



# DIGEST

## Around and About

The County's newest department — consumer affairs — in operation less than six weeks, is settling into its home in room B-96, Hall of Administration. The staff of 22 is already coping with 150 to 200 cases of aggrieved consumers each week (complaint phone is 974-9751).

The response came fast and heavy to registrar-recorder Leonard Panish's announcement that he could hire 1,150 County employees to handle primary election returns June 8. More than 2,000 offered to staff the tally center from 6 p.m. until the wee hours at \$4.30 an hour. Those who sleep in the next day will do so on their own time.

The Board of Supervisors has told CAO Harry Hufford to investigate whether the County should contract with private institutions to care for some of its long-term patients, now bedded mostly at Rancho Los Amigos hospital. County costs range from \$87 a day for the chronically ill to \$229 a day for those on respirators. Early studies indicate a possible cost of \$30 to \$35 a day at private facilities.

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## CAO'S BUDGET IS UNHAPPY READING

CAO HARRY Hufford, its author, calls it "the budget that will please no one," an inch-thick document that recommends a record County spending program of nearly \$3.2 billion, a rise in the County property tax rate to its legal ceiling, and stiff reductions in the operations of most County departments.

The CAO's proposed 1976-77 budget, now in the hands of the Board of Supervisors, awaits public hearings that start June 9, to be followed by possible Board changes before it adopts the budget to go into effect July 1.

Hufford's recommended total of \$3.188 billion for the County general and special funds and special districts is \$120 million more than the current year's budget and sends the property tax rate up 41 cents to \$4.93 per \$100 of assessed valuation, the maximum permitted under state law (senate bill 90). Despite its record size, the budget pinches off positions in most County departments.

"This situation has been created largely by external problems — state and federal financing cutbacks, inflation, and the decay of urban centers which increases demand for services and reduces the availability of tax funds," Hufford told the Board.

### Layoffs

The proposed budget calls for the layoff of 18 more flood control construction inspectors and 120 road department construction engineers, surveyors, and designers.

Another 2,462 in general fund departments are tabbed for possible layoff, but Hufford proposed avoiding their actual dismissal by

including a \$15 million "anti-layoff" reserve. If the Board of Supervisors keeps this reserve in the final budget, it would finance paychecks for the 2,462 until the reduction is achieved through attrition by retirements and resignations. Their existing positions, however, would disappear from the budget.

These potential layoffs are distributed among 15 departments:

Health services, 1,700. Sheriff, 260. DPSS, 188. Probation, 130. Parks, 55. Building services, 30. Personnel, 22. Superior court, 18. Assessor, 17. District attorney, 12. Communications, 12. Community development, 10. Museum of natural history, 4. Weights and measures, 3. Agricultural commissioner, 1.

Biggest savings in health services (\$9.3 million) would come from continuing the freeze on non-acute positions in all hospitals; \$8 million by returning to the traditional funding ratio for mental health (90 percent from state Short-Doyle funds, 10 percent from County funds); ending inpatient services at Long Beach hospital (\$1.4 million), closing El Cerrito center and transferring the long-term chronic and tuberculosis patients from Mira Loma hospital (\$1 million), halting the methadone program (\$1.4 million), and eliminating the minibus and "community outreach" services at County-USC Medical Center and King hospital, and the home care and Med-Ocho programs at the Medical Center (\$1.6 million).

Other casualties of the money squeeze would be conciliation court counseling and DPSS' school

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## Floating Day off Now Available

STARTING TODAY (May 14), all monthly County employees are eligible for a "floating" holiday to be taken off, with approval of the employee's department head, any time between now and Jan. 1, 1978.

The holiday replaces, on a one-time-only basis, the June 8 primary election day, which the legislature cancelled as a statewide holiday for public employees (along with the November general election day and all future elections).

Under its 1975-76 memorandum of understanding with the employee organizations joint council, the County agreed to provide "an equivalent compensating adjustment" for the June 8 holiday,

### Longtimers Are Retiring

THE BOARD of retirement has announced the departure of the following long-time County employees:

With 35 to 40 years' service — Evan Lewis, district attorney; June Ramsey, parks; Albert Rico, sheriff; Charlton Barksdale and Fred Dixon, probation; and Richard Davis, road.

With 30 to 35 years' service — Thomas Corbett, John Gonzales, and John Miedecke, sheriff; Joe Segers, fire; William Chappelow, McKinley Franklin, Angela Garcia, Johnnie Goldsmith, Ocie Locklear, Wayne Mathias, Robert Williams, and Maple Willis, health services. Wayne Mathias, Robert Williams, and Maple Willis, health services; Everitt Boyd, Louis DeBus, and John Linker, probation; Earl Bell, Frank O'Hagan, and Fred Wendler, road; James Polley, floor control; Lawrence Rose, district attorney; Harold Needham, coroner; Robert Wells, engineer; Albert Nichols, parks; Willa Fox, DPSS; and Leon Williamson, facilities.

### New Union for Sheriffs

DEPUTY SHERIFFS and D-A investigators of Unit 611 have chosen a new union to negotiate with the County. By a 2,219 to 816 majority they voted to oust the Professional Peace Officers (PPOA) and retain the Association of Los Angeles County Deputy Sheriffs (ALADS).

should the legislature eliminate it.

The Board of Supervisors ordinance (April 13) approving the floating holiday provides that if an employee has not used the time off by Oct. 1, 1977, his department head will schedule the holiday for him prior to Jan. 1, 1978.

### Charter Changes Face Vote

TWO PROPOSED County charter amendments will appear as propositions A and B on the June 8 primary ballot.

The charter long has required that anyone running for Supervisor must have lived in the district for a year. Courts now have held this requirement to be unconstitutionally long. Proposition A would cut the residency period to 30 days, the longest residency requirement now legally allowed.

Under proposition B, County department heads appointed in the future would be outside civil service. A department head who before appointment had held a civil service job could, if removed, return to civil service status (unless removed for serious malfeasance or moral dereliction).

Both propositions require a simple majority for approval.

### E & E Warns on Spending

THE CITIZENS economy and efficiency commission submitted to the Board of Supervisors last Tuesday (May 11) a 40-page report warning that quick action is needed to prevent County spending from out-running revenues.

As stopgap measures, the commission recommended that the Board give CAO Harry Hufford direct supervision of seven internal services departments — building services, communications, data processing, facilities, mechanical, personnel, and purchasing — and that the Board establish a "compensation review committee" including the CAO, auditor-controller, and three citizens appointed by the Board. The committee would scrutinize County pay scales and advise the Board whether they are "consistent with reasonable standards of personnel practice."

dropout, jobs placement, and family homemaker programs, along with cuts in personnel recruiting, the assessor's operations analysis, the D-A's investigation bureau, and the maintenance of County parks, buildings, and communications systems.

Hufford said that, with curtailments unavoidable, he gave highest priority to maintaining programs that provide direct services to the public.

The CAO's budget did not continue the County subsidies to community groups (\$12 million) and to the rapid transit district (\$42 million would be required to maintain the 25-cent fare).

## Letters

TO THE DIGEST:

Here's a word for County employees who expect to be away on vacation or some other type of leave when applications open for a promotional exam in which they are interested.

Cover yourself by filling out the application form in advance and give the completed form to a co-worker, friend, or relative who will be in town when the exam opens. Ask this person to file the application for you at the proper time.

Application forms are available from your department's personnel officer or from the department of personnel, room 493, Hall of Administration.

C. NAVARETTE

Chief, Recruitment Division  
Department of Personnel

County of Los Angeles

**DIGEST**

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