



# DIGEST

## *Around and About*

PLANS FOR a competitive examination to select a new chief administrative officer have been cancelled. Eight County executives had been scheduled to take the exam next Monday and Tuesday, Jan. 20 and 21, to choose a successor to retiring Lin Hollinger. Board of Supervisors chairman Ernest Debs, however, opened last Tuesday's meeting (Jan. 14) with this statement:

"In view of the change in circumstances of our CAO, he has withdrawn his intent to retire and the Board is unanimous in saying that we certainly go along with his desire. He has served this County well. Because of the tragic death of his wife, we all realize that he'd like to continue on for the time being."

The Supervisors then voted unanimously to instruct the civil service commission to suspend its planned CAO examination.

Hollinger's wife Alyce died Jan. 2 of the flu and complications.

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## COURT OK's E-R ORDINANCE

A SUPERIOR court removed the legal handcuffs from the County employee relations ordinance following trial last Monday (Jan. 13) and the County employee relations commission (ERCOM) promptly began steps to put the ordinance into operation.

Judge Harold F. Collins ruled against the Los Angeles County Employees association, which had brought suit last Sept. 17 charging that the ordinance, then two weeks old, was illegal.

LACEA sought a temporary injunction freezing use of the ordinance but Judge Robert S. Thompson denied this Oct. 2. He was reversed, however, on Dec. 9 by another superior judge who ordered ERCOM to cease all its activities except rule-making. Judge Collins' decision last Monday dissolved this Dec. 9 order.

Following the Monday ruling, ERCOM chairman Lloyd Bailer and his fellow commissioners Neely Gardner and Melvin Lennard sent letters to some 30 employee associations and unions, enclosing petition forms the groups may file if they wish to seek ERCOM certification as a negotiating unit for certain groups of County employees. The letter also included rules the commission adopted Dec. 17 regulating how negotiating units may be formed. A summary of those rules will appear in the next DIGEST, Jan. 31.

Judge Collins, in his ruling, directed that ERCOM hold no elections to determine negotiating units before Jan. 30—this to give LACEA attorneys Cy Lemaire and Frank Morales time to appeal their cause

to a higher court. Lemaire told The DIGEST they now are weighing whether to seek an order from the Court of Appeal.

The County was joined in Monday's trial with seven employee organizations resisting the LACEA action. These codefendants were AFSCME (AFL-CIO) Council 49, California Nurses association, Building Trades council, Social Workers Local 535, Service Employees union Local 434, Firefighters association Local 1014, and the medical center physicians' association.

Courtroom debate centered largely around chapter 10 of the California government code (the Meyers-Milias-Brown act) which outlines the rights and duties of local governments and their employees in their dealings with each other (to confer in good faith, and so forth). LACEA contended chapter 10, in effect, prohibits local legislation like the employee relations ordinance. The County and its codefendants replied that chapter 10 merely lays down minimum rights and duties and does not preclude local governments from adopting further rules like the ER ordinance. The court agreed with the defendants.

Deputy County counsel Larry Hoffman declared that LACEA's suit was an attempt to upset the whole system of labor law and practice that has grown up in the U.S. during the past 30 years.

The LACEA attorneys also argued that the Board of Supervisors had unlawfully delegated some of

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# Around and About

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THE ASSESSOR's staff is about to swell by 159 positions. The newcomers will help mail and process some 3 million claims for property tax refunds and exemptions required by Proposition 1-A approved by California voters last Nov. 5. In approving the new jobs Jan. 7, the Board of Supervisors voted to ask the legislature for quick reimbursement for the \$1.6 million expense. The state provided only \$500,000 to L.A. County for this purpose.

STAFF JUGGLING is upcoming in the marshal's and sheriff's departments, the result of another state law change. The 1968 legislature decided that the marshal, not the sheriff, shall have custody of prisoners appearing for trial or hearing in municipal court. This will mean adding 30 deputy marshals and 20 deputy clerk-matrons (for women prisoners). The CAO says these additions will be more than offset by reducing the number of deputy sheriffs assigned to municipal court duty. Explanation: the marshal already must provide a bailiff in each municipal court. In many cases he also will handle prisoner custody.

THE ART museum's 43 security guards have been voted a scroll of commendation from the Board of Supervisors. As volunteer impresarios, they planned and staged the Black Culture festival at the museum Dec. 28—a show of black African sculpture, music, fashions, dancers and films. Some 2,500 attended.

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# CHANGES IN RETIREMENT

THOSE EAGLE-eyed employees who always scrutinize their paycheck stubs will notice a change in their Feb. 10 warrants.

The 48,000 or so who are "general" members of the County retirement system will find more money being deducted for retirement.

The 6,000-plus who are "safety" members (sheriffs, marshals, firemen, lifeguards) will discover a little less taken out for retirement.

The changes result from the Board of Supervisors' approval Dec. 31 of three major revisions in the retirement system, including an eventual lowering of the mandatory retirement age from 70 to 65. (See Jan. 3 DIGEST for details.)

The revisions, made possible by a 1967 state law, became effective Jan. 1.

## Contributions

All general members this month begin paying higher contributions into the retirement fund. For most the increase is 10 to 15 percent above their former contributions. Those who entered the retirement system at an early age have the lesser increases. Those, however, who did not begin working for the County until they were in their fifties will find the increase up to 17 percent above the old rate.

Here are selected examples of how contribution rates have changed. The figures show percentage of salary deducted for retirement:

The story is different for safety members of the retirement system. Their contributions rose sharply in November 1967 along with accelerated benefits and earlier retirement. Now, thanks to greater returns from retirement fund investments, the safety members' rates will drop about 10 percent. The drop, however, will leave the rate still above the pre-November 1967 level.

## Benefits

Most general members will receive higher retirement allowances than before, particularly if they retire between ages 55 and 60. This group's benefits rise 13 to 14 percent above former levels for men, 11 to 14 percent for women. The rate of increase in benefits curves downward, however, for those who retire at age 61 or later, until the employee who retires at age 65 or older will find no increase over the previous level in his retirement allowance.

The chart on page 3 illustrates the increases in benefits. To find what his retirement allowance would be, an employee would multiply his number of years of service by the proper percentage figure in the page 3 table, then multiply that amount by his average monthly salary for his highest paid 36 months (usually his final three

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Age entered County service	GENERAL MEMBERS			
	Men		Women	
	Former	Now	Former	Now
20 .....	6.22%	6.97%	6.29%	6.80%
25 .....	6.32	7.13	6.73	7.35
30 .....	6.56	7.45	7.27	8.02
35 .....	6.93	7.92	7.90	8.83
40 .....	7.42	8.55	8.65	9.77
45 .....	8.02	9.32	9.47	10.81
50 .....	8.75	10.25	10.38	11.95
55 .....	9.58	11.07	11.39	12.95
59 .....	10.33	11.07	12.28	12.95

years of service). The result would be his "unmodified" monthly retirement allowance (meaning his allowance before considering any social security coverage he may have).

Example: an employe retiring at age 60 with 20 years service in the County and an average salary

the final three years of \$700 a month would multiply 20 years times 2.171% from the table below, times \$700. The resulting \$303.94 is his unmodified retirement allowance per month. (Using the former factor of 1.919% his allowance works out to \$268.38, a difference of \$35.56.)

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### GENERAL MEMBERS

Age When Retiring	Men			Women		
	Former	Now	Rise	Former	Now	Rise
55	1.463%	1.667%	13.94	1.492%	1.667%	11.73%
56	1.539	1.740	13.06	1.564	1.741	11.32
57	1.621	1.839	13.44	1.641	1.841	12.19
58	1.711	1.943	13.56	1.725	1.948	12.93
59	1.809	2.054	13.54	1.817	2.061	13.43
60	1.917	2.171	13.25	1.917	2.182	13.82
61	1.991	2.221	11.55	1.991	2.232	12.10
62	2.089	2.271	8.71	2.091	2.282	9.13
63	2.193	2.321	5.84	2.198	2.332	6.10
64	2.304	2.371	2.91	2.311	2.382	3.07
65	2.421	2.421	.....	2.432	2.432	.....

Retired employees receive the "unmodified" allowance if they have not been covered by social security. When the County combined its retirement system with social security in June 1964 some employees chose not to join the integrated system, as was their right. Others did join. These "joiners" as well as all persons hired since mid-1964 are in the integrated system, which means their unmodified allowances are reduced a bit to make partial allowance for the separate social security payments they will receive.

Thus, if our hypothetical employee who retired at age 60 had been paying social security taxes for eleven years, his retirement allowance from the County would be reduced by \$24.53 a month; however, he would receive approximately \$111 a month from social security.

### Up Goes 'f.i.c.a.'

AMONG SIGNIFICANT figures on last Friday's (Jan. 10) County paycheck was that under "f.i.c.a." on the top line of the check stub.

That figure reflects the federally enacted increase in the 1969 social security tax from 4.4 percent of the first \$7,800 salary to 4.8 percent.

This works out to a boost of 40 cents for each \$100 of gross pay. Thus, an employee whose salary totals \$7,800 or more this year will pay an additional \$31.20 for social security. The County, as employer, will pay an equal amount.

Federal officials say the extra money will finance a 13 percent increase in social security benefits, slightly more for certain classes of recipients.

MOVING DAY will be Feb. 3 (or a few days thereafter) for the 650 County employees who park in lots 10 and 19 — moving day, at least, for their cars. Construction is scheduled to begin that week on the huge Criminal Courts building and phase two of the Mall, wiping out both parking lots. Parking coordinators in each affected department will reassign displaced drivers to other County parking lots nearby and to the east. portion of the new double-deck parking structure at First and Olive streets. This east portion is scheduled for completion Jan. 28. The west portion with room for another 640 autos will be finished Feb. 21. The CAO and mechanical department said they also are working on a share-the-ride program to relieve the chronic parking shortage.

ANOTHER PARKING development: County officials have begun the search for 237 parking spaces in lots near the Engineering building, Second and Main streets. Engineering employees long have complained that they were "short changed" on parking in this area, and County engineer John Lambie said the shortage has complicated his recruiting problem.

# County Requests 20 Bills

THE BOARD of Supervisors is sending the 1969 legislature its first installment of requests—a package of 20 bills concerning everything from alcoholism to hearing aids.

The Board also indicated last Tuesday (Jan. 14) that it will have later requests on several major issues.

Top priority, as in previous years, will go to tax reform so as to lessen the County's dependence on property taxes. The Board voted to await the report expected Feb. 1 from state controller Houston Flournoy's advisory commission on tax reform. If the report proves unsatisfactory, the Board said it will sponsor its own legislation including such proposals as permitting counties to use the same revenue sources as cities, collecting revenues on a countywide basis instead of just within unincorporated areas, obtaining more favorable financial arrangements with the state on "partnership" programs, and requiring the state, when it narrows the County's property tax base, to provide replacement revenues.

The 20-bill package adopted last Tuesday includes:

**HIGHWAY FUNDS.** A change in the historical formula of giving 45 percent of state highway monies to northern California counties, 55 percent to the 13 southern counties. If the southern share were increased to 60 percent, it would provide \$32 million more per year to meet what that Board called "obviously huge road deficiencies."

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## Ordinance

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its powers by creating the employee relations commission, and that the Board had divested the civil service commission of some of its charter powers. Judge Collins rejected both arguments.

**ALCOHOLISM.** Make permanent the McAteer act which provides funds for the County health and hospital departments' programs to treat alcoholics as sick persons rather than as law breakers.

**GAMBLING.** Help the sheriff control gambling by permitting courts to issue injunctions closing illegal gambling establishments as public nuisances.

**ASSESSMENT APPEALS.** Extend the deadline for filing appeals against assessed values until after taxpayers receive their tax bills in early November. The deadline was cut back to Sept. 15 in 1968, and after receiving their November tax bills, hundreds of taxpayers protested but had to be told the time was past for filing appeals.

**VOTING HOURS.** Move back the closing hour for polling places from 8 p.m. to 7 p.m. Registrar-recorder Ray Lee reported only one percent of the voters last Nov. 5 cast ballots between 7 and 8 p.m.

**COURT AUDITS.** Require the auditor-controller to audit municipal and justice court records every two years instead of every year.

**HEALTH INVESTIGATORS.** Deputize public health investigators so they won't need the help of a deputy sheriff in serving "communicable disease warrants" on violators of the state health code, particularly tuberculosis and typhoid carriers.

**SMOG.** Provide controls for air pollution from jetliners.

**BOARDING HOMES.** Extend state regulation to boarding homes caring for persons 16 to 64 years old. At present the state regulates only homes for children under 16 and adults over 64.

**AFDC.** Relax the ceiling on state aid to families with dependent children so that the state can help counties bring a family's aid up to the living standards set by the state department of social welfare.

**AID TO DISABLED.** Extend Aid to the Totally Disabled to persons unable to work for a year or longer. At present ATD goes only to those disabled for life; other disabled must be helped from the County's general relief funds. This drain on County funds has been growing rapidly in recent years.

**JUVENILE PAROLEES.** Require the California Youth authority to take custody within 24 hours of CYA parole violators who are picked up and held in a County juvenile hall. At present these violators may remain for indefinite periods in juvenile hall before the CYA claims them, causing the County an estimated \$1 million a year in extra expenses.

**COURT WARDS.** Extend state aid to cases where the County places a juvenile court ward in a private institution or foster home. Annual cost of such care has grown from \$2.5 million to \$4.7 million in the past five years. At present the state reimburses the County only for wards placed in County-operated facilities.

The Supervisors' list of requested legislation also includes bills that:

- Would provide state reimbursement to the County for full costs of handling refunds to property taxpayers under Proposition 1-A.
- Would require state licenses for firms dispensing hearing aids.

County of Los Angeles

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