

The County of Orange Report

December 14, 2020
by Lewis Consulting Group



ORANGE COUNTY
LAFCO
EST. 1963

LAFCO Highlighted by Changing of the Guard

The December 9th meeting of OCLAFCO was a bittersweet event as the Directors paid tribute to outgoing Chairwoman Cheryl Brothers. Brothers was defeated in her city council re-election bid, making her ineligible to continue as a city representative on LAFCO. This was the first meeting that Huntington Beach Councilman Mike Posey served as the committee's newest city representative.

With the beginning of the New Year looming, selection of 2021 officers took place. The 2021 Chairman will be East Orange County Water District's Board President Doug Davert and Supervisor Don Wagner was selected to serve as Vice Chair.

Due to COVID-19, the annual LAFCO Strategic Workshop has been delayed until June 2021 at the earliest. As Chairman Davert noted, the Workshop does not lend itself to a Zoom meeting.

Finally, under the agenda's Legislative Report, it was noticed that LAFCOs across the state will be involved in and monitoring this year's LAFCO omnibus bill. Some of the issues that should be addressed are:

- 1) clarifying the role a "Principal County" plays in spheres of influence
- 2) clarifying LAFCO role in city and special districts new or extended services outside of their boundaries
- 3) clarifying Protest Provisions for LAFCO proceedings



UPDATE

COVID-19 and ICE Heat Up Board Meeting

No, we are not talking about the dry ice needed to appropriately cool the Pfizer vaccine, but the ICE better defined as the Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

Several years ago, the California Truth Act, Transparent Review of Urgent Transfers and Hold was enacted into law. The Truth Act requires counties to hold an annual public meeting to provide access to information to the public regarding cooperation with ICE

and the numbers of individuals the county was holding under an ICE detention. The County in the past has just treated it like a regular item on the agenda with little or no comment. This has outraged local immigration activists.

This year, for the first time, Sheriff Don Barnes testified to last year's statistics and noted the total number of ICE detentions in 2019 was 1,507. Of those, 492 of the worst offenders were turned over to ICE upon completion of their sentence. State law shielded 1,015 of the inmates from being turned over to ICE and they were released. Among those, 238 have already been re-arrested for additional crimes.

The Board of Supervisors continued to get publicly pummeled by a group of citizens who show up to oppose Governor Newsom's various COVID-19 restrictions. Some object to mandating mask wearing, others to curfews and closures. Numerous times the Board has listened to heart wrenching stories of small business owners or restauranteurs who have gone deeply into debt, face the risk of losing their businesses or have already done so.

There is not the appetite among a majority of the Board to either reject some of the Governor's orders or to join in litigation with counties opposing the Governor's orders. Instead, at the December 8th meeting, they unanimously passed a resolution by Supervisor Bartlett and Wagner calling on the Governor to respect Orange County's autonomy particularly opposing the new region it has been placed in and to give more deference overall to local control.

The next Board meeting takes place December 15th and any items of interest will be briefed orally.



Supervisor Election Looms Large in OC

When Orange County Supervisor Michelle Steel unseated freshman Congressman Harley Rouda, it jump-started a frenzy among ambitious councilmembers throughout the district. Even though the Board of Supervisors is a non-partisan body, you wouldn't know that by the sense of urgency taken by both the Republican and Democratic parties to secure a new victory.

Because Michelle Steel has not yet resigned from her Board position, the election to replace her has not been called. However, the winner of the "winner take all" primary, puts a premium of each party trying to winnow the field to prevent "vote splitting". So far, the Democrats have consolidated behind Costa Mesa Mayor Katrina Foley. Despite a Republican Party endorsement for former Supervisor/County Treasurer/State Senator John Moorlach, two popular GOP councilmembers, Huntington Beach's Mike Posey and Newport Beach's Kevin Muldoon remain in the race. Under the existing field of candidates, Katrina Foley appears to be the early favorite.



PPIC

PUBLIC POLICY
INSTITUTE OF CALIFORNIA

NEW POLL

Californians and Their Economic Well Being

On December 5, 2020, the PPIC released its first post election survey, this one dealing with Californians' attitude about the state of the economy and how it affects them. The survey of 1,700 Californians occurred between November 4-23. It has a margin of error +/- 3.3% with a 95% confidence level.

Looking ahead, in California will we have mostly good times during the next five years or will we have mostly periods of widespread unemployment or depression?

- 40% good times
- 59% periods of depression or unemployment
- 1% don't know

Does the lack of well-paying jobs make you and your family seriously consider moving away from the part of California you live in now? (if yes, ask: "Does it make you consider moving elsewhere in California or outside of the state?")

- 32% yes
 - ⇒ 6% yes, elsewhere in California
 - 26% yes, outside the state
- 68% no
- 1% don't know

Do you think the American Dream—that if you work hard you'll get ahead—still holds true, never held true, or once held true but does not anymore?

- 38% still holds true
- 16% never held true
- 45% once held true, but not anymore

Do you think the American Dream is easier to achieve in California than elsewhere in the US or harder to achieve?

- 11% easier to achieve
- 58% harder to achieve
- 30% about the same
- 1% don't know

When children today in California grow up, do you think they will be better off or worse off financially than their parents?

- 35% better off
- 63% worse off
- 1% don't know

Do you favor or oppose a government policy to make college tuition free at both public two-year and four-year colleges?

- 66% favor
- 34% oppose

Would you favor or oppose the government offering a health insurance plan, similar to Medicare, that Americans can choose to purchase instead of private insurance?

77% favor
23% oppose

Would you favor or oppose the federal government providing a guaranteed income, sometimes called a "Universal Basic Income," of about \$1,000 a month for all adult citizens, whether or not they work?

50% favor
50% oppose

Because of the corona virus outbreak...

Have you or anyone in your household been laid off or lost their job?

25% yes
75% no

Have you or anyone in your household had work hours reduced or pay cut?

38% yes
62% no

Have you or anyone in your household been working remotely from home?

47% yes
53% no

Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican Party or Democratic Party?

31% Republican Party
64% Democratic Party
4% neither



Orange County COVID-19 Stats

ORANGE COUNTY COVID-19 STATS	AS OF 12/13/2020	AS OF 11/9/2020
CUMULATIVE CASES TO DATE	102,514	62,563
CUMULATIVE DEATHS TO DATE	1,694	1,509
DEATHS REPORTED TODAY	14	0
CUMULATIVE TESTS TO DATE	1,694,359	1,190,732
TESTS REPORTED TODAY	21,438	7,148
CASES CURRENTLY HOSPITALIZED	1,236 *	205*
CASES CURRENTLY IN ICU	284	76
CUMULATIVE RECOVERED TO DATE	65,621*	55,063*

* = INCLUDES *ICU* CASES

Where Orange County Ranks [as of 12/13/2020]

LOCATION	POPULATION	CONFIRMED CASES	DEATHS
CALIFORNIA	40,129,160	1,551,766	20,939
LOS ANGELES COUNTY	10,247,557	504,317	8,269
ORANGE COUNTY	3,228,519	102,514	1,694
RIVERSIDE COUNTY	2,468,145	118,335	1,573
SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY	2,217,398	125,741	1,215
SAN DIEGO COUNTY	3,370,418	104,958	1,151

“The decision to include among other sectors outdoor dining and limiting that — turning to restaurants to deliver and provide takeout options instead — really has to do with the goal of trying to keep people at home, not comment on the relative safety of outdoor dining”.

- Mark Chaly - California Health and Human Services Agency Secretary

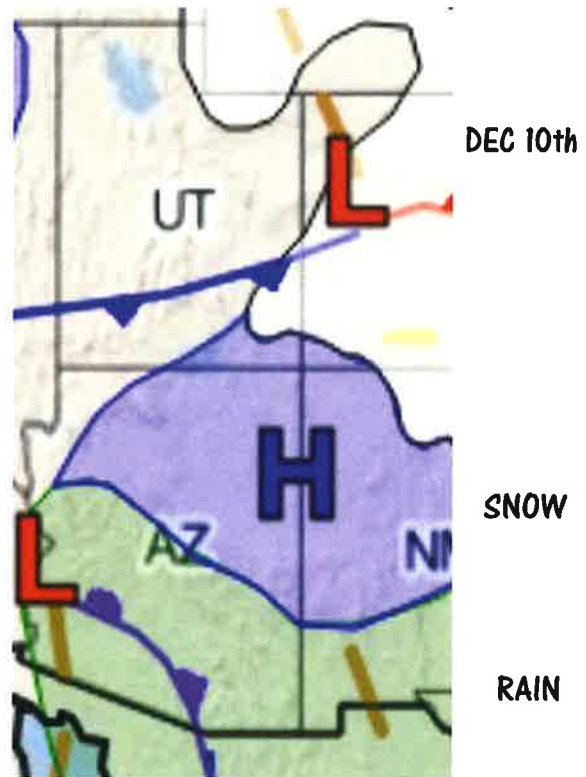
ENSO METER



La Niña conditions have lessened slightly, but Southern California's weather patterns continues to reflect La Niña probabilities with warmer and drier weather in the Southland.

Finally - Some relief for Four Corners area and the Colorado River

Colorado River Basin map



While not close to being a drought buster. . . Could this be the changing of a weather pattern?