

## CALAFCO BULLETIN

### Proposed LAFCo Membership New Dues Structure

To be presented to the Membership for consideration and vote at the  
2019 Annual Business Meeting in Sacramento, California on  
October 31, 2019



### Questions & Answers

**Question:** *How did the Board come up with the proposed dues structure?*

**Answer:** The Board spent over a year deliberating the structural deficit and dues structure through their Finance Ad Hoc Committee. They considered feedback received from the membership at the 2018 Annual Conference from the regional roundtable discussions and the message to work towards a more sustainable dues structure model. The Board discussed at length options presented to them by the Ad Hoc Committee in February and May.

**Question:** *Why was this structure selected over other options considered?*

**Answer:** After extensive research and discussion by the Ad Hoc Committee, and after considering a variety of possible structures including those based on LAFCo budget, County category (urban-suburban-rural), flat rate increases and population, ultimately it was a population-based structure that was favored. The Ad Hoc Committee presented two options to the Board with this population-based structural model and the Board agreed the population-based structure created the fewest irregularities to resolve and created a more sustainable funding formula. Ultimately this structure was unanimously approved by the Board.

**Question:** *What are the variables in the formula?*

**Answer:** The formula includes: (1) A flat annual fee or base rate (each LAFCo will pay the same flat rate); (2) Population threshold number; and (3) A per capita rate.

**Question:** *How will these variables be determined each year as CALAFCO considers member LAFCo dues?*

**Answer:** Should the membership approve the new structure, the Board will create policies to support the new structure. These policies will include the consideration of each of these variables and possible future adjustments. These policies will include keeping the Board's discretion to increase the dues by the CPI annually.

**Question:** *Where will the population data come from?*

**Answer:** The population data will be updated annually as the Board considers the next fiscal year dues. The data source to be used for updates is the California Department of Finance population estimates.

**Question:** *Is CALAFCO still budgeting for a net profit for the Annual Conference and how does that impact the annual budget?*

**Answer:** Yes. The Board has given clear direction that each year the annual budget should have a 15% net profit built into the budget for the Annual Conference (pursuant to Board Policy 4.2). CALAFCO's current FY 2019-20 budget calls for a 15% (or \$20,817) net profit. This net profit is still used to help balance the budget. However, the goal is for CALAFCO to move away from the unhealthy and unsustainable reliance on any higher net profit assumptions to balance the budget and fill the structural deficit.

The Ad Hoc Committee and the Board discussed at length using sponsorships to boost revenue and the Board continues to feel this revenue is unreliable and unpredictable and therefore unrealistic to use as a reliable revenue source.

**Question:** *How were the proposed base rate, population threshold and per capita rate selected?*

**Answer:** First, the Board committed to using the FY 2018-19 dues as the baseline from which to work, which they did (the FY 2018-19 dues are lower than the FY 2019-20 dues). The Board anticipated the FY 2020-2021 operational costs to be close to \$300,000, which was the baseline budget number from which they worked. The Ad Hoc Finance Committee considered eleven (11) different options before deciding on the population-based model with the three variables. To narrow that further, after looking at several (three) options with different variable numbers, the Board selected the current formula (\$1,000 base rate, 700,000 population threshold, per capita rate of 0.013802199 and population estimates for 2020 given that is the year the new dues structure would take effect, should it be approved). While this and other formulas realized the \$300,000 anticipated operational budget, these particular variables created dues for each LAFCo that the Board felt were the most equitable at this time.

**Question:** *How is this structure different than the current structure?*

**Answer:** The straight 3-category model no longer effectively serves the Association's member LAFcos. County populations vary enough that 3 categories just did not accurately capture the broader population picture. With the proposed model, the gap in the amount paid between the more populated rural LAFcos and their suburban colleagues has been reduced, as has the gap between the higher populated suburban LAFcos and the urban LAFcos.

**Question:** *Are LAFcos in counties with a population over 700,000 exempt from any future increase based on population growth?*

**Answer:** The proposed changes call for the Board to set the population threshold annually. Should the membership approve this proposed structure, the Board will set policies around the variables of population threshold, base rate and per capita rate. This means that population threshold can change based on Board discretion.

**Question:** *What if our LAFco has a financial hardship? Is that still addressed in the Bylaws?*

**Answer:** Yes. The Board unanimously agreed to keep the provision of allowing any LAFco with a financial hardship to bring that to the Board for consideration. (Please refer to Bylaws Section 2.2.4).

**Question:** *What will the dues be for my LAFco if the membership approves this new structure?*

**Answer:** The spreadsheet accompanying this bulletin details what the first year will look like with this formula. As a starting point, the Bylaws will reflect the formula used to get at these rates and the rate chart itself. That detailed information will be contained in the meeting packet for the October 31, 2019 Annual Membership meeting.

**Question:** *When will the membership vote on this proposed structure?*

**Answer:** The proposed structure is being presented to member LAFcos for voting at the Annual Business meeting on October 31, 2019 during the Annual Conference in Sacramento. The Annual Business Meeting agenda and meeting packet will be distributed in early August, allowing approximately three months for discussion prior to the vote.

**Question:** *Can we vote by proxy or absentee ballot if we are not attending the Annual Business meeting?*

**Answer:** No, all member LAFcos must be present to vote at the Annual Business meeting pursuant to Bylaws Section 3.7. **For purposes of voting, each member LAFco must be in good standing – which means all dues are current and paid in full by September 30, 2019. Further, each member LAFco shall submit to CALAFco the name of their voting delegate by September 30, 2019.**

**Question:** *What happens if the membership does not approve the proposed new dues structure?*

**Answer:** The Association will continue to have a structural deficit and may need to rely on accessing Fund Reserves to balance the budget. Further, in order to have a balanced budget, without additional sustainable and reliable revenues, expenses will need to be reduced which will equate to a reduction in services offered.

**Question:** *Who can I talk to if I have questions?*

**Answer:** If you have questions you are encouraged to contact Pamela Miller, CALAFco's Executive Director at [pmiller@calafco.org](mailto:pmiller@calafco.org) or 916-442-6536. You can also contact the CALAFco Board Chair Josh Susman at [jsusman@calafco.org](mailto:jsusman@calafco.org). You are highly encouraged to reach out to any of your regional Board members and/or your regional staff representatives. All of their names and contact information can be found on the CALAFco website at [www.calafco.org](http://www.calafco.org).