County of Los Angeles

DIGEST

Around and About

THREE YEARS ago the department of personnel stopped sending recruiters to college campuses to find civil engineers. With a recession and aerospace cutbacks, plenty of engineers were available. Next week the recruiters will start hitting campuses again around the U. S. Their goal: to fill 80 vacancies reported by the road, flood control, and engineering departments.

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THE MUSEUM of Natural History announces that its parking lot on Exposition boulevard is out of commission until mid-1976, while a contractor adds two new wings to the building. A substitute lot lies across Menlo avenue.

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AT FIRST the letter to Dennis Kelly, supervising deputy probation officer, sounded like great news. "Dear Dennis, I'm giving you a raise for 85% because you've been working your tail off. I hope you are happy about this. . . Your boss, Kilpatrick." Alas, the letter came, not from chief probation officer Kenneth Kirkpatrick, but from Dennis' 9-year-old son, Mark.

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Budget-Cutting Group Starts Work

A HIGH-level County management committee has begun meeting each week to determine how County spending might be cut enough to permit a 49-cent drop in the property tax rate next year.

The Board of Supervisors (Oct. 15) ordered the Special Budget Advisory Committee (SBAC) be established with the goal of reducing the tax rate from this year's $4.35 per $100 of assessed value back to the $3.86 rate of 1973-74.

The SBAC includes representatives from each of the five Supervisors, the CAO, the director of personnel, the auditor-controller, and the Management Council executive board.

Acting CAO Harry Hufford informed the Supervisors that to attain the 49-cent tax cut would mean lopping more than $100 million from this year's net County spending of $999.5 million ("net" refers to costs for which the County receives no outside revenue and so must pay from property taxes).

In addition, Hufford estimated the County will need $62 million more to meet inflation-caused increases and to replace the one-time-only surplus saving of $31.6 million made in this year's budget.

This $162 million total, Hufford indicated, would have to come from deep slashes in spending by all County departments. He pointed out that while some County services exist at the discretion of the Board of Supervisors, many major services are mandated by state law and the Board has only limited freedom to curtail them.

The CAO has sent each department head a "target" figure of how much the net County cost of his department must be reduced to reach the Board's 49-cent tax cut. These target figures are about 15 percent below this year's net County costs.

Hufford said he expects by Dec. 1 to have from each department head a report showing what services he might curtail in 1975-76 to reach the target figure. Each department's possible curtailments will be listed in order of priority.

These reports the SBAC group will evaluate before sending to the Board of Supervisors in January.

Hufford said he hopes the Board, after studying the SBAC's work, will arrive by Feb. 1 at a policy to guide preparation of the 1975-76 County budget.

Leave for Exams

DIRECTOR OF personnel Gordon Nesvig has sent all department heads a memo clarifying a long-standing policy that County employees may have paid leave from their jobs to take civil service examinations.

Nesvig said the County salary ordinance, section 240(2), permits any County or special district employee "including temporary, hourly, and daily" to receive paid time off to participate in tests for positions in any County department, special district, or court.

(Continued on page 2)

Holidays for 1975

ELEVEN HOLIDAYS, including five three-day weekends, await County employees in 1975.

The holidays are:

New Year's day, Jan. 1 (Wednesday).

Lincoln's birthday, Feb. 12 (Wednesday)

Washington's birthday, Feb. 17 (always the third Monday in February.

Memorial day, May 26 (always the last Monday in May).

Independence day, July 4 (Friday)

Labor day, Sept. 1 (always the first Monday in September).

Admission day, Sept. 9 (Tuesday)

Columbus day, Oct. 13 (always the second Monday in October)

Veterans day, Nov. 11 (Tuesday)

Thanksgiving day, Nov. 27 (always the fourth Thursday in November).

Christmas day, Dec. 25 (Thursday).

In addition to these holidays, County employees will receive the customary three hours off Good Friday, March 28.

Boyd Appointed

ROBERT W. Boyd will take over as executive director of the County human relations commission Nov. 12, a post from which Herbert Carter resigned in August 1973 to run for Los Angeles city council. Since then the job has been filled consecutively by interim directors Julius Klein and David Torres.

Boyd, 55, lives in Compton, where he is administrator of secondary schools for the Compton district. He was a teacher and administrator with the Washington D.C. schools from 1941 to 1969 and a member of the Washington human relations commission.

He holds a master's degree in clinical psychology from Catholic University.

Veterans Day Mix-up

CONFUSION HAS been widespread in recent weeks over whether the Veterans day holiday falls this year on Nov. 11, the correct date, or on Oct. 28, as it appears on most calendars.

The explanation:

In September 1973, after many 1974 calendars had been printed, Governor Reagan signed a state law reestablishing Nov. 11 as Veterans day, starting in 1974.

The law provides that when Nov. 11 falls on a Saturday or Sunday, the adjoining Friday or Monday shall be a holiday.

EXAM LEAVE

(Continued from page 1)

Paid leave also is allowed for certain exam-connected activities, such as:

- Filing a job application in person, if that is required in the official test bulletin
- Appearing for a job placement interview if the applicant's name is on the eligible list
- Inspecting examination scoring keys, answer sheets, or rating standards
- Appealing the conduct or results of an examination at a civil service commission hearing.

Nesvig said the employee is entitled to reasonable travel time to engage in these activities.

Paid leave is not available, however, for job interviews to obtain transfers or for absences to seek information about possible job openings.

Nesvig pointed out that section 240(2) applies only to an employee's normal working hours. For example, if an employee takes an examination on his regular day off or while on vacation, he may not be paid for that time.

Audits Beginning

MANAGEMENT AUDITS of seven departments, including a majority of County employees, are under way or soon will begin.

Teams, each composed of three to seven specialists from the CAO, personnel, and auditor-controller departments, are looking into operations of the sheriff, public defender, urban affairs, and human relations departments, as well as the plan-checking section of the County engineer.

The inquiries into efficiency of each department's operations are expected to take three to six months.

The Board of Supervisors also authorized hiring outside consultant firms to audit DPSS and health services. These massive studies will begin next February or March and will require about a year to complete. A similar outside audit will be made into all County ambulance operations.

A managment audit of the probation department, prepared by director of personnel Gordon Nesvig and a multi-department task force, has been submitted to the Board of Supervisors.

Court Prayer Breakfast

SUPERIOR COURT will hold its annual Thanksgiving prayer breakfast at 6:30 a.m. Nov. 27. Any County employee may order a $2 ticket by telephoning 974-6101 or 974-5411 or by going to room 203 or 428B at the County Courthouse.

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