

SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE
February 27, 2019
9:00 a.m.

[9:00:59 AM](#)

CALL TO ORDER

Co-Chair Stedman called the Senate Finance Committee meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Natasha von Imhof, Co-Chair
Senator Bert Stedman, Co-Chair
Senator Click Bishop
Senator Lyman Hoffman
Senator Peter Micciche
Senator Donny Olson
Senator Mike Shower
Senator Bill Wielechowski
Senator David Wilson

MEMBERS ABSENT

None

ALSO PRESENT

Kelly Tshibaka, Commissioner-Designee, Department of Administration; Josiah Tshibaka, Eldest Son, Commissioner-Designee Kelly Tshibaka; Senator Cathy Giessel.

SUMMARY

^CONFIRMATION HEARING: COMMISSIONER-DESIGNEE KELLY TSHIBAKA, DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION

[9:02:23 AM](#)

KELLY TSHIBAKA, COMMISSIONER-DESIGNEE, DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION, stated that her resume was accurate, and had been background-checked by the FBI, and other agencies. She continued to discuss her background. She shared information about a church created by her and her husband.

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Senator Bishop wondered whether she would "work with the rank and file" to stay in line with the mission.

Commissioner-Designee Tshibaka replied that throughout her career, she found that it was important to work with the people.

Senator Hoffman felt that she might be overqualified for the position. He wondered how she would fulfill the goals of the administration.

Co-Chair Stedman further wondered how she would fulfill the responsibilities of the department.

Commissioner-Designee Tshibaka replied that the role of the Department of Administration (DOA) was to provide consistent and efficient support services to the state agencies to better serve Alaskans. She understood that the goals of the administration were to do what they could within the means to accomplish the most critical services for Alaska.

Senator Bishop noted that data had driven her decisions. He wondered whether she would stand up to her superiors, if the data did not support their decisions.

Commissioner-Designee Tshibaka replied in the affirmative, and stated that she had experience in that scenario.

[9:19:12 AM](#)

Senator Wielechowski wondered whether there was an intent to continue the work in elections, National Guard, and Constitutional Convention issues.

Commissioner-Designee Tshibaka replied that when she was brought into the administration, she served as a policy advisor to the governor. Her purpose was to conduct efficiency and effectiveness reviews. She remarked that the review was a multidisciplinary approach to determine a program's efficiency and effectiveness.

Senator Olson noted that Ms. Tshibaka came from a very mixed background. He wondered why she wanted the position.

Commissioner-Designee Tshibaka announced that one of her core values was wanting to help other people. She loved Alaska, and wanted to help Alaskans.

[9:25:03 AM](#)

Senator Micciche queried the position in DOA prior to the appointment to commissioner.

Commissioner-Designee Tshibaka replied that she was first appointed as policy advisor to the governor.

Senator Micciche queried the state date of that employment.

Commissioner-Designee Tshibaka replied that it began January 21, 2019.

Senator Micciche stated that he prescribed to a philosophy of continuous improvement. He stated that there was a natural resistance in the public sector to continue to improve. He remarked that there were some private sector philosophies in Ms. Tshibaka history. He wondered whether the administration would allow her to use those abilities.

Commissioner-Designee Tshibaka relayed that the governor's office seemed receptive to her ideas.

Co-Chair Stedman noted a letter about the mission of DOA.

Senator Micciche queried examples of areas on where data analytics could help move in a forward direction.

Commissioner-Designee Tshibaka believed that there could be significant cost efficiencies applying data analytics against health care numbers. She believed that the Workman's Comp program could also see efficiencies.

[9:30:48 AM](#)

Senator Shower noted the inspector general work, and felt that it was important to examine fraud, waste, or abuse. He asked about consolidation of services.

Commissioner-Designee Tshibaka replied that if there was an effort to consolidate services, especially for travel, accounts payable, procurement, human resources, so

excellent service could be provided, she felt that would be a huge success for the state.

Senator Wielechowski noted that she would oversee thousands of state employees. He wondered whether the state or any agency to discriminate against employees based on their sexual orientation.

Commissioner-Designee Tshibaka replied that she did not believe that any agency should discriminate against employees based on their sexual orientation

Senator Wilson noted the numerous databases in the various agencies. He asked about information about the security of those databases.

[9:35:31 AM](#)

Commissioner-Designee Tshibaka replied that she was concerned about the privacy and security of the information systems. She had confidence the efforts to heighten the information security.

Senator Wilson appreciated those efforts. He felt that she was the right person for the position.

Senator Hoffman queried experience in rural Alaska, and how she would affect them.

Commissioner-Designee Tshibaka shared that she had traveled to some parts of rural Alaska.

Senator Bishop wondered whether the Public Defender's Office was sufficiently staffed.

Commissioner-Designee Tshibaka replied that there were some needs in the Public Defender's Office, but she did not know those needs yet.

Senator Olson wondered whether Ms. Tshibaka had been to the North Pole.

Commissioner-Designee Tshibaka replied that she had been above the Arctic Circle.

Senator Olson noted the 1200 mile difference.

Commissioner-Designee Tshibaka shared that she had been to the oil fields.

Senator Olson stressed that public broadcasting was essential to the most of the communities, especially those that had the largest revenue for the state. He queried the thoughts on the administration's defunding of public broadcasting.

Commissioner-Designee Tshibaka replied that the Alaska Public Broadcasting Commission (APBC) provided an essential service to the rural communities. She stated that the state funding was not the only funding that they received. She stated that it received federal funds, and could receive funds from local, community, and tribal grants. She stated that it received grants from the Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development (DCCED).

[9:40:23 AM](#)

Senator Olson wondered whether she was in agreement with the administration to withhold funds for those radio stations.

Commissioner-Designee Tshibaka replied that she inherited the budget, but would talk with APBC to examine the remainder of their financial output.

Senator Wielechowski noted that the state Public Defender had testified that cuts had placed the state at risk for violating the constitution. He remarked that the budget cut public defenders. He wondered how quickly the audit would be complete.

Commissioner-Designee Tshibaka responded that the Public Defender was able to meet the obligation through FY 19, and would extend the appellate backlog into FY 20.

Co-Chair Stedman wondered whether she intended to assist the budget process in the subcommittees.

Commissioner-Designee Tshibaka replied that she would confirm with OMB about the plan for subcommittee.

Co-Chair Stedman stressed that it was difficult to do the subcommittee work with only OMB.

Senator Micciche asked that Ms. Tshibaka become intimately educated with the budget.

Senator Bishop stated that he never missed a meeting with the committee or subcommittee when he served as commissioner of a department.

Senator Wielechowski asked whether there was an intent to seek reductions in any existing state collective bargaining agreements, or seek reductions in retirement benefits or health insurance.

Commissioner-Designee Tshibaka replied that she was not intending to changing the direction of any program.

[9:46:00 AM](#)

JOSIAH TSHIBAKA, ELDEST SON, COMMISSIONER-DESIGNEE KELLY TSHIBAKA, introduced himself.

Co-Chair Stedman wondered the legislature should give his mother the job.

Mr. Tshibaka replied in the affirmative.

Co-Chair Stedman MOVED to FORWARD the appointment of Kelly Tshibaka in accordance with AS 39.05.080, to a joint legislative session for consideration as commissioner of Department of Administration.

Co-Chair Stedman informed that the action did not reflect an intent by any of the members to vote for or against the confirmation of the individual during any further sessions.

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ADJOURNMENT

[9:48:19 AM](#)

The meeting was adjourned at 9:48 a.m.