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SAN DIEGO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

LEON L. WILLIAMS, SUPERVISOR

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SAN DIEGO WATER ALTHORITY WATER RECLAMATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

REGIONAL TASK FORCE ON THE HOMELESS

1600 PACIFIC HIGHWAY • SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA 92101 • (619)531-5544

CAO
PJA

August 20, 1990

TO: Norman Hickey
Chief Administrative Officer

FROM: Supervisor Leon L. Williams

SUBJECT: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BUDGET CUTS

During the next few weeks, as you review suggested budget cuts from members of the Board of Supervisors, my sincere hope is that together we can develop strategies which will enable us to maintain critical human services.

As you well know, over the last two years, we have embarked on a path to provide and emphasize prevention programs. And though we face difficult decisions, our focus, and my priority, must be on quality of care and programs which we have implemented. We must continue to maintain and expand them when possible. The results of our efforts should be to maintain funding and resources for health, mental health, social services, and law enforcement. All are necessary for a free and orderly society.

In your review of all the options available to us to reduce the budget deficit, I am sure you will give serious consideration to working with the employee groups in an effort to arrive at a compromise position with the unions to defer a percentage of the salary increases (which as you know is the largest growth area of the budget) and, therefore, enable us to maintain service levels.

The following items are a list of suggested areas for possible savings:

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A. A significant savings to the general fund could be realized if home garaging was reduced. A seventy-five percent reduction in Home Garaging could save approximately $330,000 in general fund costs. The departments having the greatest use of Home Garaged cars are:

* Sheriff's Department--396 vehicles out of a total of 714
* District Attorney--100 vehicles out of a total of 111
* Marshal--55 vehicles out of a total of 84

In addition, if the number of cars in the County fleet were reduced from 540 to 405, costs for auto parts, fuel, maintenance, and repairs would save approximately $100,000 and fuel costs would decrease by approximately $230,000.

B. Review the impact of increasing the number of unfilled positions for departments and the salary savings which would be achieved. Those positions which have been approved, but not filled, will increase the vacancy rate and yield savings and also create an opportunity to place those employees at risk of termination.

C. Review the impact of delaying additional capital projects. Examine the possible savings from delaying the completion and operation of Clairemont Hospital. It is important to review the funds set aside for various costs and programs associated with the opening of the hospital and the final determination of its use. These options should be examined within the context of reduced services at Rosecrans, priorities set by the Board of Supervisors and non-mandated program delivery.

D. Examine the potential savings for immediate implementation and impact on departments of a county-wide work furlough program which allows hourly, daily, and/or weekly leave period options.

E. Review the feasibility of eliminating, or significantly reducing, collect calls to the county. Implement policies which require only certain functions to accept collect calls. Potential savings of approximately $170,000. For example:

* In the case of jailed inmates calling the public defender, special non-collect line could be established which connects the jails with the public defenders' office.
* Compare the cost of a toll free telephone number for the public to use for specific departments in order to reduce the number of collect calls from citizens needing assistance.

F. Unanticipated revenues--review the projections of departments to actual historical patterns, determine any underestimating or over-realizing revenue which may be used to reduce our deficit. Implement a policy which would have all unanticipated revenue go to the general fund and not to departments. This revenue is to be used only on pre-defined needs established by the Board.

G. Reduce the number of temporary employees and the hours that temporary employees work, since most temporary employees work 40 hours a week, and in some cases 60 hours.

* Evaluate the impact of the layoff strategy on full time employees, while maintaining a significant temporary work force.
* Determine what options may be created for employees at risk of layoff while reducing our temporary work force.
* Evaluate the salary savings which would accrue from a policy which limited the number of hours temporary employees could work on a bi-weekly basis to: 50 hours, 60 hours or 70 hours.

H. Evaluate a percentage increase of certain user fees for their potential as revenue sources which could offset general fund costs. The County has over 160 sources of revenue that are based solely on user fees which could be increased at the direction of the Board of Supervisors.

I. Review the need for county phone operators, since each department has receptionists. Determine if this is a duplication of service. The public can utilize existing resources such as: AT & T directory assistance services, white pages, and calling departments directly for information; a potential savings of $266,000.

Since the recommendations offered must be reviewed in the context of the impact of realignment on our Department of Social Services and Health Services Department, the information which county staff provides will help us all arrive at a difficult, but fairer, budget for the citizens of San Diego County.

cc: Chairman John MacDonald
Supervisor George Bailey
Supervisor Brian Bilbray
Supervisor Susan Golding