



MINUTES
of the
THREE-HUNDRED-ELEVENTH MEETING
of the
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
September 25, 2007
Santa Fe

The three-hundred-eleventh meeting of the Legislative Council was called to order on Tuesday, September 25, 2007, at 10:40 a.m. in Room 307 of the State Capitol by Speaker of the House Ben Lujan, co-chair.

Present

Representative Ben Lujan, Co-Chair
Senator Carlos R. Cisneros
Senator Dianna J. Duran
Senator Stuart Ingle
Senator Timothy Z. Jennings
Representative Rhonda S. King
Senator Leonard Lee Rawson
Representative Sheryl Williams Stapleton
Representative Thomas C. Taylor
Representative Jeannette O. Wallace

Special Advisory Members Present

Representative Donald E. Bratton
Representative Antonio Lujan
Representative James Roger Madalena

Staff

Paula Tackett, Director, Legislative Council Service (LCS)
Kathy Pacheco-Dofflemeyer, Assistant Director for Administration, LCS
Raúl Burciaga, Assistant Director for Drafting Services, LCS
Jeret Fleetwood, Locator Coordinator, LCS

Absent

Senator Ben D. Altamirano, Co-Chair
Senator Pete Campos
Senator Kent L. Cravens
Representative Daniel R. Foley
Representative W. Ken Martinez
Representative Rick Miera
Senator Michael S. Sanchez

Special Advisory Members Absent

Representative Janice E. Arnold-Jones
Senator Mary Jane M. Garcia
Senator Cisco McSorley
Senator Steven P. Neville
Representative Al Park
Senator Lidio G. Rainaldi
Senator John Arthur Smith
Senator H. Diane Snyder
Representative Peter Wirth

Senator Duran was named as a voting member for the duration of the meeting for the purposes of a quorum.

The minutes of the August 20, 2007 meeting of the council were approved as submitted.

Session Preparation

The council authorized the LCS and the House and Senate chief clerks to proceed with regular preparation for session, beginning with hiring the necessary pre-session staff, including one computer staff member on October 1; two to three clerks' core staff members on October 15; pre-session employees on November 1; leadership staff on November 15; and five to 10 other clerks' staff members on December 1.

Ms. Tackett reminded the council that, before 30-day sessions, the standing finance, education and, sometimes, the transportation committees usually begin meeting before the legislature meets in January. She indicated that the House Appropriations and Finance Committee, Senate Finance Committee, House Education Committee, Senate Education Committee, Senate Corporations and Transportation Committee and House Transportation and Public Works Committee would all likely meet before the 2008 session begins.

Interim Committee Requests

The council approved an extra meeting day for the Radioactive and Hazardous Materials Committee for its October meeting to visit a uranium mine reclamation site.

In response to a question from Representative Antonio Lujan, staff indicated that the committee has not yet decided whether to meet on October 29-30 or 30-31.

Staff Reports

Ms. Tackett indicated that the architectural firm of Dekker, Parich and Sabatini had been selected to continue with planning at the Capitol North. She explained that the firm would be meeting with staff at the Secretary of State's Office, the Administrative Office of the Courts, the Legislative Finance Committee and the Legislative Education Study Committee to develop space recommendations for long- and short-term needs.

In response to a question from Speaker Lujan, staff indicated that a more detailed report would be made to the council at an upcoming meeting.

Ms. Tackett noted that some preliminary work had been done regarding the use of money appropriated for webcasting of legislative sessions, but requested council approval for the LCS to make a formal request for information (RFI). She explained that the RFI functions somewhat like a request for proposals, but that no contract would be awarded. Instead, she indicated that experts would reply to the RFI with information about the initial and recurring costs associated with webcasting, as well as ideas about how best to handle cost, staffing and various other

logistic issues. She also stated that staff would return to the council with a report regarding the recommendations made in response to the RFI.

In response to a question from Senator Jennings, Ms. Tackett indicated that money for webcasting had come as a severance tax bond project, but that the money would not be certified until more information on the project could be obtained.

On a motion made, seconded and approved, the council authorized the LCS to issue an RFI regarding webcasting of legislative sessions, with Senator Jennings and Senator Ingle voting NO.

The council approved the use of both the House and Senate chambers for a Council of State Governments-West (CSG-West) Border Legislative Conference on October 19.

In response to a question from Speaker Lujan, Ms. Tackett indicated that the Legislative Council has historically authorized legislators to attend conferences such as this, even those legislators who are not members of the organization. However, she did note that members would have to call their respective leaders in order to be authorized to attend.

On a motion made, seconded and unanimously approved, the council authorized all members to attend the CSG-West Border Legislative Conference, subject to members calling their respective leaders.

The council directed staff to inform members about the conference.

Ms. Tackett indicated that the issue raised at the previous meeting regarding office suite keys for legislators had been resolved between the LCS, the House and Senate chief clerks and the Legislative Building Services (LBS). She stated that, upon request, members could now get a key from the LBS that would open the door to the suites of offices containing their individual offices.

In response to a question from Speaker Lujan, Ms. Tackett indicated that members could either get a key to open the large suite of offices located in the Capitol North or they could have security open the suite for them.

Ms. Tackett noted that the LCS accounting office had just received word from the Department of Finance and Administration (DFA) that payment vouchers received after 12:00 noon would not be processed until the next day, which means that it would likely be 72 hours before members receive per diem and mileage checks.

In response to a number of questions, Ms. Pacheco-Dofflemeyer explained that the new accounting system, SHARE, simply is not as fast as the old accounting system. She explained that part of this is because the new system processes everything at once while the old system was fairly compartmentalized and allowed for quicker turnaround times on items such as per diem

and mileage payments. She also pointed out that a number of other factors, such as phone line problems or problems affecting the speed with which information transfers across the internet, could also affect the speed of the overall system. Ms. Pacheco-Dofflemeyer reminded the council that SHARE is processing all of the state's transactions across New Mexico, so that if a warrant is cashed anywhere, it can affect the system as a whole.

In response to a question from Representative Bratton, Ms. Pacheco-Dofflemeyer explained that with the SHARE system, transactions are not reconciled at the agency level, but at a statewide level. She noted that while such an arrangement probably works better for the DFA, it does make things a bit tougher for agencies, because the sheer volume of activity on the system makes it difficult for agencies to determine what their liabilities are. She went on to acknowledge that the delay in processing payment vouchers is less a financial issue for the state than an issue with the process and timing associated with the new system.

Speaker Lujan suggested that representatives from the DFA speak to the council about the issues associated with SHARE.

Ms. Tackett notified the council that a card reader had been installed on the door to the Senate lounge, allowing senators access to the room year-round.

In response to a question from Senator Rawson regarding potential illegal immigrants working in the Capitol, staff indicated that session staff are required to produce federal I-9 forms, social security numbers and two forms of identification.

There being no further business, the council adjourned at 11:20 a.m.