

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
September 27, 2006

1. ROLL CALL

The Legislative Council meeting was called to order at 2:09 p.m. by Representative Kott, Chairman, Legislative Council, in the Anchorage LIO, 2nd Floor Conference Room and via teleconference.

The roll was taken. In attendance were Council members: Representatives Kott, Gatto, Harris, Rokeberg, Gruenberg and Senator Davis. Members via teleconference: Representatives Coghill, Weyhrauch, Senators Ben Stevens, Gary Stevens, Therriault, and Wagoner. Absent members: Senators Cowdery and Wilken. Staff present: Varni, Ohmer, Popely, Seitz, Turner, and Warena. Staff via teleconference: Collins, Cook, Ibesate, Lobaugh, Price, Clothier, and Schofield.

Guest present: Tim Storey, Senior Fellow, Staff Management Program, National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL).

2. APPROVAL OF AUGUST 1, 2006 MINUTES

Senator Therriault moved Legislative Council approve the minutes of the August 1, 2006 meeting.

YEAS: Kott, Coghill, Gatto, Harris, Rokeberg, Weyhrauch, Gary Stevens, Therriault, Wagoner, and Davis

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Representative Gruenberg, Senators Ben Stevens, Cowdery, and Wilken

The motion passed 10 – Zero.

3. LATE PER DIEM CLAIM – SENATOR STEDMAN

Senator Therriault moved Legislative Council approve the late per diem claim for Senator Stedman.

YEAS: Kott, Coghill, Gatto, Harris, Rokeberg, Weyhrauch, Gary Stevens, Therriault, Wagoner, and Davis

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Representative Gruenberg, Senators Ben Stevens, Cowdery, and Wilken

The motion passed 10 – Zero.

4. CAPITOL COPIER REPLACEMENT APPROVAL

Jan Price, Procurement Officer for the Legislative Affairs Agency stated that the Legislative Printshop currently has five Rich Aficio 1105 black-and-white digital copier/printers located throughout the Capitol that need to be replaced. On August 22, 2006, ITB 438 was issued to solicit bids to purchase five black and white copier/printers for the Capitol and one colored copier/printer for the Legislative Printshop. After careful review The Competitive Edge Office Systems, Inc. was recommended with a low bid of \$168,276.

Senator Ben Stevens and Representative Gruenberg joined the meeting.

Discussion followed regarding cost of copiers/printers, maintenance agreement, warranties, local businesses who process color print requests, legislators using their office accounts for the purchase of their own color printers; who made the request for the color copier, cost per copy for each copy, use of color copier for newsletters and not changing the newsletter policy to allow color copies. Members were not ready to approve a color copier so the amount was subtracted from the low bid amount, which was stated in the bid.

Representative Gruenberg moved to accept the bid by The Competitive Edge Office Systems for the purchase of five Xerox 4110CP black and white digital Copiers/printers for \$132,735.

Senator Therriault objected for the purpose of a question. Senator Therriault withdrew his objection.

YEAS: Kott, Coghill, Gatto, Harris, Rokeberg, Weyhrauch, Gruenberg, Ben Stevens, Gary Stevens, Therriault, Wagoner, and Davis

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Senators Cowdery and Wilken

The motion passed 12 – Zero.

Chairman Kott stated that the purchase of a color copier/printer could be brought up at a later date.

5. NCSL STUDY OF STAFF CLASSIFICATION AND COMPENSATION APPROVAL

Tim Storey, Senior Fellow, Legislative Management Program of the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), stated that Legislative Council contracted with NCSL to complete a study on the classification and compensation system for the Legislative Affairs Agency staff. He further stated the primary goals for the study were to review the current classification system for Agency employees and make recommendations with regard to internal consistency; review the current compensation system including salaries and other compensation and benefits and analyze the adequacy and effectiveness of the system; compare total compensation paid to legislative staff with that paid to comparable positions; and review and revise job descriptions.

Representative Rokeberg questioned Mr. Storey on the use of compensatory time.

Mr. Storey replied that under the current policy, the Agency grants employees comp-time for work on official state holidays that fall during the session. The policy is a point of concern for many employees who wish the Agency would grant more comp-time recognition for the high amount of overtime necessary to accomplish tasks during the session. A large majority of Legislative agencies throughout the country employ comp-time as a means to offset the extraordinary amount of effort and work demanded of Legislative staff during peak workload, typically regular and special sessions. The use of comp-time allows the employee to have extra time-off during the less busy time of the interim.

Chairman Kott requested that managers meet and develop a policy Legislative Council could adopt at a later date.

Ms. Varni stated she has been working with Skiff Lobaugh and Karla Schofield and they had developed a draft Compensatory Time Policy for the Legislative Council to review. Ms. Varni stated that the three sections of the Legislature are being handled differently.

Senator Therriault moved to adopt the National Conference of State Legislatures Study of the Alaska Legislative Affairs Agency Staff Classification and Compensation dated September 2006 from the existing Agency budget.

Representative Rokeberg objected.

Senator Wagoner asked the cost of implementing the study and if funds were available.

Ms. Varni, Executive Director of the Legislative Affairs Agency stated there were 72 job classifications, 38 job classes would be increased, 31 job classes would stay the same, and three job classes would be decreased, with a total of 147 staff that are full-time, seasonal, and hourly. It would be an increase of \$172,000, for Legal and Research Services and \$220,000 for Administrative Services. The total cost would be \$392,000. Ms. Varni further stated that the Agency carried forward approximately \$600,000, which are sufficient funds for this increase.

Senator Wagoner stated he would like to review the study and take this issue up at another meeting.

Discussion followed regarding the effective date of the study.

Senator Therriault withdrew his motion.

Chairman Kott would like to meet again October 6, 2006. He asked members to review the Study of Staff Classification and Compensation and also a proposal on the comp-time policy.

6. OTHER BUSINESS

Chairman Kott recognized Alaska's efforts in supporting the National Women's History Museum and updated the Council on the federal progress.

Senator Wagoner expressed concerns related to repairs to the computers in the Kenai offices after a power outage caused failure to a switch and the firewall. Curt Clothier apologized it took several hours to fly Data Processing staff to Kenai to replace the equipment.

Chairman Kott adjourned the meeting at 3:50 pm.