

July 6, 1993

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Board of Supervisors  
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**Subject: VENTURA COUNTY COUNCILS, COMMITTEES,  
COMMISSIONS AND BOARDS**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that your Board:

1. Receive and file the attached 1992 Review of Councils, Committees, Commissions, and Boards.
2. Request each panel to review its impact on County personnel with the intent of reducing staff time required to support the activity. This review should include methods to:
  - Consolidate the number of meetings held each year.
  - Downsize the membership.
  - Eliminate/reduce the number of subcommittees requiring staff support.
  - Combine committees with similar mission statements into one panel. (Note: Departments will provide the committees with the 1992 Annual Report of similar committees).

- Prioritize those activities which are essential and/or mandated for committee consideration.
- Analyze costs associated with executing responsibilities and minimize wherever possible. This may include such things as limiting the size of graphic reproductions for meeting packages, mileage reimbursement, cost of elections for Municipal Area Councils.
- Where appropriate, consider the formation of non-profit status to allow the panel to pursue non-governmental funding through charitable contributions, grants, etc.

Actions taken in relation to the above directions should be accomplished within the 1993 calendar year with the results reported in the 1993 Annual Review.

3. Establish a "sunset" date for all non-mandated Board advisory committees.
4. Restructure the County arts' program to focus only on the County Government Center displays and administration of the State/Local Partner grant program. Further request that the Arts Commission pursue non-profit status with the goal of becoming independent by January 1994.
5. Request that the Commission for Women pursue non-profit status with the goal of establishing independence by January 1994.
6. Eliminate the Agricultural Land Trust Advisory Committee and Senior Nutrition Advisory Committee from the County listing of committees.

7. Direct the Clerk of the Board to provide each newly formed panel with the guidelines outlined in Recommendation No. 2 for the purpose of affording direction as goals and objectives are formulated.

#### **DISCUSSION:**

In September 1992, Supervisor Maria VanderKolk requested your Board to direct departments to prepare an analysis of various councils, committees, etc. to determine their effectiveness and continued need. This review includes panels established for a variety of purposes; to advise the Board of Supervisors; inter-departmental groups addressing operational issues; along with multi-jurisdictional entities reviewing County-wide concerns. Staff was further directed to implement a procedure which will provide periodic performance reviews.

To fulfill both of these objectives, an annual review process has been developed utilizing a calendar year basis. Thus, the attached report is through December of 1992. We have attempted to prepare a format that will provide a comprehensive analysis of each panel. Every segment of the format is designed to furnish specific information:

**Formation/Date** identifies how the body was first organized along with the date established.

**Discretionary/Mandated** denotes whether this is an optional panel or legally required, including the mandate source. Please note that certain committees have been established by Board ordinance and are marked as "Mandated", however, as a local policy, your Board may choose to eliminate the "mandate".

**Achievements** reflect the accomplishments of the panel since its inception. Future reports will reflect the achievements of the body during the preceding calendar year.

**1993 Goals** reflect the planned activities for the current calendar year.

**Meetings** provide the time, date and place.

**Committee Support Costs** supply the annual costs (unless otherwise noted) of providing staff work to the panel.

In addition to this information, each department was requested to determine whether the elimination/modification of a panel would result in cost and/or personnel savings. The majority of departments did not identify any significant cost savings accruing as a result of eliminating a committee panel. Nor was it the perception that the panels are not providing a useful County service.

However, most departments noted that with the continued decrease in resources, it is becoming increasingly difficult to dedicate limited personnel time to organizing meetings, preparing agendas, meeting packets, minutes and so forth. Departments voiced serious concern that this staffing difficulty will be even further exacerbated in the coming fiscal year.

To address this dilemma, staff has developed certain guidelines (Recommendation No. 2) which are intended to minimize the impact on limited staff time while encouraging panels to focus on their primary objectives. Certain changes, such as consolidation/membership reduction of Board appointed committees, will necessitate returning to your Board for final approval.

Recommendation No. 3, to establish a sunset date, or ending date, for all Board appointed non-mandated committees, serves two purposes. First, it provides a well-defined time frame upon which Committees are to set goals and objectives. Secondly, your Board will have an opportunity to reassess the continued need for each committee and provide new direction as required. This will ensure that the committees' roles and responsibilities address the current needs of your Board. Sunset dates

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may be established in various ways: 1) each date may be established based on the estimated time to complete the committee objectives; 2) a staggered sunset may be adopted with perhaps one-half of the committees terminating each year; or 3) all committees may sunset annually. In any of the scenarios, your Board will have the opportunity to extend the committee for another cycle.

While it is expected that Recommendation Nos. 2 and 3 will result in future changes, the current review process did reveal certain appointed bodies which appear to have alternative methods of achieving their goals.

Though the County arts' program has been extremely successful, it does require substantial staff time and expense. Because of the continued decline in resources, it appears prudent to narrow the scope of activities. In turn, because of the importance of arts to the community at large, we are recommending that the Arts Commission consider pursuing independent non-profit status, or consider joining another, already established, community based organization with similar goals. This approach will ensure the continuation of such worthwhile activities as conducting conferences/workshops on the arts and recognition of outstanding artists and organizations. As a non-profit entity, it is also envisioned that community financial support will be forthcoming along with the opportunity to apply for available grant funding.

The situation with the Commission for Women is quite similar to that of the Arts Commission. This organization does not currently utilize County staff, rather each member participates in carrying out the support functions. The County Board of Supervisors does, nonetheless, appoint the membership. Under the current structure, however, the Commission cannot fully take advantage of such funding sources as charitable contributions and grants which potentially could be available under the non-profit umbrella. Thus, we are recommending that the Commission consider this organizational structure.

The recommendation to eliminate the Agricultural Land Trust Advisory Committee and Senior Nutrition Advisory Council from the listing of

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County panels is the result of such an effort to obtain independent status. Both bodies incorporated in 1992 as non-profit entities. Although they have taken on a new structure, these panels will still provide your Board with valuable input in the coming years.

As stated in the introduction, this is the first Annual Review. We anticipate the recommended actions contained in this letter will enhance future reports to ensure that all committees operate as efficiently as possible and remain focused on their primary objectives.

Please call me at 654-2862 if I may answer any questions or provide additional information.



**TERRY DRYER**  
PRINCIPAL ANALYST

**Attachment**

c: Richard Wittenberg  
Agency Department Heads  
Committees w/o attachment  
CAO Analysts w/o attachment