

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

April 27, 2006

1. ROLL CALL

The Legislative Council meeting was called to order at 5:09 p.m. by Representative Kott, Chairman, Legislative Council, in the House Finance Committee Room and via teleconference.

The roll was taken. In attendance were Council members: Representatives Kott, Coghill, Gatto, Harris, Rokeberg, Weyhrauch, Senators Cowdery, Ben Stevens, Therriault, Wagoner, and Davis. Absent members: Representative Berkowitz, Senators Gary Stevens and Wilken. Staff present: Varni, Ohmer, Collins, Cook, Fleek, Ibesate, Johnston, Maher, Popely, Price, and Schofield.

2. APPROVAL OF THE MARCH 23, 2006 MINUTES

Senator Therriault moved Legislative Council approve the minutes of the March 23, 2006 meeting.

The motion was approved unanimously.

3. FY 2005 LEGISLATURE AUDIT

Pam Varni, Executive Director of the Legislative Affairs Agency, described the letter to the Council and Budget and Audit Committee members along with a Management Letter and Schedules of Appropriations, Expenditures, Encumbrances and Revenues for the Legislature for FY 05. Ms. Varni further stated there were no audit exceptions and that no action was needed on this item. The Agency will exercise one of its one-year option renewals with KPMG LLP for the Legislature's FY 06 Annual Audit in FY 07.

4. MASONIC TEMPLE

Chairman Kott thanked the City and Borough of Juneau and the members of the Assembly for extending the opportunity to Council and the Legislature for the transfer of the Masonic Temple to Legislative Council. He requested Mr. Gruening relay the message to the Mayor and Assembly members.

Discussion followed regarding the remodeling, cost estimates, removal of asbestos, or other hazardous materials, to bring the building to code.

Chairman Kott stated he had had a brief discussion with Jim Clark, Office of the Governor, and indicated to Mr. Clark that the City had made the offer of the Masonic Temple. Mr. Clark indicated he would like the Legislature to purchase the building.

Pam Varni, Executive Director of the Legislative Affairs Agency, offered some initial ideas on the proposed uses for the Masonic Temple space. Ms. Varni further stated that the Agency could eliminate other leased space, with a savings of about \$30,000 a year.

Discussion followed in regards to removal of pipes, electrical wiring, and fixtures, structural design of the building, size and useable space of building, safety codes, egresses, windows, parking, fire code requirements, bringing the elevator up to code, handicap access, building assessment, and if project money was needed immediately and what the yearly expenses were going to be.

Don Johnston, Building Manager addressed questions regarding the above-mentioned items.

Senator Therriault moved that Legislative Council approve the transfer of the Masonic Temple from the City and Borough of Juneau to Legislative Council.

Representative Gatto objected.

Senator Wagoner objected until he saw a full report or an engineer's report on the structure as a whole.

Chairman Kott stated that once the City and Borough of Juneau has purchased and conveyed the property to the Legislature that it is to be used for some government purpose and not simply sold.

Chip Wagoner, Realtor, Coldwell Banker Race Realty, stated that when his client (Masonic Temple) asked to list the building they believed it was in the best interest of the State of Alaska to give the Legislature the first opportunity to the building. The building has not been placed on the market or multiple listing services yet. Mr. Wagoner further stated that if the Legislature needed an extension of that time, he would have to go back to his client.

The question was called on the motion.

Senate President Ben Stevens joined the meeting.

YEAS: Kott, Coghill, Harris, Weyhrauch, Cowdery, Ben Stevens, Therriault, and Davis

NAYS: Rokeberg, Gatto, and Wagoner

ABSENT: Berkowitz, Gary Stevens, and Wilken

Motion passed 8 - 3.

Senator Therrault would like staff to put together a soundness-of-the-building report, to include the environmental assessment, the soundness of the roof, and information from an architectural firm showing possible utilization of the space.

Senate President Ben Stevens stated he would like to see comparisons on what the estimated costs for a remodel or rebuild, or bring it up to code for occupancy versus demolition and a comparison on what could be utilized as parking and or a parking garage or facility.

Ms. Varni stated that with the \$25,000 threshold, and if the project was divided up between an engineering firm and architectural firm, there was no need to return to Council for authorization of funds for this initial assessment of the building. Ms. Varni stated she could come up with different options and costs for all the members to review.

5. BALANCED ALASKAN ARCTIC DEVELOPMENT REQUEST

Howard Fletcher Scaman, "Assistant to Binkey," Balanced Alaskan Arctic Development presented a proposal to

Legislative Council. Mr. Scaman requested funding in the amount of \$25,000 initially with \$10,000 a month for six months to present a series of grass roots confrontational guerilla theater events featuring a "real" Alaskan bear, "Binkey" supported on site by appropriate members of the Alaska Legislature to expand petroleum resource production in the Arctic North Slope.

Discussion followed.

Speaker Harris stated that before he could support such a proposal that he feels anyone working on this issue (ANWR) must coordinate their efforts with our Congressional delegation in Washington, D.C. Mr. Scaman stated he had not checked with the Alaska Congressional delegation. Speaker Harris asked that this item be postponed until Legislative Council hears positively from Alaska's Congressional delegation.

6. CAPITOL SECURITY

Senator Therriault moved that under Uniform Rule 22(b)(4) discussion of a matter, the public knowledge of which would adversely affect the security of the state or nation, or adversely affect the security of a governmental unit or agency, that Legislative Council go into Executive Session and asked that the following staff remain in the room to answer questions: Pam Varni, Karla Schofield, Don Johnston, Judy Ohmer, and Wayne Fleek.

Council went into Executive Session.

Council came out of Executive Session.

Speaker Harris moved that the policy of the Legislative Council on key cards or keys be changed effective immediately. No key or key card will be issued to anyone except a state employee, a member of the press who is actively renting a space in the building, and at the discretion of the Building Manager, any contractor who is doing business in the building at that time, and to those people only.

YEAS: Kott, Gatto, Harris, Rokeberg, Berkowitz, Ben Stevens, Therriault, and Davis

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Cowdery, Gary Stevens, Wagoner, Wilken, Coghill,
and Weyhrauch

Motion passed 8 - 0.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:55 p.m.