

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL**

**SEPTEMBER 23, 2021
10:30 AM**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Sara Hannan, Chair
Senator Lora Reinbold, Vice Chair
Representative Bryce Edgmon
Representative Louise Stutes
Representative Cathy Tilton
Senator Mike Shower
Senator Bert Stedman
Senator Gary Stevens

MEMBERS ABSENT

Representative Matt Claman
Representative Neal Foster
Representative Chris Tuck
Senator Click Bishop
Senator Lyman Hoffman
Senator Shelley Hughes (alternate)
Senator Peter Micciche

OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Harriet Drummond

AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER
APPROVAL OF AGENDA
APPROVAL OF MINUTES
COMMITTEE BUSINESS
COMMITTEE BUSINESS - EXECUTIVE SESSION
ADJOURN

SPEAKER REGISTER

Jessica Geary, Executive Director, Legislative Affairs
Agency (LAA)

10:46:00 AM

I. CALL TO ORDER

CHAIR HANNAN called the Legislative Council meeting to order at 10:46AM on September 23, 2021, in the House Finance Room 519.

Present at the call were: Representatives Edgmon, Hannan, Stutes, Tilton; Senators Reinbold, Shower, Stedman, and Stevens.

Members absent were: Representatives Claman, Foster, Tuck; Senators Bishop, Hoffman, Hughes (alternate), and Micciche.

Eight members present.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

10:47:34 AM

VICE CHAIR REINBOLD moved and asked unanimous consent that Legislative Council approve the agenda as presented.

CHAIR HANNAN, seeing no objections, approved the agenda.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

10:48:44 AM

VICE CHAIR REINBOLD moved and asked unanimous consent that the Legislative Council approve the minutes dated March 17, 2021, as presented.

CHAIR HANNAN, hearing no objections, approved the minutes and introduced the first item of business, a briefing and overview of pending Capitol Maintenance, and Jessica Geary, who was present to answer Council questions.

IV. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

A. Overview of Pending Legislative Council Matters

JESSICA GEARY, Executive Director of the Legislative Affairs Agency, said that the memo council members received was an outline of items to be brought before the committee for consideration either this year or next year depending on timing. The first was the Capitol roof - Jensen Yorba Wall was preparing construction management and bid documents, and their preliminary estimate was \$1.3 million and there were existing capital funds. She said that a

hazmat survey had been completed and there were no hazardous materials present, and the last time the roof was replaced was in 1993/1994. She said the second item to come before Council are contract approvals for: the Sitka LIO; Utqiagvik LIO and Legislative Office Space; Ketchikan LIO and Legislative Office Space; and the Thomson Reuters Westlaw - Online Research Services contract. The third item would be the veto of per diem by Governor Dunleavy which meant that beginning the January regular session, there would be no funds available for regular session per diem, and that she would be presenting scenarios for the committee's consideration. The last item would be a potential amendment to Legislative Procurement Procedures, to be presented at a future meeting by JC Kestel, Procurement Officer. She paused to take any questions before continuing.

SENATOR STEVENS asked Ms. Geary for options on Governor Dunleavy's veto issue; he stated that one issue was to simply not fund the governor's per diem but was interested in hearing options other than that.

MS. GEARY said the options as she saw them were for Legislative Council to approve transfers to cover per diem from the existing budget authorization and then recommend to the Finance subcommittee that a supplemental fund be backfilled to replace the almost \$2 million. She said those were the only two options she had been able to come up with, but that it would need to be dealt with through the budget process.

SENATOR STEVENS asked if that would mean per diem could be provided as early as January.

MS. GEARY said yes, if the transfers were approved to cover per diem in the interim, if it was the will of the committee, per diem could be paid beginning the first day of session.

SENATOR STEVENS thanked Ms. Geary and the Chair, and said he assumed members would proceed with that and get this taken care of. It was totally absurd, he said, for Governor Dunleavy to think that legislators should all go to Juneau and not receive per diem for the cost of living. He said if that was the case, there likely would have been several legislators who would not have run due to not being able to afford to participate in law-making. He said he hoped it was an issue Chair Hannan would address.

CHAIR HANNAN thanked Senator Stevens and said it was her full intention to address this issue before the beginning of regular session in January of 2022. She said she anticipated there would be a couple more Legislative Council meetings between now and the start of session.

VICE-CHAIR REINBOLD echoed Senator Stevens' comments. She stated she was concerned even though she was often one of the lowest per diem-takers. She thought it was important due to the costs involved for lawmakers with special sessions being repeatedly called. She said perhaps members could take a step further and look at all the executive branch per diem and if Governor Dunleavy was going to throw stones, perhaps the Legislature could investigate members of the Executive Branch who were taking per diem, required to be in Juneau, and often not. She thanked the Chair.

CHAIR HANNAN, seeing no further comments, asked Ms. Geary to continue with subcommittee updates.

MS. GEARY stated that a few of these updates were a bit premature because currently two of the subcommittees were in the planning stages: the Security subcommittee and the Assembly Building subcommittee. The IT subcommittee was already formed, she said, and reminded members of the recent security breaches to the Executive and Judicial branches. She said LAA's IT Manager, Tim Banaszak, had been working closely with his counterparts in the other branches to be able to best prevent what had happened to them from happening to the Legislature and might need to bring some items before the committee for action. She said the telephone systems were due for replacement and the IT Department were considering a few pilot programs to see what would best fit, and once a decision was made between those, it would be presented to Council. She said if it was alright with the Chair, she would wait to give detail on the other two items until they reached that point in the agenda.

SPEAKER STUTES asked if the IT Department had begun replacing the telephone system, because she had been calling a staff member of hers from Kodiak and kept hearing a message that said the number was no longer in service, so she had been resorting to calling him on his cell phone.

MS. GEARY said that to her knowledge, the replacement had not yet begun, so she believed this could be an isolated incident, but the IT Department would be happy to investigate this issue and follow up with the Speaker.

SPEAKER STUTES said that would be great, and she would appreciate it.

VICE-CHAIR REINBOLD said she was recently in Juneau and found ninety-three messages on her phone even though she had forwarded the phone to her district office and was surprised to learn that if the phone did not get picked up in the office, it would bounce back to the Juneau phone for message recording. She asked for assistance with this issue and wanted to remind others this had been an issue for several years and would appreciate a reminder on how to forward a phone and have it stay forwarded and not end up reaching Juneau.

MS. GEARY said she would be happy to send out more frequent reminders, and that hopefully with the new web-based phone system, issues like this would not be problems in the future.

B. Formation of Assembly Building Utilization Subcommittee

10:59:12 AM

CHAIR HANNAN, seeing no further questions, announced she was forming a subcommittee for utilization of the Assembly Building to produce recommendations for the best use of the assembly building for the benefit of the legislature and its service agencies. She said she would chair the subcommittee, and its membership would include the Legislative Affairs Agency Executive Director, Jessica Geary, or her designee; the Facilities Manager, Serge Lesh; Senators Kiehl, Stedman, and Bishop; and Representatives Edgmon and Tuck. She asked if there were any questions and gave the floor to Ms. Geary.

MS. GEARY said members are aware that Legislative Council voted on August 16, 2021, to accept the donation from the Juneau Community Foundation with the intent that, until this committee had a chance to consider potential options for use of the building, that no large expenses would be made. She then highlighted some of the possible options, which she expected the new subcommittee would explore and research. Her list included: Legislative housing (apartments); renovating to replace current leases as they expired; continuing to lease space to current tenants to offset building maintenance costs; utilizing in some way the building's underground parking garage with nineteen spots; possible Legislative office space - perhaps relocating the Print Shop, storage, Ombudsman's Office all

of which the Legislature currently pays rent for in non-Legislative buildings, as well as possible relocation of the Capitol Press Room and Legislative Mail Room from the Capitol. She updated members about current projects within existing procurement authority, including replacement of rusted-out fire doors, the underground storage tank with an above-ground storage tank, new garage door and openers, rekeying of the locks for security reasons, as well as completion of an environmental hazard survey. She told members they had copies of the building's current floor plans and said she would be happy to take any questions.

SENATOR SHOWER said that last meeting, he made it clear he was not a fan of accepting the gift of the Assembly Building as he believed it was going to cost the Legislature money rather than the predictions of other members that it would save money or even provide income. He said he would believe it when he saw it and asked that Council members be kept apprised of costs as projects moved forward.

CHAIR HANNAN said that she would keep members apprised.

REPRESENTATIVE TILTON seconded Senator Shower's request, and further recommended to the new subcommittee that they confer with support staff and staff who had been working in the Capitol for many years, as they could have good ideas about the new space.

CHAIR HANNAN thanked Representative Tilton and said she would, and further explained that she kept the committee small to keep it manageable but did not intend it to be an exclusive group working in isolation. Seeing no further questions or comments, she moved to the next order of business, requiring members to go into Executive Session to discuss formation of a subcommittee on Legislative Security and a contract for snow removal at the Anchorage Legislative Office Building (LOB).

V. ADDITIONAL COMMITTEE BUSINESS - EXECUTIVE SESSION

- A. Formation of Legislative Facilities Security Subcommittee**
- B. Anchorage LOB Snow Removal Contract**

11:06:19 AM

VICE-CHAIR REINBOLD moved and asked unanimous consent that Legislative Council go into Executive Session under Uniform

Rule 22(B)(1), discussion of matters, the immediate knowledge of which would adversely affect the finances of a government unit and 22(B)(3), discussion of a matter that may, by law, be required to be confidential. The following individuals were permitted to remain in the room or on-line for the entirety of the executive session: Jessica Geary, JC Kestel, Rayme Vinson, Santé Lesh, Megan Wallace, Emily Nauman, Helen Phillips, Jodie Murdock, Bree Wylie, any Legislators not on Legislative Council, and any staff of Legislative Council members.

11:07:06 AM

A roll call vote was taken.

YEAS: Representatives Edgmon, Hannan, Stutes, Tilton; Senators Reinbold, Shower, Stedman, Stevens.

NAYS: None.

The motion was approved 8-0.

11:07:43 AM

Council went into Executive Session.

11:26:11 AM

Council came out of Executive Session. A roll call vote was taken to confirm a quorum.

Present at the call were: Representatives Edgmon, Hannan, Stutes, Tilton; Senators Reinbold, Shower, Stedman, Stevens.

Eight members present, maintaining a quorum.

CHAIR HANNAN said for the record that she had formed a subcommittee of the Council to consider improvements to Security at the Capitol and other Legislative Facilities. She said the subcommittee would be chaired by Chief of Security, Rayme Vinson, and if any members were interested in serving on that subcommittee, they should email Tim Clark, her Chief of Staff.

11:27:44 AM

VICE-CHAIR REINBOLD moved that the Legislative Council approve the award of RFP 647 for Anchorage Snow Removal Services to A-1 Lawn and Landscaping for a one-year contract and a five-year option one-year renewal with a budget not to exceed the value of \$65,000 per contract year.

CHAIR HANNAN objected for purposes of discussion and asked Mr. Kestel to briefly summarize the contract.

JC KESTEL, Procurement Officer, Legislative Affairs Agency, said LAA issued RFP 647 to solicit proposals for snow removal services at the Anchorage Legislative Office Building. He said members had copies of the bid abstract from the bids that were received, and that LAA recommended the contract be awarded to A-1 Lawn and Landscaping, who proposed the lowest total price on the RFQ, and said he would be happy to answer any questions.

[11:29:03 AM](#)

A roll call vote was taken.

YEAS: Representatives Edgmon, Hannan, Stutes, Tilton; Senators Reinbold, Shower, Stedman.

NAYS: None.

[11:30:08 AM](#)

An at-ease was taken.

[11:31:58 AM](#)

The at-ease ended.

CHAIR HANNAN said that members had been in the middle of a roll call vote, and asked Ms. Kiesel to continue.

SENATOR STEVENS said he was disconnected and was now back with the Council.

CHAIR HANNAN thanked him and said that Ms. Kiesel was going to ask for his vote.

SENATOR STEVENS voted yea.

With 8 yeas and 0 nays, the motion was approved.

VI. ADJOURN

[11:32:36 AM](#)

Adjourn.