

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
February 1, 2007

1. ROLL CALL

The Legislative Council meeting was called to order at 5:10 pm. by Pam Varni, Executive Director of the Legislative Affairs Agency, in the Senate Finance Committee Room and via teleconference.

The roll was taken. In attendance were Council members: Cowdery, Davis, Elton, Green, Hoffman, Stevens, Wilken (via teleconference), Coghill, Dahlstrom, Harris, Samuels, Stoltze and Wilson. Absent member was: Guttenberg. Staff present were: Varni, Schofield, Ibesate, Carlson, Clothier, Cook, Finley, and Makinster.

2. ELECTION OF CHAIR

Executive Director Pam Varni called for nominations of the Legislative Council Chair. Senate President Lyda Green moved to elect Senator John Cowdery as Chair of Legislative Council. No other nominations were put forward.

YEAS: Cowdery, Davis, Elton, Green, Hoffman, Stevens, Wilken, Coghill, Dahlstrom, Samuels, Stoltze, and Wilson

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Harris and Guttenberg

The motion passed 12 to 0.

3. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

Chairman Cowdery called for nominations of Vice-Chair.

Representative Stoltze moved to elect Representative Nancy Dahlstrom as Vice-Chair of Legislative Council. No other nominations were put forward.

YEAS: Cowdery, Davis, Elton, Green, Hoffman, Stevens, Wilken, Coghill, Dahlstrom, Samuels, Stoltze, and Wilson

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Harris and Guttenberg

The motion passed 12 to 0.

4. APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 9, 2006 AND NOVEMBER 2, 2006 MINUTES

Representative Dahlstrom moved the minutes of October 9, 2006 and November 2, 2006 meetings be approved.

YEAS: Cowdery, Davis, Elton, Green, Hoffman, Stevens, Wilken, Coghill, Dahlstrom, Samuels, Stoltze, and Wilson

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Harris and Guttenberg

The motion was approved unanimously.

5. LATE PER DIEM APPROVALS – SENATOR RALPH SEEKINS, REPRESENTATIVE JIM HOLM, REPRESENTATIVE MIKE KELLY, REPRESENTATIVE PEGGY WILSON

Representative Dahlstrom moved that Legislative Council approve the late travel and per diem requests for Senator Ralph Seekins, Representatives Holm, Kelly, and Wilson.

The motion was approved unanimously.

6. RATIFICATION OR SANCTIONING OF CHARITABLE EVENTS

Representative Dahlstrom moved that Legislative Council ratify and sanction the following charitable events per AS 24.60.080(c)(10): The Inaugural Ball Celebrations, Legislative Skits, Fahrenkamp Classic, and Thanksgiving in March.

The motion was approved unanimously.

7. APPROVAL OF 2007 DRAFTING MANUAL

Representative Dahlstrom moved that Legislative Council approve the 2007 Manual of Legislative Drafting for the 25th Legislative Session.

The motion was approved unanimously.

8. IT SUBCOMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

Chairman Cowdery expressed that he would like to appoint Legislators and legislative staff to an IT Subcommittee. Any Legislators or Legislative staff interested in serving on the subcommittee are to contact his office.

9. DON MITCHELL CONTRACT AMENDMENT APPROVAL

Ted Popely, Legal Counsel for Legislative Council, gave a brief summary of the Don Mitchell Contract.

Representative Dahlstrom moved that Legislative Council approve an amendment to the Donald C. Mitchell contract adding an additional \$30,000 and amending the dates of performance.

The motion was approved unanimously.

Speaker Harris joined the meeting at this time.

10. LAWSUIT UPDATE - BACHNER COMPANY INC. VS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Jim Fosler of the Fosler Law Group, Inc. presented a summary regarding the legal dispute with Bachner Company, Inc. arising out of the procurement of office space for the Legislative Information Office and legislative district offices in Fairbanks, Alaska.

Discussion followed.

11. LEXIS NEXIS & WESTLAW PASSWORDS, TRAINING

Pam Varni, Executive Director, discussed whether the Council wants to amend the distribution of the Lexis Nexis and Westlaw online research passwords to accommodate more members or staff.

Discussion followed.

Representative Coghill moved to make the unused passwords available to more House and Senate members on a first come, first serve basis, by having Stew Roland check by order of distribution outlined in the January 26, 2007, memo from the Executive Director.

The motion was approved unanimously.

12. WILLIAM LARGE CONTRACT AMENDMENT APPROVAL

Ted Popely, Legal Counsel for Legislative Council, gave a brief summary regarding the William Large contract for legal services. Mr. Popely informed the Council that the services rendered exceeded the contract amount and asked the Council to amend the existing contract to cover the additional costs for legal services.

Representative Dahlstrom moved that Legislative Council approve an amendment to the William Large contract for legal services in the amount of \$13,610.

The motion was approved unanimously.

13. BIRCH, HORTON, BITTNER, AND CHEROT CONTRACT AMENDMENT APPROVAL

Ted Popely, Legal Counsel for Legislative Council gave a brief outline of the Birch, Horton, Bittner & Cherot contract for consulting services. Mr. Popely informed the Council that the contract has expired and asked to amend the contract by extending the contract for an additional 12 months, but no additional funds are needed.

Representative Dahlstrom moved that Legislative Council approve an amendment to the Birch, Horton, Bittner & Cherot contract amending the dates of performance.

The motion was approved unanimously.

14. BRIEFING - MASONIC TEMPLE AND CAPITOL BASEMENT

Pam Varni, Executive Director of the Legislative Affairs Agency, briefed the Council regarding the Masonic Temple and Capitol Basement. Ms. Varni indicated that the City and Borough of Juneau and the Alaska Committee purchased the building from the Masons. The building may be used for the Legislature, the Governor's Office, or the Lieutenant Governor's Office. On January 31, 2007, Legislative Council took possession of the building. The Agency will be remodeling the building with Legislative Council approving the necessary remodeling contracts. It is anticipated the following entities will be in the building: House and Senate Records, Legislative Finance Fiscal Office, the Press Room, additional committee rooms, additional legislative staff offices, and a child care facility.

Chair Cowdery stated he would approve funding up to \$25,000 under his signatory authority, for preliminary architectural plans and bring the plans back to Council.

Discussion followed.

15. SNOW PLOWING CONTRACT AMENDMENT APPROVAL

Pam Varni, Executive Director of the Legislative Affairs Agency, informed the Council that the snow plowing costs for the Capitol and the Terry Miller Legislative Office Building have exceeded the amount routinely budgeted for snow plowing due to heavy snow. Ms. Varni stated that an additional \$15,000 was requested to be added to the Duran contract.

Representative Dahlstrom moved that Legislative Council approve a \$15,000 amendment to increase the amount of the Duran Construction snow plowing contract.

The motion was approved unanimously.

16. ANIMAL POLICY APPROVAL

Chairman Cowdery presented Council with a new policy regarding animals in legislative facilities. The purpose of the policy is to maintain a safe office work environment free of allergens or other maintenance issues caused by animals and to provide professional surroundings in office space where legislative business takes place.

Representative Harris moved that Legislative Council accept the Animal Policy as presented to the Council.

The motion was approved unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:43 pm.