

MEMORANDUM**TO:** Commission For Women**FROM:** Stacey B. MacDonald, Chair**DATE:** October 27, 1991**SUBJECT:** Reorganization, Commission Office and Staff Responsibilities

Commissioner Anna McVerry and I met with Public Social Services Deputy Director Barbara Fitzgerald, PSSA Supervisor Jan Butler and Administrative Aide Bonnie Warrington on October 24, 1991, to discuss the responsibilities and duties of the Commission Office staff. Commissioners Breyman and Scoville were unable to attend.

Administrative Aide Responsibilities and Office Functions

As a result the attached job description was developed for Bonnie. Bonnie is presently scheduled to work 20 hours per week; however, she is spending considerably more time at the office and home working on Commission business. The County is subject to the Fair Labor Standards Act and has taken a strong position, and rightly so, on limiting Bonnie's hours to the budgeted 20 hour week. The County is in violation of the FLSA requirements and can get into trouble if we do not honor the 20 hour week. Through a cooperative effort with all of the above mentioned persons the job description was developed. Time was also taken to review the various tasks Bonnie is currently responsible for and suggestions made to increase efficiency.

As it presently stands Bonnies responsibilities will include continued management of the Commission's office, telephone referrals and information for public assistance requests, attendance at monthly Commission meetings, production and mailings of both the agenda and minutes, coordination of volunteers, support of and attendance at Commission events when required and maintaining compliance with the by-laws and the Brown Act.

Bonnie's assistance with clerical duties on behalf of Committees and Commissioners will be monitored and directed through me as called for in the by-laws. This will insure that she is not getting direction from a possible 15 different members making it difficult for her to accomplish required tasks during her 20 hour week. Bonnie has also been directed to take equal comp time off as a result of her attendance at the Commission's monthly meetings or other special meetings she is directed to attend on our behalf. She has also been instructed to

turn-in mileage for attendance at events and meetings outside the normal scope of her work week. For example, she would not receive mileage for attendance at the monthly meeting because she would be taking comp time off. She is merely trading hours. However, if she attends an Executive Board meeting outside of her normal work hours and has to travel from home she would receive both comp time and mileage. Unless there is a special need this Committee did not feel that Bonnie's attendance is necessary at the various Committee meetings. However, it is important that we maintain a significant level of flexibility with regard to Bonnie helping out and attending Commission events, it is almost always necessary for her to be there, and as a result we will need to provide her with comp time.

As a result of the necessity to adhere to the FLSA requirements it was felt by the Reorganization Committee that Bonnie's time was insufficient to spend time devoted to clerical tasks that could be handled by Commissioners and Committee Chairs. Commissioners and Committee Chairs will be required to submit reports and minutes of Committee meetings in a final form for inclusion in our monthly Agenda packet. Preferably these reports and minutes should be typewritten, if this is not possible, then they should be legibly printed in "BLACK" ink for easy reproduction on the County's Xerox machine for inclusion into the Agenda packet.

Weekly Reports

It was the determination of the Executive Board at its October meeting to have correspondence, notices, etc., received by the Commission each week summarized in a weekly report to the Commissioners and mailed every Friday. This should reduce the number of mailings we receive and help reduce associated postage costs and also keep us informed. Items of interest will not necessarily be attached to the Weekly Summary, it will be the responsibility of interested Commissioners to contact Bonnie and obtain further information on particular items. However, these materials will continue to be available at monthly meetings for review before or after the meetings.

Correspondence

As Chair I will undertake the responsibility of directing and responding to necessary correspondence that comes into the office, unless it is appropriate for another Commissioner to respond on our behalf. Regardless, copies of all correspondence should be forwarded to the Commission office for appropriate record keeping purposes. Committees needing to direct correspondence should have the correspondence signed by the Chair of the Committee with copies

distributed to Committee members and forwarded to the Commission office for inclusion in the Weekly Report or the Agenda packet, whichever is appropriate.

Mailing Lists and Distribution of Agendas and Minutes

I have reviewed the Agenda/Minutes mailing list for the Commission. I was very concerned about the number of duplications to various agencies and the number of individuals receiving our Agendas and Minutes. I would like to propose several changes in order to reduce costs and increase efficiency. During our meeting with County officials I inquired as to whether or not the Commission could charge a subscription fee to persons interested in receiving our Agendas and Minutes and was told that we could and would only need to obtain the approval of the Board of Supervisors. I am attaching a copy of a report that I would like to submit to the Board of Supervisors upon approval of the Commission at our November meeting. Please be prepared to discuss it and offer suggestions and/or alternatives.

I understand the importance of widespread distribution of the Commission's Agenda's and Minutes; however, in light of the fiscal restraints and limitations it is also important that we take measures to conserve and use our limited resources in ways that will produce the most good. In my 19 months on the Commission I have seen little benefit to mailing in excess of 472 copies of our Agendas and Minutes each month, few if any of these people attend our meetings and/or contact us with regard to the business matters included on our Agendas. At an average cost of \$.47 we are presently spending in excess of \$222. per month on just mailing out our Agendas and Minutes this does not include copying charges. It is my recommendation that we continue to mail a single copy of the Agendas and Minutes free of charge to the Mayor of each City, other interested Government Agencies, Libraries, the Press, Women's Groups involved with Commission activities and Educational Institutions. At present we have for example two copies going to Happenings Magazine in Moorpark, five copies to Interface, two copies to the Oxnard Library, two copies to the Coast Reporter, etc. I do not think it is unreasonable to have only one copy go to various agencies such as these, but any additional copies should be charged a subscription fee. I am attaching a sample letter that will go to persons presently receiving the Agenda free upon approval of the Commission and Board of Supervisors to implement subscription fees. It was discussed as to whether or not we should accept pre-addressed envelopes with postage for persons in lieu of charging a fee. I would advise against this for several reasons, postage is not always sufficient for the documents being mailed, an envelope would have to be stuffed which strays from the routine procedure of just folding and stapling and is inefficient.

In addition to Commissioners the following persons receive not only the Agendas and Minutes but a complete Agenda packet: Each member of the Board of Supervisors, Jan Butler, Barbara Fitzgerald and Bonnie for a total of 23 packets when we are at full force. It is estimated that it should take approximately 2 hours to produce 23 Agenda packets depending on volume and Xerox interruptions. The County has agreed to work cooperatively with us on this knowing that Bonnie's hours are limited by trying to limit interruptions when she is copying Agendas, Minutes and packets. The amount of time contributed to the copying, addressing, stamping and mailing of the Agendas and Minutes should be reduced significantly upon revision of the mailing list.

We also have what is known as the "big mailing list" which has approximately 2500 names on it. I am assuming that this list is utilized for special mailings for events and special announcements. If this is the case I would propose that we continue to add to it, avoiding as many duplications as possible, and use it on a very limited basis. Also, whenever we have mailings of this size we should take advantage of bulk mailing rates, which means we'll have to be very timely.

In the past we have also enclosed and/or inserted notices in our Agenda/Minutes mailing list to better get the word out. If we adopt a more limited practice of distribution for the Agendas and Minutes as I have proposed I see no reason why we cannot keep a separate mailing list of the names of persons that will be removed if they elect not to subscribe for use when we have a special announcement that does not require utilization of the "big list."

Agenda Process

I know that most of us are far too busy for our own good; however, I believe it is important to prepare written reports on various matters such as Committee projects, etc. It is much easier for us to assist the Committees in decision making when we have an opportunity to review the materials before the meeting. All Committees should ALWAYS have a report on the monthly Agenda along with copies of the minutes of each meeting. The minutes can well serve as the report if in the Committee's opinion it is sufficient. Additionally, Commissioner's involved in special projects, etc. should prepare written reports as well.

I think once we pare down the mailing lists, if that is the desire of the Commission, much of the work load associated with the Agenda will be eliminated and staff time can better be utilized for such projects as maintaining the Talent Bank for the Women's Political Appointments Coalition, etc.

At this juncture it is imperative that Agenda Items, such as minutes and Committee reports be submitted timely. I think the following time-table will be

workable for both Bonnie and the Commissioners and Committees responsible for reports.

1. *Items for the Agenda will be called in to Bonnie no later than two Mondays preceding the monthly meeting. (committee reports are standing items and will always be included on the Agenda)*
2. *The Executive Committee will confer with Bonnie and finalize those items to be included on the Agenda. **
3. *Written reports and minutes are to be submitted in final form to Bonnie no later than two Wednesdays preceding the monthly meeting.*
4. *The Agenda will be prepared two Thursdays preceding the monthly meeting and prepared for mailing two Fridays preceding the monthly meeting.*
5. *Agenda packets will be copied and prepared for mailing two Fridays preceding the monthly meeting.*

* I do not see a purpose in the Executive Board meeting to discuss items to be included on the Agenda. It is my belief that items of concern to individual Commissioners should readily be included on the Agenda. With the approval of the Commission and the Executive Board's concurrence I would propose that we amend the bylaws to do away with the monthly Executive Board meeting to discuss the Agenda and make it a further responsibility of the Chair. The main reason for this is merely to save us from one more meeting a month. With most of us on several Committees and meeting three or more times a month I'm not sure time spent discussing the Agenda is not time better spent elsewhere. I continue to believe that the purpose of the Executive Board is to meet and act on matters that because of time cannot be brought before the entire Commission. A subsequent item on this Agenda includes a proposed revision to the bylaws on this matter and to formally establish the Finance Committee.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATION

I realize that this is a lot of information and I appreciate the time you have taken to review it. Unfortunately, with the reduction in our staff and our enthusiasm to maintain our present level of service we need to make some changes somewhere. And essentially that somewhere is with us, as individual Commissioners. We need to undertake some of our own clerical responsibilities and limit our dependence on Bonnie to only those necessary tasks.

It is my recommendation that we implement the proposed job description and tasks for Bonnie as previously described, prepare in final form our own reports and committee minutes and reports, revise the mailing lists as proposed and implement a subscription fee as outlined on the attached report to the Board of Supervisors, and adhere to the Agenda time-table as proposed (with some flexibility available, if approved I will prepare and distribute a listing of the deadline dates for Agenda Items through the end of my term as Chair for your convenience).

Please be prepared to discuss these matters and take action at our November 9, 1991, meeting.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATION

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COMMISSION FOR WOMEN

ADMINISTRATIVE AIDE JOB DESCRIPTION

Under direct supervision of the Chair of the Commission.

Manage Commission office as follows: respond to public requests, provide information and referrals, receive and distribute Commission correspondence, attend monthly meetings of the Commission, prepare and distribute Agendas and Minutes of monthly Commission meetings. Provide staff support for the Commission, its events and activities as needed and authorized by the Chair of the Commission. Coordinate and supervise volunteer activities and maintain appropriate documentation of volunteer efforts on behalf of the Commission. Maintain compliance with by-laws and Brown Act.

STACEY B. McDONALD
CHAIR

COMMISSION FOR WOMEN
ADMINISTRATIVE AIDE JOB DESCRIPTION
Date

Name
Address
City

Dear _____:

I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the Commission For Women to express our appreciation to you for your interest in our activities. Our Commission is a very active and integral volunteer agency involved with issues confronting families, women and Children in Ventura County. Your involvement and participation in Commission activities has been a valuable asset to us and we encourage you to continue monitoring and participating with us as we serve.

As you may or may not be aware the Commission suffered severe budget cuts from the County of Ventura in the 1991-1992 Fiscal Year Budget. The Commission has had to take a very close look at its limited resources and evaluate where best to allocate our monies the cost to mail our Agendas and Minutes on a monthly basis often exceeds \$225. As a result we have now determined that it is not within our means to continue providing our Agendas and Minutes free of charge to everyone who has requested to be on our mailing list. In an effort to continue to provide Agendas and Minutes to those persons wishing to remain abreast of the Commission's business we are providing an opportunity for you to continue to receive this information at a very minimal cost. You may continue to receive this information for an annual subscription fee of \$15.00. For record keeping purposes and ease in accounting only annual subscriptions are available. We have calculated the costs at approximately \$1.25 per month for both the copies and postage and feel this is what it costs us to provide this service to you.

If you are interested in continuing to receive the Commission's Agendas and Minutes, please forward a check in the amount of \$15, payable to the Ventura County Commission For Women, to our office at 505 Poli Street, Ventura, CA 93001. Again, we appreciate your interest in the Commission For Women and look forward to continuing to serve your needs.

Sincerely,

STACEY B. MacDONALD
CHAIR