



DIGEST

Around and About

A recent department of communications study found County offices spending more than \$3 million a year in U.S. postage — some of it for such things as mailing memos from one building to another in Civic Center, and even mailing messages from one floor in the Hall of Administration to another. The Board of Supervisors ordered more use of County messenger service and less use of the County's 150 postage meters.

Talks are under way with Long Beach officials after the L-B city council asked the County to consider taking over that city's beaches, just as it did those of Santa Monica and Los Angeles in 1974 and 1975. The County counsel, mechanical, communications, beaches, and four other departments are readying recommendations for the Board of Supervisors.

The consumer affairs department says a County employee — or anyone else — who has a complaint against a product or dealer can get the department's attention by telephoning 974-1452.

The County bicentennial commission invites anybody who wants to march in an 18-mile 4th of July parade from downtown L.A. to Santa Monica to volunteer at 626-5781, extension 308.

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Pay, Health Boosts Recommended

SALARY INCREASES averaging slightly more than 5 percent for most employees, along with an increased County contribution to match rising health plan costs, have been recommended by CAO/personnel director Harry Hufford.

Hufford sent his 1976-77 recommendations to the Board of Supervisors last Monday (June 14). Board action on them is expected next Tuesday (June 22).

The salary increases, to go into effect in July, are contained in memoranda of understanding negotiated with 42 bargaining units in recent months. All have been ratified by the members or are in the final stages of ratification.

The 42 agreements cover more than 64,000 employees — among them 24,000 clerical and office administrative personnel, 9,000 hospital workers and technicians, 3,165 registered nurses, 9,600 welfare workers, 4,500 blue-collar employees, 3,000 custodians, 2,000 fire fighters, 3,100 deputy probation officers, and 1,260 supervisory deputy sheriffs.

At press time, three employee units were still negotiating or were at impasse with the County. These included 4,419 peace officers, 49 public defender investigators, and 130 dentists.

Five units have a salary year beginning Sept. 1. Of these, the building trades unit with 1,550 members has ratified a full agreement. Negotiations continue with the other four units containing 3,300

engineers and engineering technicians.

Hufford also recommended increases averaging 5 percent for the 5,769 employees who do not belong to a bargaining unit.

Health Benefits

Health plans with whom the County contracts for medical and hospital coverage for County employees are scheduled to make their annual rate increases Sept. 1. Hufford, after negotiating an agreement with a coalition of certified employee organizations, recommended that the County increase its contribution to a maximum of \$85.29 a month for an employee with family coverage. This is equal to the Blue Cross family rate. The present maximum contribution, which went into effect June 1, is \$61.36 a month (the present Blue Cross family rate).

Hufford recommended no other changes in fringe benefits.

Layoff Reserve

The CAO said he has heard from several employee organizations, expressing concern over possible layoffs of County workers under pressure of 1976-77 budget cuts. In reply, Hufford said he is reaffirming his budget recommendation that a \$15 million anti-layoff reserve be included in the coming year's budget.

"It is possible, even if the Board retains that reserve," Hufford added, "that layoff of fulltime, permanent employees may occur because

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APCD's Lunche Departing

APCD DIRECTOR Robert Lunche will retire July 1 to become a private consultant in air pollution problems. He has been with the department since 1949.

Other departures announced by the board of retirement include:

35 to 40 years' service — Benjamin Cheney, County clerk; Jeanne Butterfield and Ruby King, health services; Mary Jordan, adoptions.

30 to 35 years' service — Reginald Threadgill and June Stephenson, sheriff; Marvin Bass, parks; Robert Eaby and Vernon Bonner, road; Albert Freedman and Robert Innis, health services; Raymond Nixon and Leonard Mintey, fire; John Lehane, mechanical; Zephyr Gill and Juanita Perry, DPSS; Robert James, flood control; Leonard Johnston, agricultural commissioner; Italo Pene, engineer.

Volunteer Use Encouraged

THE BOARD of Supervisors has ordered a step-up in the County's already considerable use of volunteers to augment County services.

The Board order (May 18) noted that in the present fiscal year volunteers are giving almost 1.5 million hours of assistance to 14 County departments, most notably health services which received 569,000 hours of volunteer aid, followed by parks and recreation with 361,000 hours, DPSS with 222,000 hours, Museum of Art with 105,000 hours.

Supervisors Coast, Proposition B Wins

COUNTY VOTERS (June 8) returned Supervisors Kenneth Hahn, Baxter Ward, and James Hayes to office by comfortable margins, elected D-A John Van de Kamp to a four-year term by a narrow majority, and removed future County department heads from civil service.

Hahn received 81 percent of the vote in the second district, Ward 63 percent in the fifth district, and Hayes 59 percent in the fourth.

Van de Kamp got 51.8 percent of votes cast for district attorney. The nearest of his five rivals, Vincent Bugliosi, got 36 percent.

Proposition B, which received 58 percent approval, amends the County charter to remove future department heads from civil service, thus giving the Board of Supervisors

'226' Centrex Grows

THE ROAD department and central juvenile hall received new telephone numbers this month as they joined the "226" Centrex system, which already includes County-USC Medical Center, the chief medical examiner-coroner, and the flood control district.

Callers on the big "974" Centrex system can reach the "226" system by dialing 181 and the last four digits of the Centrex number. Phoners from King hospital dial 7 and the last four digits; from purchasing and stores, 71 and the last four digits. Outsiders must dial 226 and the last four digits.

SALARIES

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of program cancellations, withdrawal of federal and state funding, or possible elimination of mandated services. Should these actions take place, or should the Board delete the layoff reserve fund, management will consult with the unions regarding the impact of such layoff actions, prior to their effective date."

Hufford informed the Board that the recommended salary increases and higher health plan contribution will mean a gross general fund cost of \$62 million, a net general fund cost of \$45.7 million. The cost for special fund departments and special districts will be \$4.9 million.

broader power to hire and fire them. The amendment provides, however, that the Board shall make appointments "from a list received from the civil service commission certifying the candidates as meeting the standards of the position."

Proposition B will go into effect after registrar-recorder Leonard Panish files his official vote count with the California secretary of state, probably before July 1.

Meanwhile, the civil service commission is proceeding with scheduled examinations for six department head jobs — County engineer, directors of DPSS, weights and measures, community development, collections, and affirmative action compliance officer. The County clerk post also is vacant.

Now — a Department for Bill Collecting

A COUNTY department devoted entirely to bill-collecting will go into operation July 1, taking over a job now handled as a sideline by several County departments.

The new department of collections will be housed at 155 West Washington boulevard where its nucleus, more than 300 staffers from health services' bureau of resources and collections, are quartered. They will be joined by approximately 120 others from the auditor-controller's claims and collections, court trustee, and warrant investigations units.

The department is scheduled to relieve the probation, public defender, and PSS departments, as well as the courts, of most of their account-collecting function.

The department also will monitor revenue due the County from federal and state subvention programs and from contract city services.

CAO Harry Hufford estimated the department will take in \$48 million during the 1976-77 fiscal year, or ten times its annual budget.

"County managers tend to regard collecting money as secondary to their program missions," Hufford said. "Most of the departments' energy and resources are allocated to providing services, and very little to collecting for those services."

Civil service examination of candidates for director of the new department is pending.

County of Los Angeles
DIGEST
EDITORIAL BOARD

HARRY HUFFORD, Chief Administrative Officer/Director of Personnel

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LORIN PETERSON, Editor

Editorial Office: Room 526, Hall of Administration, 222 North Grand Avenue, Los Angeles 90012
Telephone 974-2490