

LAFCO

Santa Barbara Local Agency Formation Commission

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March 6, 2025 (Agenda)

Local Agency Formation Commission
105 East Anapamu Street
Santa Barbara CA 93101

LAFCO Organizational Extra-Help Options

Dear Members of the Commission,

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Commission discuss staff's proposal and provide direction regarding recruitment options in addressing LAFCOs extra-help needs and allow shifting priorities in staff's job descriptions to adapt to current circumstances.

DISCUSSION

This discussion would benefit the Commission before preparation of preliminary FY 25-26 Budget. Other review of staffing options has been presented to the Commission in 2014, 2019, 2020, and 2022.

Option A - In 2013, the Commission entered into a service agreement wherein the County agreed to provide administrative services through the Clerk of the Board's Office to the Commission. Although this agreement is still in place, it was determined LAFCO would resume all services in 2022 with the addition of Analyst/Clerk employee. One option to consider may be to re-activate this agreement with the County. Your Executive Officer has reached out to the County to solicit any interest and any capacity to fulfill a subset of the duties outlined in the previous agreement. As of this writing, County CEO was reaching out to various department to see if any personnel was interested in the role. By March 6th meeting I am hopeful to update the Commission if a County employee has interest. In addition, staff has reached out to other neighboring agencies to inquire if sharing a part-time person could be beneficial. At this time, there is no additional capacity from others to enter into an agreement for services.

Option B - In January 2022, the Commission considered four staffing options. The option for Executive Officer employee plus Part-time Clerk employee, and Full-time Analyst as all LAFCO Employees were considered. Adding a part-time Commission Clerk position would increase salary cost by \$3,500 to \$3,900 per month plus limited benefits. Salaries would increase by 18% and overall budget is expected to increase by 8%.

The option of 3-full time LAFCO employees were also considered. Given the specific skills and job duties of clerking services, a part-time employee may be difficult to fill. Offering a full-time position serving as a clerk/analysis may also open the candidate pool for employment recruiting. This maybe a longer-term solution to be considered should the workload continue at current pace.

Option C – The option to add a part-time person to fulfill a portion of clerking duties could be filled by a former SBCERS retiree. Under this option, needed services would be performed by contractor on payroll that meets the post-retirement employment of SBCERS requirements. Total hours would be limited to 960 per year, a limit of 24-month of service would apply, unless an extension is desired and the Commission adopts a resolution declaring the need. Adding a part-time Contracting Commission Clerk position would increase professional services cost by \$2,500 per month with no added benefits. Professional & Special Services would increase by 40% and overall budget is expected to increase by 5%.

BACKGROUND

The Santa Barbara LAFCO organization started in November 2020 as an employee model operating with one full-time employee. Prior to this LAFCO was served under a contractor model using County Clerk of the Board (COB) for clerking services. This model change was primarily a reaction to needing to implement a formal Municipal Service Review program while addressing an increase of submitted boundary change proposals. In Fiscal Year 22-23, the Commission authorized the addition of a full-time Analyst/Clerk employee and all COB service were returned to LAFCO.

Today, Santa Barbara LAFCO is subject to more regulations, works on projects that are more controversial and sometimes contentious, receives greater public and local agency scrutiny/questions/involvement, and is more proactive in reaching out to the greater Santa Barbara County community. Further, the State Legislature continues to look at LAFCO as its local “watchdog” on sustainable growth and good governance matters and continues to expand LAFCO’s responsibilities or direct LAFCO actions. Each year the Commission sets the organizational goals and work plan. In January 2025, the goals and work plan include continued effort on developing Memorandum of Agreements between the County and each City, an application for Round 10 Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Grant (SALC), while we continue processing all annexation and

sphere of influence proposals, maintain our outreach and support to each member agency. Organizationally, the Commission has also set LAFCOs goals to continue to monitor legislation in the State legislature that may affect LAFCOs, continue building relationships with each organization with a lasting trust, establish a Succession Plan for developing and mentoring employees.

Next Steps

The start of draft budgets is underway, your Executive Officer will prepare a draft budget for consideration in April with the direction provided by the Commission from above.

ALTERNATIVES FOR COMMISSION DIRECTION

After reviewing this report and any testimony or materials that are presented, the Commission can direct one of the following options:

OPTION 1 – APPROVE the Staff recommendation regarding adding a contract part-time Commission Clerk for a period of two years and bring back a draft budget in April. This is pending any interest by a County employee.

OPTION 2 – DEFER adding extra help for another time.

OPTION 3 – MODIFY the staff recommendation and direct staff to continue pursuing re-activating or entering into a new County agreement or enter into a new agreement with another agency.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

DIRECT OPTION 1.

Attachments

Attachment A – Commission Clerk Job Description (shifting highlighted portion)

Please contact the LAFCO office if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Mike Prater

Executive Officer

COMMISSION CLERK

Job Summary:

Under the general direction of the Executive Officer, provide overall office administration and accounting support for the Local Agency Formation Commission to maintain efficiency in everyday business.

Duties and Responsibilities:

Provide administrative/clerical support to the Executive Officer and the Local Agency Formation Commission. Is responsible for record maintenance, minute preparation and administrative correspondence. Assists the Executive Officer in budget preparation and contract administration.

Is responsible for preparation of public notices, timely posting of legal notices, recordation of public documents and filings with appropriate State agencies. Maintains mailing lists and prepares agendas for public meetings. Assists other staff in project report preparation.

Provide overall administrative and general clerical support in areas of purchasing, equipment maintenance and payroll.

Under general supervision of the Executive Officer, performs accounting duties to include: accounts payable and receivable, revenue tracking and deposit, trust account management and payroll.

Interact with the County Auditor-Controller's Office, County Treasurer-Tax Collector, and Bank for the purpose of account management.

Maintain the Commission's Website.

Education, Experience and Knowledge:

High School education or equivalent is required, plus at least five years of progressive experience in an administrative capacity to include 3-5 years' experience in book-keeping or accounting. Two years of college may be substituted for two years of experience. Must have significant experience in general office operations. Experience working in a local government environment, including serving a clerk to a board or commission, would be highly desirable.

Specific Skills:

Must have the ability to exercise independent judgement within agreed upon limitations, make administrative decisions and takes action on behalf of the Executive Officer based upon knowledge of the Commission's organization, policies and personnel. Must have excellent oral and written skills. Website maintenance skills are recommended.

Requires good organizational and computer skills, i.e. spreadsheets, word-processing, presentation, communication and Internet software.