32.8 mil	2,451
Mental Health	\$ 37.9 mil	548
Veterinarian	\$ 406,000	24
Sheriff	\$ 112 mil	7,009
*Flood Control	\$ 106.1 mil	1,858
*Road	\$ 82.9 mil	2,344
Fire and *Fire Protection Districts	\$ 67.3 mil	2,230
Probation	\$ 53 mil	4,179
Municipal Courts and Marshal	\$ 26.5 mil	1,920
Assessor	\$ 21.5 mil	1,635
Mechanical	\$ 20.2 mil	1,884
Superior Court	\$ 19 mil	819
District Attorney	\$ 18.1 mil	1,157
Communications	\$ 16.8 mil	614
*Library	\$ 16.3 mil	930
Parks	\$ 16.1 mil	1,638
Engineer	\$ 15.9 mil	1,466
Building Services	\$ 11.8 mil	1,649
Public Defender	\$ 10.6 mil	555

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Department by Department

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DEPARTMENT	FUNDS (Mil = millions)	POSITIONS
County Clerk	\$ 9.6 mil	893
Registrar-Recorder	\$ 9.5 mil	586
Auditor-Controller	\$ 8.3 mil	545
Personnel	\$ 6.3 mil	492
Air Pollution Control District	\$ 5.9 mil	327
Adoptions	\$ 5 mil	412
Treasurer-Tax Collector	\$ 4.3 mil	312
Data Processing	\$ 4.1 mil	1,063
Music and Performing Arts	\$ 3.9 mil	5
County Counsel	\$ 3.4 mil	204
Regional Planning	\$ 3.2 mil	185
Urban Affairs	\$ 3.1 mil	188
Purchasing and Stores	\$ 2.9 mil	319
Board of Supervisors	\$ 2.6 mil	150
Museum of Art	\$ 2.5 mil	180
Museum of Natural History	\$ 2.1 mil	167
Medical Examiner-Coroner	\$ 2.1 mil	132
Beaches	\$ 2.1 mil	164
Arboreta	\$ 1.6 mil	148
Animal Control	\$ 1.4 mil	139
Real Estate Management	\$ 1 mil	178
Agricultural Commissioner	\$ 1.2 mil	84
Community Services	\$ 944,000	95
Weights and Measures	\$ 940,000	71
Human Relations	\$ 788,000	53
Otis Art Institute	\$ 600,000	29
Senior Citizens' Affairs	\$ 572,000	57
Veterans' Affairs	\$ 292,000	27
Justice Courts	\$ 141,000	13
Employee Relations Commission	\$ 114,000	4
Public Welfare Commission	\$ 115,000	5
Farm Advisor	\$ 99,000	10

BUDGET

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Will's proposed budget would result in a decrease of 17 cents per \$100 of assessed valuation in the County general fund tax rate.

The last decrease of such size occurred in 1956-57 when the rate dropped 18 cents. Thereafter, the tax rate has climbed steadily nearly every year, zooming \$1.18 in 1970-71 and nearly 35 cents for the current year.

There were three years when the rate showed slight decreases—2.6 cents in 1966-67, less than half a cent in 1961-62, and 2.6 cents in 1960-61.

Election Day Work

REGISTRAR-RECORDER James Allison says he has primary election day jobs June 6 for County employees who want to work the holiday at a precinct polling place.

The pay is \$25 a day for an inspector, \$20 a day for a judge or clerk. Those interested may apply in writing to: "Registrar-Recorder, 808 North Spring street, Los Angeles 90012—Attention, Polls Division." Applicants should include their home address and telephone number, and office telephone—and should indicate if they will accept a location outside their home areas.

Allison said employees also may offer their homes for use as polling places at a rental of \$25 per day.

County of Los Angeles

DIGEST

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