

Ventura County Board of Supervisors' Stipends and Commissions

Background

The 2001-2002 Ventura County Grand Jury looked into stipends and/or compensation given supervisors for attending board/commission committee meetings. This investigation started at the same time Ordinance 4191 was proposed by Supervisor Bennett to eliminate compensation for service on Boards and Committees on July 17, 2001.

On December 11, 2001, at the second reading of Ordinance 4191, Supervisor Flynn proposed an amendment to the ordinance exempting the Assessment Appeals Board and the Board of Retirement from the original ordinance. Supervisor Flynn resigned from the Assessment Appeals Board on January 28, 2002. However future members of the Board of Supervisors will still be able to collect compensation under the exemption provisions of the amended ordinance. Supervisor Schillo is currently serving on the Board of Retirement.

This amendment was passed by a 3-2 vote of the Supervisors with Supervisors Bennett and Long dissenting.

The final reading of Ordinance 4191 was December 18, 2001, Section 4 Boards and Commissions.

“Supervisors shall not be entitled to receive any compensation for services rendered on any board, commission or committee, the membership for which is appointed by the Board of Supervisors EXCEPT the Ventura County Employees Retirement Association, Board of Retirement and Ventura County Assessment Appeals Board. With regards to all other boards and commissions, Supervisors shall either waive any fee payable thereunder or shall designate that all such fees shall be made payable to the Ventura County Auditor-Controller for deposit in the Ventura County General Fund.”

Section 3-This ordinance shall take effect on February 17, 2002, more than 60 days from the date of adoption.

Section 4- All other provisions of Ordinance 4191 not consistent with the provision herein remain in full force and effect.

Passed and adopted the 18th day of December, 2001 by the following:

Ayes: Supervisors Mikels, Flynn and Schillo.

Noes: Supervisors Bennett and Long.

Methodology

The Grand Jury contacted a Supervisor's office, asked for and received copies of board minutes and formal readings regarding Ordinance 4191. We also contacted the Auditor-Controller's office to determine if stipends affected Supervisors' retirement pay.

Findings

- F-1. Supervisor Flynn served on the Ventura County Assessment Appeals Board until January 28, 2002. This board meets weekly and stipends amount to \$100-\$200 per meeting. Thirty-six meetings were held last year.
- F-2. Supervisor Schillo currently serves on the Retirement Association Board which meets twice monthly and pays \$100 per meeting.
- F-3. The current board member compensation:
\$85,000 annual salary; full package or standard county fringe benefits; and transportation allowance: choice of either the IRS-approved \$.365 per mile reimbursement or full cost of car lease, fuel and operating expenses.
- F-4. Supervisors Long, Mikels and Bennett do not elect to receive stipends.
- F-5. Stipends paid do affect Supervisors' retirement pay.

Conclusions

- C-1. Stipends are intended to reimburse citizens for disruption of work, time and revenue.
- C-2. The Board of Supervisors should not receive stipends for attending meetings of Boards or Commissions, which are part of their supervisory duties.

Recommendations

- R-1. The amendment to Ordinance 4191 should be removed.
- R-2. If attendance at these exempted boards is so onerous, it would be better to alternate membership on the two boards among all Supervisors on an annual basis.

Commendations

Supervisors Long, Mikels and Bennett do not elect to receive stipends from the Boards and Commissions they attend.

Responses Required

- Supervisor Flynn
- Supervisor Schillo
- Supervisor Long
- Supervisor Mikels
- Supervisor Bennett