

Long Beach City Auditor Laura Doud
Recognizes and Celebrates



Myrtelle Gunsul
Long Beach City Auditor
1919-1951



MISS MYRTILLE L. GUNSUL
CITY AUDITOR

CITY OF LONG BEACH

LONG BEACH, CALIFORNIA

March 23, 1931.

TO THE WOMEN OF THE FUTURE:

To you I send Greetings as the first and only woman to occupy the elective position of City Auditor since the year 1919, in the beautiful City of Long Beach, California.

I hope that the position of women in National and City Administrations of the future shall be more clearly recognized as a great constructive force for the betterment of all.

I have blazed this trail and have endeavored to leave a record that shall be an incentive to other women. I hope that, increasingly, women shall enter into public service and instill high ideals and motives into both political and business life.

"Efficiency not Politics" has been my Motto.

Sincerely yours,

City Auditor.

MLG:

Greeting enclosed in time capsule for Municipal Auditorium, placed 3.23.31, recovered week preceding March 26, 1975

Myrtelle Gunsul wrote a letter for a time capsule buried at the Long Beach Municipal Auditorium in 1931.

The time capsule was opened 44 years later in 1975, and this letter to the women of the future was discovered.

Long Beach and Vicinity

GUARDIANS OF CITY BANK ROLL



Miss Myrtelle Gunsel, Long Beach City Auditor, seated at right; Miss Esther Skonberg, chief deputy, seated at left. At right, standing, Mrs. Mabel Hadfield, deputy; left, Miss Helen Barnes, clerk.

WOMEN HOLD MUNICIPAL PURSE STRING

City Auditor and Her Assistants Control Entire Finances at Beach Without Extravagance

LONG BEACH, July 10.—Women hold the purse strings of official Long Beach.

The city auditor is a woman. She is Miss Myrtelle Gunsel. She has three assistants—women. They are Miss Esther Skonberg, chief deputy; Mrs. Mabel Hadfield, deputy, and Miss Helen Barnes, clerk.

The city auditing department runs the city's finances; women run the city auditing department. It's believed the only instance in the United States.

One would hardly suspect that they would disallow a bill for \$1.75 for flowers used to decorate the official automobile of the city commissioners for a parade. But that's what they did. There is nothing but business, no politics or anything, about the auditorial office. Floral frivolities of masculine commissioners are not to be financed by the city, and as long as the office full of women can prevent it, they will do so, no matter how lovely the legislators looked in their power garlanded machine.

WOMEN NAME TAX RATE

Such a little matter as determining the city tax rate, paying the city bills and collecting delinquent taxes are up to the four women of the auditor's office.

And despite these problems their greatest difficulty consists of moving a gigantic book weighing eighty-seven pounds. The volume contains the delinquent tax list extending over a number of years. Even making the collections pale into insignificance when it comes to transporting the book from desk to safe and back again. But between the four of them the feat is managed all right.

Every demand upon the city must receive the approval of Miss Gunsel. Every apportionment of city funds must be made at her office. She is a sort of super bookkeeper for the entire city. And once every month every employee of the city calls at her office at the top of the stairs in the City Hall Building and street sweepers line up along with commissioners, policemen and life guards.

WINS RE-ELECTION

And the fact that the city finances are directed in perfect fashion with a woman at the head of the department and all feminine assistants is evidenced in the fact that at an election a month ago Miss Gunsel was returned to office by a vote of 7 to 1 majority over a masculine opponent.

Miss Gunsel has been in city service and the same office for seven years. For a time she was deputy. Then she became chief deputy. She proved her candidacy for the position and was summarily discharged by the masculine head of the department. She anticipated him and her resignation reached the city commission before his notice of dismissal reached her. Then she went ahead and was elected to the office.

Such matters as awarding compensation to a patrolman whose car was bitten nearly off by a city prisoner, paying for the establishing of a city dump, paying taxicab bills for city commissioners and making an inventory of the city's property are all in the day's work.

A sign placed in a prominent position on the wall of the office says, "Business."



"Efficiency, Not Politics."

Myrtelle Gunsul's motto

"Actions speak louder than words."

Myrtelle Gunsul's lifelong personal motto

"To me, public office is public trust."

Myrtelle Gunsul's 1921 letter to the voters of Long Beach