

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
SENATE LABOR AND COMMERCE STANDING COMMITTEE

February 26, 2019

1:33 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Lora Reinbold, Chair
Senator Mia Costello, Vice Chair
Senator Click Bishop
Senator Chris Birch
Senator Elvi Gray-Jackson

MEMBERS ABSENT

All members present

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

CONFIRMATION HEARING(S) :

Board of Public Accountancy:
Karen Smith - Anchorage

- CONFIRMATION ADVANCED

Board of Barbers & Hairdressers:
Jessica Steele - Wasilla

- CONFIRMATION ADVANCED

Board of Massage Therapists
Julie Endle - Palmer

- CONFIRMATION ADVANCED

Board of Social Work Examiners:
Geoffry McCormick - North Pole
Colleen Vague - Wasilla

- CONFIRMATION(S) ADVANCED

Real Estate Commission:
Peggy Ann McConnochie - Juneau
Cheryl Markwood - Fairbanks

Jamie Matthews - Glennallen
Margaret Nelson - Anchorage

- CONFIRMATION(S) ADVANCED

Board of Pharmacy:
Leif Holm - North Pole

- CONFIRMATION ADVANCED

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

No previous action to record

WITNESS REGISTER

KAREN SMITH, Appointee
Board of Public Accountancy
Division of Corporations, Business & Professional Licensing
Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development
Anchorage, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as appointee to the Board of
Public Accountancy.

JESSICA STEELE, Appointee
Board of Barbers & Hairdressers
Division of Corporations, Business & Professional Licensing
Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development
Wasilla, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as appointee to the Board of
Barbers & Hairdressers.

JULIE ENDLE, Appointee
Board of Massage Therapists
Division of Corporations, Business & Professional Licensing
Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development
Palmer, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as appointee to the Board of
Massage Therapists.

GEOFFRY MCCORMICK, Appointee
Board of Social Work Examiners
Division of Corporations, Business & Professional Licensing
Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development
North Pole, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as appointee to the Board of
Social Work Examiners.

COLLEEN VAGUE, Appointee
Board of Social Work Examiners
Division of Corporations, Business & Professional Licensing
Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development
Wasilla, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as appointee to the Board of
Social Work Examiners.

JAMIE MATTHEWS, Appointee
Real Estate Commission
Division of Corporations, Business & Professional Licensing
Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development
Glennallen, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as appointee to the Real Estate
Commission.

PEGGY ANN MCCONNOCHIE, Appointee
Real Estate Commission
Division of Corporations, Business & Professional Licensing
Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development
Juneau, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as appointee to the Real Estate
Commission.

CHERYL MARKWOOD, Appointee
Real Estate Commission
Division of Corporations, Business & Professional Licensing
Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development
Fairbanks, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as appointee to the Real Estate
Commission.

MARGARET NELSON, Appointee
Real Estate Commission
Division of Corporations, Business & Professional Licensing
Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development
Anchorage, Alaska
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as appointee to the Real Estate
Commission.

LEIF HOLM, Appointee
Board of Pharmacy
Division of Corporations, Business & Professional Licensing
Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development
North Pole, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as appointee to the Board of Pharmacy.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[1:33:19 PM](#)

CHAIR LORA REINBOLD called the Senate Labor and Commerce Standing Committee meeting to order at 1:33 p.m. Present at the call to order were Senators Costello, Birch, Gray-Jackson, Bishop and Chair Reinbold.

CONFIRMATION HEARING(S) :
Board of Public Accountancy
Board of Barbers and Hairdressers
Board of Massage Therapists
Board of Social Work Examiners
Real Estate Commission
Board of Pharmacy

[1:33:42 PM](#)

CHAIR REINBOLD announced that the only order of business would be the Confirmation Hearings for appointees to the Board of Public Accountancy, Board of Barbers and Hairdressers, Board of Massage Therapists, Board of Social Work Examiners, Board of Pharmacy, and the Real Estate Commission.

[1:34:37 PM](#)

KAREN SMITH, Appointee, Board of Public Accountancy, Division of Corporations, Business & Professional Licensing, Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development, stated that she owns RV Concierge, a business in the Mat-Su Valley. She has been serving on the board for the last year and reapplied for a full term. She enjoys serving on boards and also sits on Anchorage East Rotary and her children's PTA board. As a business owner, she said she would bring a different perspective to the board than a certified public accountant. She said she tends to focus on profit and loss statements and regulations. She looks forward to continuing to serve on the board pending legislative approval.

[1:35:58 PM](#)

CHAIR REINBOLD opened public testimony, and after first determining no one wished to testify, closed public testimony on the confirmation hearing for Karen Smith, appointee, Board of Public Accountancy.

[1:36:17 PM](#)

SENATOR BIRCH welcomed a member of Anchorage East Rotary to continuing to serve on the Board of Public Accountancy.

[1:37:08 PM](#)

JESSICA STEELE, Appointee, Board of Barbers & Hairdressers, Division of Corporations, Business & Professional Licensing, Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development, said although she had never served on a board, since her appointment she has actively worked on the board. She said she looks forward to serving on the board, if confirmed. She has been a hairdresser for 30 years and has owned a Wasilla hair salon, Beehive Beauty Shop, for 21 years. She has also been an instructor for just over 10 years. She said that it is important for young people to have technical opportunities. She related her personal experiences that hairdressing helped her achieve financial independence. She recognizes the value this profession brings to individuals who choose to become hairdressers and is thankful to give back to her profession.

[1:39:07 PM](#)

SENATOR BIRCH asked what she views as the downside that the Board of Barbers and Hairdressers is a board and not a commission.

MS. STEELE said that she believes in regulation of safety concerns, especially when licensees touch skin and come in contact with body fluids. However, she knows how to run her business, so she would also guard against overregulation.

CHAIR REINBOLD opened public testimony and after first determining no one wished to testify, closed public testimony on the confirmation hearing for Jessica Steele, appointee to the Board of Barbers and Hairdressers.

[1:40:39 PM](#)

CHAIR REINBOLD thanked her for operating a business for 21 years in Alaska and for being an instructor for 10 years.

[1:41:24 PM](#)

JULIE ENDLE, Appointee, Board of Massage Therapists, Division of Corporations, Business & Professional Licensing, Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development, stated she was appointed to serve as the public member of the board, but she has not previously served on a board. She said she likes to receive massages and related her experiences. She has received some wonderful, professional therapeutic massages and has

observed some good business practices and some less so. She offered her belief that she can be helpful as the public member and will be an asset to the team of professional licensees.

[1:42:44 PM](#)

CHAIR REINBOLD opened public testimony, and after first determining no one wished to testify, closed public testimony on the confirmation hearing for Julie Endle, appointee to the Board of Massage Therapists.

[1:43:07 PM](#)

CHAIR REINBOLD thanked her for her willingness to serve.

[1:44:16 PM](#)

GEOFFRY MCCORMICK, Appointee, Board of Social Work Examiners, Division of Corporations, Business & Professional Licensing, Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development, stated he is a life-long Alaskan. He said his father came to Alaska in 1964. He expressed an interest in serving on the board, which would allow him to give back to his profession. He said that it would give him the opportunity to provide guidance on rules and regulations related to the practice of social work to ensure that safe practices are used in the profession.

MR. MCCORMICK said this appointment would also give him an opportunity to safeguard the rights of all social workers by bringing fairness and objectivity into the decision-making process. He has 20 years of military experience and a world view perspective since he has traveled throughout the U.S. and other countries. As an African American male, he also brings diversity to the board. He said he is a disabled veteran and a new social worker. In closing, he offered his belief that his experiences give him an enhanced perspective.

[1:46:07 PM](#)

SENATOR GRAY-JACKSON thanked him for his willingness to serve and bring diversity to this field.

[1:46:27 PM](#)

SENATOR COSTELLO echoed her gratitude that so many wonderful talented Alaskans are willing to serve. She asked whether he thinks there is a lack of social workers in the state and if so, what the board or legislature can do.

MR. MCCORMICK acknowledged a lack of social workers exists in the state. He suggested the state could do more advertising and outreach at universities and local schools to help address the

issue by highlighting the profession. He said he also works for the Fairbanks Rescue Mission to serve the homeless community. He said he has observed a need for more social workers in Alaska, especially in rural areas.

1:48:16 PM

CHAIR REINBOLD opened public testimony, and after first determining no one wished to testify, closed public testimony on the confirmation hearing for Geoffry McCormick, appointee to Board of Social Work Examiners.

1:48:25 PM

CHAIR REINBOLD said she appreciated that he is a veteran and has earned so many medals. She stated she is impressed with his scholarship work and his training. She thanked him for his work on domestic violence prevention and other service to the state. She also thanked him for his willingness to serve.

1:50:00 PM

COLLEEN VAGUE, Appointee, Board of Social Work Examiners, Division of Corporations, Business & Professional Licensing, Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development, stated she has earned a Master of Education and Counseling degree and a Bachelor of Arts degree in psychology. She has worked as a high school teacher, a private school principal, and at the Department of Corrections (DOC) as an education coordinator. She also worked at the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD) as a career guide. She currently works in a non-profit organization for a childcare assistance program. She said she thinks social work can create a foundation for people whose lives are in distress and help them connect to their community. This might help people avoid some of the pitfalls that happen to them in life, she said. She acknowledged that is the reason she is interested in serving on this board. She also expressed an interest in staying informed and connected to her own community. She noted that she chairs the Mat-Su Planning Commission. She expressed an interest in achieving a statewide perspective as a citizen serving on the board.

1:51:48 PM

SENATOR BIRCH said he was intrigued that she served as an education coordinator at Department of Corrections. The state can do so much more to rehabilitate and restore the community engagement of the prison population, he said. He asked her to briefly share her experiences.

MS. VAGUE answered that her experience working at the prison was very fulfilling. She said most prisoners do not want to be in prison nor do they want to return to prison after their release, but they do not know how to do so. She said it is important to recognize that 95 percent of prisoners in the system will be released. She said that if the state does not help them in prison, they will continue to victimize others. She said she thinks that the state needs significantly more rehabilitation and other programs in the prison system to help stop recidivism.

SENATOR BIRCH thanked her for her public service.

[1:53:19 PM](#)

SENATOR COSTELLO asked what can be done about the lack of social workers in the state and what the legislature can do to help.

MS. VAGUE said that the social workers' profession could be elevated to a profession that is respected. She said she thinks many people view social workers as those who work in the Office of Children's Services and take away their kids. She said that the profession serves a much larger role in the community and can help families in distress. She suggested that colleges need to advertise the profession of social work as a necessary one, much like psychologists or other professionals who are held in high regard.

SENATOR COSTELLO said the Senate Education Standing Committee learned that research is being done by the University of Alaska, Fairbanks related to suicide prevention. She asked whether Ms. Vague was familiar with that research, and if not, if she would be willing to find out more about it.

MS. VAGUE said she had not specifically heard about the research. However, she did her thesis on suicide prevention, she said. She said that society ignores suicide until it happens. She expressed an interest in finding out more about the research and what can be done to prevent suicides in Alaska.

[1:55:53 PM](#)

CHAIR REINBOLD opened public testimony, and after first determining no one wished to testify, closed public testimony on the confirmation hearing for Colleen Vague, appointee to Board of Social Work Examiners.

[1:56:05 PM](#)

CHAIR REINBOLD remarked on Ms. Vague's amazing credentials and experience. She thanked her for her willingness to serve.

[1:57:19 PM](#)

PEGGY ANN MCCONNOCHIE, Appointee, Real Estate Commission, Division of Corporations, Business & Professional Licensing, Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development, said that she has been licensed since 1980. She is a real estate broker and she owns a real estate company in Juneau. She is being reappointed to serve on the Real Estate Commission. She characterized the commission's work as important and difficult since the commission reviews statutes and regulations that govern the entire state. Sometimes the board has to consider potential wrongs that have occurred in the industry and it must provide information to investigators to resolve cases. Real estate licensing touches consumers in communities throughout the state, she said. She offered her belief that the commission must ensure that real estate licensees do a good job and do no harm to the consumers.

[1:58:51 PM](#)

SENATOR COSTELLO thanked Ms. McConnochie for her service. She pointed out her wide-ranging skill set and accomplishments, including helping re-write the real estate exam in Alaska. She said the state is lucky to have her serving in this capacity.

[1:59:31 PM](#)

CHAIR REINBOLD opened public testimony, and after first determining no one wished to testify, closed public testimony on the confirmation hearing for Peggy Ann McConnochie, appointee to the Real Estate Commission.

[1:59:45 PM](#)

SENATOR BIRCH remarked that innovation has changed industries. He asked what she views as ways to embrace technology in her field.

MS. MCCONNOCHIE responded that Alaska is lucky because some lag time exists related to the profession in the Lower 48, so Alaska can take advantage of what other states have done and avoid pitfalls. She agreed "Zillow" and other entities outside of Alaska often attempt to do business in Alaska without obtaining licensure.

[2:01:39 PM](#)

CHAIR REINBOLD commended her local and national involvement. She thanked her for her willingness to serve.

[2:02:23 PM](#)

CHERYL MARKWOOD, Appointee, Real Estate Commission, Division of Corporations, Business & Professional Licensing, Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development, stated that this is her first appointment to a board or commission. She said that she has been a licensed real estate broker in Alaska since 2010. She became an associate broker in 2014, and a real estate broker in 2015. She opened her own business, Markwood Realty, that specializes in property management, more specifically condo associations and large-scale properties. She believes her experience in this specialized field will be a great fit and she will be an asset to the commission. She said that she is hardworking, honest, and has the ability to devote the time required in service to this position.

She said that she is very proud of her industry and recognizes the economic value that the real estate industry brings to the communities throughout Alaska. The motto in her office is that "Everyone should love where they live." She suggested that this philosophy will serve her well as she works to help to preserve the integrity of this industry. She said that it is a great honor and privilege to serve on the Real Estate Commission. She promised to dedicate herself to the work, if confirmed.

[2:04:05 PM](#)

SENATOR BISHOP thanked her for her willingness to serve. He said he thought she would be an asset to the commission.

[2:04:36 PM](#)

CHAIR REINBOLD opened public testimony, and after determining no one wished to testify, closed public testimony on the confirmation hearing for Cheryl Markwood, appointee to the Real Estate Commission.

[2:05:15 PM](#)

JAMIE MATTHEWS, Appointee, Real Estate Commission, Division of Corporations, Business & Professional Licensing, Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development, said that she grew up in Cordova, graduated from the University of Alaska Fairbanks, and has lived in the Copper Basin area for about 14 years. She related she has a diverse background, primarily related to the local electric utility, Copper Valley Electric. However, she is also president of the school board. She had not contemplated applying for this commission, but when asked to serve, she decided it would be a good way to serve her community. She said there is not a licensed real estate agent in her area. She offered her belief that life is about relationships and this will expand her network. She would bring

her strong financial background, a general familiarity with regulations, and a common-sense perspective to the commission. She said she will serve on the public seat and she is excited to learn more about the Real Estate Commission.

[2:06:54 PM](#)

CHAIR REINBOLD opened public testimony, and after determining no one wished to testify, closed public testimony on the confirmation hearing for Jamie Matthews, appointee to the Real Estate Commission.

[2:07:01 PM](#)

CHAIR REINBOLD said she appreciated her willingness to serve.

MS.MATTHEWS said she especially appreciates her senator, Senator Bishop.

[2:08:01 PM](#)

MARGARET NELSON, Appointee, Real Estate Commission, Division of Corporations, Business & Professional Licensing, Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development, stated that she is the broker and owner of Denali Real Estate. She has never served on any board or commission but is interested in a number of issues the real estate community currently faces related to associations, association management, and property management. She said she thinks this is an area that needs some attention. She would like to bring her perspective and expertise to assist the state as it moves forward on those issues. In response to Chair Reinbold, she answered that she currently lives in the Stuckagain Heights area.

[2:09:23 PM](#)

SENATOR COSTELLO remarked that even though Ms. Nelson has not served on a state board she has substantial service on local boards. She thanked her for her interest in serving in this capacity.

[2:10:01 PM](#)

CHAIR REINBOLD opened public testimony, and after determining no one wished to testify, closed public testimony on the confirmation hearing for Margaret Nelson, appointee to the Real Estate Commission.

[2:10:14 PM](#)

SENATOR BIRCH thanked her for her willingness to serve. He recalled when she worked as a reporter at the Fairbanks Daily

News Miner. He offered his belief that she will be a wonderful addition to the body.

[2:11:26 PM](#)

LEIF HOLM, Appointee, Board of Pharmacy, Division of Corporations, Business & Professional Licensing, Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development said that he has been involved in pharmacy for his entire life. He said his father was a pharmacy owner, so he has always been around pharmacies. He has served on the board for four years and hopes to be reappointed to continue work on compounding pharmacies and expanded pharmacy technician regulations. He characterized serving on the board as interesting and important work. He said that he would offer his voice as an independent and compounding pharmacist. [The U.S. Pharmacopeia Convention (USP) formally defines compounding as "the preparation, mixing, assembling, altering, packaging, and labeling of a drug, drug-delivery device, or device in accordance with a licensed practitioner's prescription, medication order, or initiative based on the practitioner/patient/ pharmacist/compounder relationship in the course of professional practice." A compounding pharmacist can create an exact preparation, customize strength or dosage, or reformulate the drug to exclude a nonessential ingredient, such as lactose, gluten, or a dye.]

[2:12:29 PM](#)

CHAIR REINBOLD opened public testimony, and after determining no one wished to testify, closed public testimony on the confirmation hearing for Leif Holm, appointee to the Board of Pharmacy.

[2:12:43 PM](#)

SENATOR BISHOP extended his gratitude. He said that the state needs people with his experience to serve on the board to ensure all Alaskans are treated fairly. He said, "You're the right man for the job."

[2:13:20 PM](#)

CHAIR REINBOLD said she was district business manager in pharmaceutical sales and management in Alaska, so she called on many pharmacies. She said that compounding is very interesting. She thanked him for his willingness to serve.

[2:14:04 PM](#)

CHAIR REINBOLD stated that in accordance with AS 39.05.080, the Senate Labor and Commerce Standing Committee reviewed the

following and recommends the appointments be forwarded to a joint session for consideration:

Board of Public Accountancy:

Karen Smith - Anchorage

Board of Barbers & Hairdressers:

Jessica Steele - Wasilla

Board of Massage Therapists

Julie Endle - Palmer

Board of Social Work Examiners:

Geoffry McCormick - North Pole

Colleen Vague - Wasilla

Board of Pharmacy:

Leif Holm - North Pole

Real Estate Commission:

Jamie Matthews - Glennallen

Peggy Ann McConnochie - Juneau

Cheryl Markwood - Fairbanks

Margaret Nelson - Anchorage

[2:14:44 PM](#)

CHAIR REINBOLD reminded members that signing the reports regarding appointments to boards and commissions in no way reflects individual members' approval or disapproval of the appointees; the nominations are merely forwarded to the full legislature for confirmation or rejection.

[2:14:55 PM](#)

CHAIR REINBOLD reviewed the upcoming committee meeting schedule.

[2:15:10 PM](#)

There being no further business to come before the committee, Chair Reinbold adjourned the Senate Labor and Commerce Standing Committee meeting at 2:15 p.m.