



Solano Local Agency Formation Commission

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Staff Report

DATE: May 15, 2013
TO: Members of the Local Agency Formation Commission
FROM: Elliot Mulberg, Interim Executive Officer
Michelle McIntyre, Analyst

SUBJECT: **Staffing Analysis Report of Solano LAFCO**

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended the Commission review the staffing analysis report and provide staff direction.

BACKGROUND:

At the Commission's April 8, 2013 meeting, the Commission directed staff to schedule a workshop to address issues associated with the operation of LAFCO. It was suggested the agenda for the workshop should include a review the Commission's current staffing level, staff responsibilities, its administrative office location, going to a paperless agenda, and county support services including IT. Also of interest were reorganization options for the fire protection districts. The following report focuses on issues as they relate to staffing.

This staffing analysis provides a brief profile of the Solano Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) documenting key activities, allocation of staff by classifications, assigned responsibilities of staff, current and upcoming workload, and a survey of staffing of comparable LAFCOs. Data used in the profile were developed based on:

- Discussions with the LAFCO Policy and Procedures Subcommittee.
- Collection of various data describing organization and staffing.
- Documentation of key processes as they relate to staff work responsibilities and workload levels.

The staffing analysis document does not attempt to recapitulate all organizational and operational facets of the Commission. It is intended to provide a general overview and provide staffing analysis.

LAFCO Overview

Solano LAFCO has jurisdiction over local government boundaries and services provided within Solano County. The Commission is charged with the sole and exclusive authority for approval of changes in organization and reorganization for cities and special districts. This authority includes but is not limited to:

- Municipal incorporations,
- Annexations,
- Detachments,
- Disincorporations,
- Consolidation of cities,
- Consolidation of districts and/or mergers of districts with cities, and
- Establishment of subsidiary districts

The Commission has jurisdiction over 7 cities, 45 independent special districts, and two dependent special districts. Table 1 shows the distribution of the types agencies in LAFCO’s purview.

Table 1: Cities and Districts in Solano County

Agency Type	Number of Agencies
Cities	7
Fire Protection Districts	6
Water Districts	2
Sanitation and Sewer Districts	2
Community Service Districts	1
Recreation and Park Districts	1
County Service Areas	1
Mosquito Abatement Districts	1
Cemetery Districts	4
Resource Conservation Districts	3
Levee and Reclamation Districts	26
Total Special Districts	47

The Commission has a number of key responsibilities including:

- **Considering a change of organization** - A change of organization is one of the tools LAFCO uses to meet the legislative intent in establishing LAFCO.
- **Out of Area Service Agreements** -Cities and districts are required to obtain LAFCO’s approval prior to entering into contracts with private individuals or organizations to provide services outside of the agency’s boundaries.

- **Sphere of Influence Studies** - Establishment of the sphere is necessary to determine which governmental agencies can provide services in the most efficient way to the people and property in any given area, and, thereby, avoid overlapping jurisdictions, duplication of services, while discouraging urban sprawl.
- **Municipal Service Review Studies** - Information required for spheres of influence and changes in organization are provided by Municipal Service Reviews (MSR). Like the spheres of influence, MSR's need to be updated every five years.
- **Special Studies** – LAFCO's may conduct studies to assist in making determinations for changes of organization.

Staff Responsibilities

An analysis of staffing levels is both qualitative and quantitative. The qualitative portion reviews what tasks need to be performed. The quantitative portion will assess how many hours and staffing needed to complete the current and anticipated workload. More specifically it might be useful to look at staff's role in accomplishing an organization's foremost activities, staff roles and responsibilities for each classification, current staffing levels, as well as the workload.

Processing Change of Organizations and Reorganizations

It is important to note every change of organization and reorganization is unique. Additionally, processing a change of organizations is a public process and as such, staff receives inquiries from other agencies and the general public requesting updates, information, and making comments.

In its most basic form, processing a change of organization can be considered a four-part procedure.

1) Pre-Application

In Solano County, most are initiated by resolution of an affected agency. In this stage of the proposal, LAFCO staff will meet with affected agency staff to provide advice and review LAFCO policies and procedures; application requirements including maps, legal boundary description, fees, special studies; CEQA review; Sphere of Influence/Municipal Service requirements; and other project specific issues.

2) Application Filing

In this second stage of the process, staff's role is to review the application including CEQA, map and legal description, plan for providing service, compliance with other requirements; issue a Certificate of Filing, noticing affected; agencies, landowners, and registered voters; and initiate the tax exchange process. Solano County and the seven cities have a Master Tax Sharing Agreement, however, the County and affected agency can negotiate an alternative agreement. Staff acts as a liaison during this process.

3) Analysis and Consideration by the Commission

Processing an application requires a review of the application relative to the 14 considerations in 56668, consistency with the sphere of influence, local policies, and standards. Sometimes an application requires a concurrent MSR update or sphere of influence amendment. As part of the analysis staff will prepare the necessary amendments so that the application can be heard and acted upon by the commission. In this third stage, staff's role is to receive written comments, complete reports, make recommendations which may include amendments and conditions, notice the LAFCO hearing, distribute board packets, and make presentations before the Commission.

4) Protest Proceedings

If the application is approved there is a reconsideration period which would allow LAFCO to receive and address new information that was not available at the time of the hearing. The reconsideration period is followed by a protest hearing. The protest hearing can be conducted by the Commission or delegated to the Executive Officer. Often this involves duly re-noticing the project, accepting filings, confirming protests, and announcing the outcome. Historically, proposals before Solano LAFCO have not received sufficient protests to exceed the threshold for calling an election or for terminating the proposal.

Policy Development

CKH requires each LAFCO to adopt local policies to implement CKH. In the past, Solano LAFCO has not allocated significant time to the development of policies. This oversight has been corrected through the formation of the Policy and Procedures Subcommittee. Staff has been working closely with this subcommittee and expending a significant amount of time to ensure that the Commission's policies are updated. In the future, once the Commission's existing policies are up to date, the Subcommittee could remain a standing subcommittee that provides staff with direction for additions or amendments to the Commission policies.

MSR/SOI Preparation and Updates

On occasion staff may be required to prepare or update a municipal service review or sphere of influence. A current municipal service review is required to update or amend the sphere of influence, which is required to complete a change of organization. CKH requires MSRs and SOIs to be reviewed and updated every five years.

For an MSR, the staff analysis would need to address and make determinations in seven areas. They include 1) growth and population projections for the affected area; 2) the location and characteristics of any disadvantaged unincorporated communities within or contiguous to the sphere of influence; 3) present and planned capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services; 4) financial ability of agencies to provide services; 5) status of and opportunities for

shared facilities; 6) accountability for community service needs, including government structure and operational efficiencies; and 7) matters related to effective or efficient service delivery required by commission policy.

A sphere amendment or update requires sufficient analysis so the commission can make determinations in the following areas. 1) the present and planned land uses in the area, including agricultural and open-space lands; 2) the present and probable need for public facilities and service in the area; 3) the present capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services that the agency provides or is authorized to provide; 4) the existence of any social or economic communities of interest in the area if the commission determines that they are relevant to the agency; and 5) the present and probable need for public facilities and services to disadvantaged unincorporated communities.

CEQA and LAFCO Staff’s Role

LAFCO actions are subject to CEQA. Generally LAFCO acts as the responsible agency. Even as the responsible agency, there is still a significant amount of time dedicated to environmental review. In some cases, such as an incorporation or changes of organization initiated by LAFCO, LAFCO acts as the lead agency. As the lead agency LAFCO is responsible for the environmental analysis which may be completed in house or through an independent contractor.

Current Staffing and Responsibilities

The preceding discussion describe staff’s role in bringing an application forward to the Commission. In Solano LAFCO, the process is completed by the Executive Officer and Analyst who also performs the duties of the Clerk to the Commission. Solano LAFCO is funded for a full time Executive Officer and a full time Analyst for a total of 2 FTE. Table 2 identifies their specific responsibilities.

Table 2. Solano LAFCO Staff Responsibilities

Position	Description of Responsibilities
Executive Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statutory responsibilities described in CKH. • Develops and implements Commission policies. • Manages the staff operations. • Completes staff reports requiring the approval of the Commission. • Develops and monitors budgets for the Commission. • Develops goals and objectives for the Commission, and monitors performance.

Position	Description of Responsibilities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Represents the Commission before governmental agencies and community groups. • Reviews and comments on regional plans, city general plans, and environmental reviews. • Reviews, reports, and makes recommendations on state legislation • Coordinates with LAFCO Counsel on legal issues and other matters that may require an oral or written interpretation or opinion from legal counsel. • Determines legal acceptability for filings. • Checks and certifies petitions. • Conducts complex analysis and prepares written reports and recommendations. • Attends all LAFCO Commission meetings. • Provides technical assistance as necessary, especially with regard to preparation of applicant proposals. • Provides orientation for new commissioners. • Prepares the annual budget.
Analyst	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performs and coordinates analytical studies, such as Municipal Service Reviews and Sphere of Influence changes. • Represents the Commission as the initial contact for most applicants. • Reviews applications for accuracy of information, works with applicants to perfect an application, prepares staff reports. • Reviews and prepares comments for environmental documents • Assists in preparation of the budget for the Commission. • Assists in monitoring the budget. • Develops and recommends the adoption of improved management practices through research and analysis, including development of LAFCO Policies and Procedures. • Maintains close contact with county departments and agencies and confers with departmental officials in order to secure necessary information. • Represents the Commission to governmental agencies; may serve as staff for committees (CALAFCO). • Develops the fee schedule. • Assists in mapping and GIS development.

Position	Description of Responsibilities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acts as Executive Officer when the Executive Office is unavailable • Manages projects as directed by Executive Officer.
Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clerk to the Commission - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Organizes and schedules public hearings, committee meetings, and other group meetings ○ Prepares and distributes legal notices, agendas, and Commission packets • Maintains payroll records. • Works with consultant to maintain website. • Researches and retrieves public records for public inspection.

Survey of Comparable LAFCOs

In considering staffing levels, it might be useful to see how other comparable LAFCOs are staffed. Staff focused the survey on the eight other Bay Area LAFCOs and other three other LAFCOs with similar population, number of cities, and number of special districts. Important points to recognize concerning the data contained in the table are:

- Some of the LAFCOs rely on consultants to provide professional services on an as needed basis.
- Without factoring in consultants, it is common for LAFCOs to operate with 2 to 3 employees.
- Santa Barbara LAFCO with a similar population and number of agencies is somewhat unique in that it contracts all of its staffing needs to a consulting firm for a flat fee. That means the contractor provides whatever time is needed to complete tasks.

Table 3: LAFCO Staffing - Bay Area LAFCOs and Other Comparable LAFCOs

LAFCO	Total County Population ¹	Cities	Special Districts ²	EO	Asst E.O.	Analyst	Clerk	FTE
Bay Area								
Alameda	1,510,271	14	35	1		Contract	1	2.00 +
Contra Costa	1,049,025	19	78	1		Contract	1	2.00 +
San Francisco	805,235	1	2	Contract		1	Contract	1.00 +
San Mateo	718,451	20	56	1			Contract	1.00 +
Santa Clara	1,781,642	15	29	1		1	1	3.00
Sonoma	483,878	9	54	1	1		1	3.00
Marin	250,500	11	36	1			0.75	1.75
Napa	136,000	5	18	1		1	0.5	2.50
Solano	413,344	7	48	1		1		2.00
Other								
Placer	348,432	6	42	1			0.8	1.80
San Luis Obispo	269,637	7	46	1		1	1	3.00
Santa Barbara	423,895	8	52	Contract			Contract	2.00

Source: ¹CDOF 2010, ²CALAFCO Survey 2009

Summary of Workloads

Having previously described the qualitative aspects of staffing it is important to estimate the time required to complete those activities. When taken in context with the proposed work plan the analysis will provide an estimate of staffing for the coming fiscal year.

The time required to process an application can be estimated based on the time spent in recent years. In 2012 staff processed 10 applications including 5 annexations, 2 detachments, and 3 reorganizations. Time spent averaged 67 hours per application, with a range of 20 hours for a single property annexation to the Rural North Vacaville Water District to 150 hours for the Canon Station Annexation to Fairfield. Staff spent an additional 200 hours on MSR/SOI studies.

In addition to processing applications and MSR/SOI activities much of staff time is spent on administrative functions. Our best estimate for administrative functions is based on time spent in the last six months. It is assumed activities during this period are typical and can then be doubled for a complete fiscal year. Table 3 on the following page shows the time spent with current staffing levels, a full time analyst and a part time EO. It should be noted that since December 2012, staff has spent a considerable amount of time working with the Policy and Procedures Subcommittee to update and create various policies. Staff anticipates this trend will continue in the upcoming fiscal year as many of LAFCO’s policies require updating. Table 3

captures approximately 900 hours of staff’s time for the six month duration. It is not meant to be all encompassing. For a full year the estimate is approximately 1800 hours.

Table 4: Staff Hours for Administrative Activities January to June 2013

Description	Est. Hours EO	Est. Hours Analyst
Budget preparation & distribution	80	48
Budget monitoring	24	24
Vendor Claims Processing	6	39
Payroll	6	12
Filing and other support services	12	24
Filing notices, deposits with treasurer, 700 forms, scheduling meeting rooms	0	24
Policy and Procedures development	160	40
Contract administration and management	3	8
Commission Meetings – Including preparation	12	18
Preparation of the Agenda packet – Not including hours for project proposals	96	72
Outside office meetings	30	24
Staff meetings	24	24

Description	Est. Hours EO	Est. Hours Analyst
CALAFCO Conferences and Workshops – EO attends Conferences and Workshops, however does not bill LAFCO for time	0	12
CALAFCO Planning Committees –staff provides support to various committees for Workshop/Conference Planning. EO provides support to CALAFCO but does not bill LAFCO for time	0	8
Bay Area LAFCO Groups	6	12
Education & Training	0	16
Website development and maintenance	0	4
GIS – Mapping not including maps for reorganizations. Includes review of maps, working with GIS, research, etc.	6	12
Respond to public records requests and other miscellaneous requests for records	6	16
Total hours 6 months	471	437
Total hours 12 months	942	874

Anticipated Staffing Needs

Table 5 is a summary of hours needed to complete the FY 2013-14 workplan. The time estimated for city applications, special district applications, and MSR/SOI updates is based on anticipated applications considered in the adopted work plan. Time estimated for administrative tasks comes from Table 3.

Table 5 shows the estimated time for the next fiscal year would be approximately 2,656 hours. That total is split between the executive officer and the analyst. Since most of the time spent processing applications is by the analyst, the portion of time spent by the executive officer on this task was estimated as 20% of the total time.

Table 5 also shows FTE or full time equivalents. That figure is based on the total estimated hours divided by the number of hours available annually. The total available hours accounts for vacation, administrative leave, sick leave, and holidays. The Table shows the anticipated work load can be completed with a full time analyst and a part time EO.

Table 5: Estimated Hours FY 2013-14 Based on the Workplan

Task	Estimated Hours EO	Estimated Hours Analyst	Estimated Hours Total
City Applications	42	168	210
Special District Applications	64	256	320
MSR/SOI Updates	62	248	310
Administrative	942	874	1816
Total Hours	1110	1546	2656
Full Time Equivalents	0.70	0.97	1.67

Conclusions

1. Anticipated workload for FY 13/14 can be completed with a full time analyst and a part time executive officer.
2. Should the workload increase dramatically the commission has the option of extending the executive officer position.