

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE



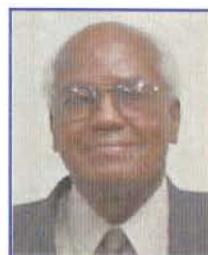
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ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE

Introduction **Page 1**

Board of Supervisors

Televising of Board Meetings **Page 2**

**Electronic Voting Equipment in the
Board of Supervisors' Chambers** **Page 3**

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

Codification of County Ordinances **Page 6**

Records Management **Page 8**

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE

Prior to March 7, 2000 the Grand Jury Administrative Committee had been combined with the Audit/Fiscal Committee. Following the reorganization of various departments approved by the Board of Supervisors on March 7, 2000, the two committees were separated. The departments that remained under the jurisdiction of the Administrative Committee include:

- Board of Supervisors
- Boards, Committees and Commissions
- Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
- County Administrative Office
- County Counsel
- Information Services Department
- Public Information Officer (a new position)
- Superintendent of Schools
- Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO)
(Not governed by the Board of Supervisors,
but an independent regulatory body)

Representatives of this committee attended all Board of Supervisors meetings held during their term of office, and reported on the actions and events that occurred during these meetings to the full Grand Jury membership. The access to the Board of Supervisors' agendas, reports and Fair Statements, available through the Internet, was very helpful to all committee members.

With the exception of LAFCO, all departments and organizations under this committee were studied and investigated with the goal of providing assistance and guidance to improve the operation of same by utilizing the personal and professional background and knowledge of its members.

The investigations completed by the Administrative Committee resulted in the following final reports.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

TELEVISIONING OF BOARD MEETINGS

BACKGROUND

The Grand Jury is aware of local cable television broadcasts of city council meetings throughout the County. The Grand Jurors found the televised meetings to be an effective method of communication between the public and their elected representatives.

Questions were raised by the Grand Jury as to the feasibility of the County Board of Supervisors' meetings being televised to better enlighten their constituents on County matters and to become more knowledgeable on how Board decisions are made.

A survey of California counties with populations comparable to San Bernardino County was undertaken to obtain a sampling of how many counties televise their meetings on local cable channels. Replies were received from 17 counties, with 13 counties responding yes. Those counties were Stanislaus, San Mateo, San Francisco, San Diego, Placer, Marin, Kern, Sonora, Sacramento, Contra Costa, Fresno, Orange and Santa Cruz.

The high percentage (76%) of counties responding yes to the question posed to them, clearly demonstrates the interest that the public has in viewing the proceedings of their elected officials.

FINDINGS

At the present time, San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors' meetings are videotaped. To produce a quality video recording of proceedings in the Board Chamber for distribution to cable television providers, certain enhancements to the existing video equipment are necessary. Four video cameras remotely controlled from the master control room are currently in use. Whenever a switch is made from one camera to another, the VHS recorder continues to record. This switching causes the video picture to be broken up for a split second.

Currently the maximum recording time is two hours of continuous operation. When a Board meeting exceeds two hours, the tape must be ejected, a new tape inserted, and recording resumed. This causes a break in the continuous recording of a meeting.

It is necessary to purchase several pieces of equipment to enable a quality product to be produced. The first is a Time Base Corrector, which will alleviate the breakup of the picture when switching cameras. The second is a Special Effects Generator/Switcher, enabling smooth transitions from camera to camera. Third is a Character Generator, which allows the operator to superimpose names and/or titles on the screen. The last pieces of equipment are two Super VHS Recorders, which will allow continuous recording of the meeting with no "lost" segments.

County technicians indicate the expense of this equipment is moderate, with the total cost of the proposed equipment to be about \$5,000. This equipment would allow a good quality video of the Board of Supervisors' proceedings to be distributed to cable companies through the use of videotapes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 01-01 UPGRADE THE EXISTING TELEVISION EQUIPMENT IN THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS CHAMBERS.
- 01-02 MAKE VIDEOTAPES OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS' MEETINGS AVAILABLE TO THE VARIOUS CABLE TV PROVIDERS AND TO THE PUBLIC THROUGH DIRECT PURCHASE.

ELECTRONIC VOTING EQUIPMENT IN THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS' CHAMBERS

BACKGROUND

Grand Jurors from the Administrative Committee attended the Board of Supervisors' meetings on a rotating basis to observe actions of the Board. They reported the results of their observations to the full Grand Jury. One of

the observations noted was the difficulty in determining how each Board member voted on presented agenda items.

A survey of California counties with populations comparable to San Bernardino County was taken by the Grand Jury to obtain a sampling of how many counties had installed electronic voting equipment in their Board of Supervisors' chambers. Replies from 18 counties were received, with the counties of San Mateo, San Diego, Sacramento, Kern, Tulare, Santa Clara and Riverside indicating they had such equipment. Alameda County advised that it is in the process of preparing a Request for Proposal for the installation of an electronic voting system.

A commonly used electronic voting system has a three-button control switch at the setting of each Board member. One button is marked "YES", the second button "NO", and the third button is "ABSTAIN". When the Board chairman calls for the vote, each member presses the appropriate button. A large lighted panel(s), visible to all in attendance, instantly lights up showing, by name, how each member voted. The panel(s) can be designed to aesthetically blend with the Board's chambers.

The system prints out the results of each member's vote onto the Clerk of the Board's main recording device. This makes the Clerk's recording duties easier and less stressful. Results of the recorded votes make record keeping simpler.

A covered, recessed box for each Board member is built to blend into the top of the Board's dais. Upon opening the box, a monitor screen is attached to the underside of the lid, viewable to the Board member. Controls are available for viewing agenda items and backup material.

FINDINGS

The Grand Jury members attending the Board of Supervisors' meetings noted that the Board's discussions on agenda items were informative and that adequate time was given for public input. When the Board members vote on agenda items, however, the process becomes very rapid. On a split vote, it is difficult for persons in the chambers viewing their actions and listening to their dialogue to comprehend how each Board member voted. Some Board members vote in an inaudible tone of voice. One has to listen intently to ascertain how each member's vote is cast. The problem becomes more noticeable when the Board Chambers reaches capacity.

Installation of an electronic voting system with a lighted display panel(s) would eliminate any question as to how each member of the Board of Supervisors voted.

Information obtained from County technicians indicates the electronic voting system could readily be installed. There is room inside the recessed boxes at each Supervisor's setting to install the three-button voting switch.

RECOMMENDATION

01-03 INSTALL ELECTRONIC VOTING EQUIPMENT WITH LIGHTED DISPLAY PANEL(S) IN THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS' CHAMBERS, AND MAKE IT VIEWABLE TO THE AUDIENCE.

CLERK OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

CODIFICATION OF COUNTY ORDINANCES

BACKGROUND

Ordinances are an authoritative law or direction for the operation of the County. They are prepared by County Counsel or staff, approved as to form by County Counsel, and presented to the Board of Supervisors for consideration. If the Board determines that an ordinance should be enacted, it is introduced at a Board meeting, reading waived and title read only. The Clerk of the Board assigns a number to the ordinance and it is placed on the next Board agenda for second reading and adoption. A summary of the ordinance is then published in a local newspaper, as required by Government Code regulations, and is effective 30 days from date of Board adoption, unless it is deemed an urgency ordinance and effective immediately. As authorized by the State of California, the County has compiled, consolidated and indexed adopted ordinances in a published book known as the San Bernardino County Code.

Government Code Section 25132 stipulates that a violation of a county ordinance is a misdemeanor, unless by ordinance it is made an infraction, and may be prosecuted by county authorities in the name of the people of the State of California, or redressed by civil action.

FINDINGS

It is necessary that code supplements be prepared for distribution to County departments and government entities for placement in their copies of the Code book for reference purposes. Supplements are ordinances that are codified.

Since April 5, 1993 there have been no supplements to the Code book of ordinances adopted by the Board of Supervisors that required codification. During this eight-year period, the departments and municipalities in possession of Code books have not had information available to them for reference in order to enforce the regulations so adopted by the Board, unless they requested this information from the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors' office.

In March 2001 the Clerk of the Board, County Counsel and the Information Services Department prepared an update of the San Bernardino County Code and placed it on the County Intranet. This allows County departments to access the Code and to print hard copy pages of revised sections of the Code Book. Preparations are being made to place the Code on the Internet.

Some cities within the County of San Bernardino have adopted sections of the San Bernardino County Code book by reference and require updated pages in order to properly enforce these provisions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

01-04 THE CLERK OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS NOTIFY COUNTY DEPARTMENTS AS TO WHAT PAGES TO ADD, DELETE AND DISCARD, AND WHAT INDEX PAGES TO REPLACE IN THEIR COUNTY CODE BOOKS.

01-05 AT SUCH TIME AS THE CODES ARE PLACED ON THE INTERNET, THE CLERK OF THE BOARD NOTIFY THE APPROPRIATE MUNICIPALITIES THAT THEY WILL BE ABLE TO ACCESS UPDATED COPIES OF PAGES AND INDEXES OF THE CODE FROM THE INTERNET, INCLUDING THE ORDINANCES ADOPTED FROM THE APRIL 5, 1993 ORDINANCE 3538, TO THE PRESENT.

01-06 THE CLERK OF THE BOARD OBTAIN THE PROFESSIONAL SERVICES OF A CODIFICATION COMPANY TO MAINTAIN ORDINANCES AND CODE BOOK SUPPLEMENTS IN THE FUTURE.

RECORDS MANAGEMENT

BACKGROUND

In the 1800's the County Courthouse was destroyed by fire and no one has information as to what records were lost in the fire.

The responsibility of the Records Management Program is currently under the County Library. As of July 1, 2001, the program will be under the Auditor/Controller-Recorder. A records management program is the systematic control of the creation, acquisition, processing, use, protection, storage, and final disposition of all recorded information handled in the course of County of San Bernardino activities. Included are the establishment and maintenance of a system of filing and indexing for public access. Records management involves assembling and managing the correct information (1) in the proper form; (2) at the right place and time; and (3) for use by the appropriate persons.

A Records Management Coordinator should oversee the Records Management Program, assist departments in maintaining the records program, coordinate and supervise an annual department records review, maintain a records center for storage of inactive records, receive and index records for storage, retrieve records from a records center for departments, maintain master and department locator logs, prepare annual departmental records destruction lists for submittal to County Counsel for approval, update an adopted Records Management Manual, and maintain an Archive to protect vital records.

A Records Management Program must include all departments within the County and should have the full support of the Board of Supervisors. To implement such a program, which may be established by policy or ordinance, would result in significant savings for the County through safe, efficient, low-cost storage of all records in accordance with Federal and State regulations, rapid access to all active and inactive records, more effective use of office space and storage facilities, and timely disposition of obsolete records.

Records programs are no longer limited to paper materials but have been extended to storage of floppy disks, magnetic tapes, electronic memory, film and optical disk.

FINDINGS

With our modern methods of filming and placing records on disks, it is important that the records are protected and a cost-effective program be enforced.

Each County department is responsible for its own records program. There has been no active Records Management authority supervising the program, and little use of the Archives storage center by departments. The Records Management Manual was published in 1985 and there is no current records retention schedule. There is a serious lack of storage area for records.

The Board of Supervisors has adopted several directives relative to the records of the County of San Bernardino, which reveals a history of the program, or lack thereof. (See Exhibit A)

In contacting 28 departments within the County, it was learned that five of these departments did not have a records program, eight departments had no retention schedule, and ten departments had never destroyed any records.

Records management publications indicate that the average office can immediately destroy one-third of its present records, transfer another one-third to low-cost storage areas, and continue uninterrupted operations with only the remaining one-third that are kept in the active files.

The Records warehouse and Archives office is located at 777 E. Rialto Avenue in San Bernardino, but many of the department records are stored in other locations, at a considerable cost to the County. An active destruction program is vital.

There are many established records management organizations that assist in records programs, train personnel, supervise records programs, and may assist in obtaining State and Federal funding for same.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 01-07 SUPPORT AN ACTIVE RECORDS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM.
- 01-08 SOLICIT A REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) FOR A PROFESSIONAL FIRM TO INITIATE A RECORDS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM UNDER THE DEPARTMENT ESTABLISHED AS RECORDS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM COORDINATOR.

01-09

INVESTIGATE GRANT FUNDING SOURCES AVAILABLE THROUGH ESTABLISHED LOCAL, STATE AND NATIONAL RECORDS MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATIONS.

EXHIBIT A

RECORD POLICIES

- 08/26/74 POLICY #10-01, Issue #1 - Records Search or Transcription Procedures for Billing for Cost of Service
- 09/15/75 POLICY #10-02, Issue #1 - Responses to Requests for Public Information
- 03/17/80 RESOLUTION #80-78 - Establishing an Orderly System for Destruction of Records
- 07/07/80 POLICY #07-01 - Establishing Records Management Program administered by Printing and Mail Services Records Management Division. County Archives to be performed by County Library.
- 01/85 RECORDS MANAGEMENT MANUAL printed by Purchasing Department and Mail Services/Records Management Division
- 10/21/85 STANDARD PRACTICE #07-01SP, Issue #2 - Establishing Records Management Program under the General Services Agency
- 08/05/91 STANDARD PRACTICE #07-01SP, Issue #3 - Establish Responsibility and Procedure Operation and Maintenance Program of County Records Management
- 07/20/93 RESOLUTION 93-213 - Establishing a Separate Records Management working Capital Transferring Records Program from General Services to County Library, Effective 07/01/93
- 04/12/94 STANDARD PRACTICE #07-01SP, Issue #1 - Archives Management - Identify Archival Records which need to be Transferred to County Archives Center
- 04/12/94 POLICY #07-01, Issue #3 - Records Management Program - Authorizing General Services Group as Responsible for Administering the Records Management Program
- 04/12/01 POLICY #07-01, Issue #4 - Transfer Authority to Auditor/Controller-Recorder for Records Management Program, Effective 07/01/01