

SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE

March 7, 2018

9:04 a.m.

[9:04:51 AM](#)

CALL TO ORDER

Co-Chair MacKinnon called the Senate Finance Committee meeting to order at 9:04 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Lyman Hoffman, Co-Chair
Senator Anna MacKinnon, Co-Chair
Senator Click Bishop, Vice-Chair
Senator Peter Micciche
Senator Donny Olson
Senator Gary Stevens
Senator Natasha von Imhof

MEMBERS ABSENT

None

PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE

Mike Powers, Appointee, Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority, Fairbanks; Verne Boerner, Appointee, Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority, Anchorage; Janis Wilson, Appointee, Regulatory Commission of Alaska, Anchorage; Paul Lisankie, Appointee, Regulatory Commission of Alaska.

SUMMARY

APPOINTMENT: ALASKA MENTAL HEALTH TRUST AUTHORITY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

APPOINTMENT: REGULATORY COMMISSION OF ALASKA

^APPOINTMENT: ALASKA MENTAL HEALTH TRUST AUTHORITY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

[9:06:34 AM](#)

MIKE POWERS, APPOINTEE, ALASKA MENTAL HEALTH TRUST AUTHORITY, FAIRBANKS (via teleconference), (AMHTA)

discussed his credentials. He stated that he had served for 10 years as the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and 20 years as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) at Fairbanks Memorial. He spent one year as an interim chancellor at the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF). He shared that as CEO, much of his time was focused on building programs and recruiting personal to support behavioral related programs and services. He noted that there were related efforts in the emergency department, police departments, and support centers. He noted the crisis situation related to coverage for behavioral health issues. He shared that he had a 23-year-old developmentally disabled niece. His brother had attempted to obtain housing for her in the Denver area. He noted that there were two exceptionally vulnerable populations: seniors; and the mentally ill and developmentally disabled. He felt that his background, experience, and desire were the reasons for his interest in the position.

Co-Chair MacKinnon wondered whether Mr. Powers had been employed by the state within the last two year. Mr. Powers replied in the affirmative. He was interim chancellor at UAF.

Co-Chair MacKinnon noted that there was a prohibition that stated that a member appointed by the governor may not be an officer or employee of the state, or within two years preceding or during the member's term of office have an interest in, served on a governing board, or been employed by an organization that had received money from the Mental Health Trust Income Account under a grant or contract services. She wondered whether there was a passage of the threshold. Mr. Powers replied in the affirmative. He finished in May 2016, so that would be two years in the spring. He felt that UAF stood apart from a state agency.

[9:10:29 AM](#)

Co-Chair MacKinnon noted a geographic interest for different boards. She remarked that Fairbanks was not currently represented on the board.

Senator von Imhof queried a process the board could evaluate the limitation, and whether there could be an acceptance of the violation.

Co-Chair MacKinnon agreed to communicate with the board and the Governor's Office.

Senator Micciche felt that it did not fit initially, but wondered whether the paragraph referred to a current employee.

Co-Chair MacKinnon agreed to reexamine an issue.

Senator Stevens felt that Mr. Powers was qualified. He wondered whether Mr. Powers left the Board of Regents on May 2016. Mr. Powers replied in the affirmative.

Senator Stevens felt that the appointment may need to wait until May.

Vice-Chair Bishop asked that Ms. Boerner be put on the record.

[9:15:11 AM](#)

VERNE BOERNER, APPOINTEE, ALASKA MENTAL HEALTH TRUST AUTHORITY, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), introduced herself. Shared her earliest memory. Her specific interest came from the tribes and tribal leaders. She announced that she was the president and CEO for the Alaska Native Health Board, which was the statewide voice on Alaska Native health issues.

[9:22:01 AM](#)

Senator Micciche reviewed the resume, and noted that it was interesting that the Master's thesis was on health disparities. He wondered whether the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority (AMHTA) had Alaska Native representation in the past. Ms. Boerner replied that there was Alaska Native in the past, and currently had a member on the board. She stated that it was limited, and the experience had not been tied to the Alaska Tribal Health system.

Co-Chair MacKinnon noted the purpose of the authority. She noted that one of the qualifications was the ability in financial management and investment; or land management. She noted that there could be assistance in the mental health and health side of the trust. She queried skills in those managements. Ms. Boerner replied that she was the

administrative officer for a board who was responsible for negotiating lease and contract agreements.

[9:26:22 AM](#)

Vice-Chair Bishop was impressed with the resume. He queried best practices from the lower 48. Ms. Boerner replied that the Alaska Tribal Health system was extremely advanced.

Co-Chair MacKinnon asked the Mr. Powers answer the same questions about financial management.

[9:29:53 AM](#)

AT EASE

[9:33:16 AM](#)

RECONVENED

[9:33:47 AM](#)

Co-Chair MacKinnon asked for information about experience with financial management. Mr. Powers stated that he served 10 years as CFO and 20 years as CEO of Fairbanks Memorial hospital. He dealt with extensive audits, public accountability, clinical safety, and regulatory reviews.

Co-Chair MacKinnon announced that there was a need for additional legal review of the limitations. She stated that his name needed to be set aside, because there may be a hurdle within state statute. Mr. Powers clarified that he officially stepped down in August 2016.

Co-Chair MacKinnon announced that the committee had established that.

[9:37:45 AM](#)

Vice-Chair Bishop felt that there were many direct involvement of the large capital projects in the hospital. Mr. Powers replied in the affirmative.

Co-Chair MacKinnon stated that there would be a formal legal request to review the qualifications. Mr. Powers replied that he understood.

[9:39:25 AM](#)

Vice-Chair Bishop moved to advance Verne Boerner to a Joint Legislative Session for consideration for the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority (AMHTA) Board of Trustees.

[9:39:51 AM](#)

AT EASE

[9:42:03 AM](#)

RECONVENED

^APPOINTMENT: REGULATORY COMMISSION OF ALASKA

[9:43:48 AM](#)

JANIS WILSON, APPOINTEE, REGULATORY COMMISSION OF ALASKA, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), discussed her qualifications. She stated that most of her work experience was with the Regulatory Commission of Alaska, therefore she would provide significant institutional knowledge for an agency with a recent high personnel turnover.

Co-Chair MacKinnon noted that the reappointment would be March 2018.

Senator Micciche felt that Ms. Wilson was extremely qualified. He noted that she had been regulating pipeline for 38 years in the state.

Vice-Chair Bishop agreed.

[9:46:21 AM](#)

Co-Chair MacKinnon queried comments on providing lower cost energy in rural Alaska. Ms. Wilson replied that it was a difficult issue, because of the cost of transporting fuel. She could not provide further information on that issue.

Co-Chair MacKinnon queried a position on the regulation of the smaller utilities. Ms. Wilson replied that the Regulatory Commission of Alaska did not currently municipal or cooperative utilities. She noted that many rural locations were not regulated by the Regulatory Commission of Alaska.

Co-Chair MacKinnon wondered whether the lack of regulation was contributing to the higher cost, or a function of the delivery of the fuel source. Ms. Wilson did not believe

that the lack of regulation contributing to the cost. She felt that the lack of regulation would limit the cost, because there was a cost to regulation.

[9:49:36 AM](#)

PAUL LISANKIE, APPOINTEE, REGULATORY COMMISSION OF ALASKA (via teleconference), discussed his qualifications. He stated that he was appointed of the remainder of the six year term.

Co-Chair MacKinnon queried thoughts on the high energy cost in rural Alaska. Mr. Lisankie stressed that the cost of regulation was an important factor. He noted that the small communities ability to respond to regulation would be difficult.

Vice-Chair Bishop MOVED to ADVANCE the names, Janis Wilson and Paul Lisankie to a Joint Legislative Session for consideration of appointment to the Regulatory Commission of Alaska.

[9:55:29 AM](#)

AT EASE

[9:57:28 AM](#)

RECONVENED

Co-Chair MacKinnon discussed the following day's agenda.

#

ADJOURNMENT

[9:58:13 AM](#)

The meeting was adjourned at 9:58 a.m.