

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE  
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL**

**FEBRUARY 12, 2020  
5:00 PM**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Senator Gary Stevens, Chair  
Representative Louise Stutes, Vice Chair  
Senator Tom Begich  
Senator John Coghill  
Senator Cathy Giessel  
Senator Lyman Hoffman  
Senator Bert Stedman  
Senator Natasha von Imhof  
Representative Bryce Edgmon  
Representative Neal Foster  
Representative DeLena Johnson  
Representative Jennifer Johnston  
Representative Chuck Kopp  
Representative Steve Thompson

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

**OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT**

**AGENDA**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES  
RATIFICATION OF CHARITY EVENTS  
COMMITTEE BUSINESS  
CONTRACT APPROVALS

**SPEAKER REGISTER**

Jessica Geary, Executive Director, Legislative Affairs Agency  
JC Kestel, Procurement Officer, Legislative Affairs Agency

[5:00:18 PM](#)

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

CHAIR STEVENS called the Legislative Council meeting to order at 5:00pm in the State Capitol's Senate Finance Committee Room. Present at the call were: Senators Begich, Coghill, Giessel, Hoffman, Stedman, Stevens, von Imhof; Representatives Edgmon, Foster, Johnson, Johnston, Kopp, Thompson, Stutes.

14 members present.

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**A. December 18, 2019**

[5:01:30 PM](#)

VICE-CHAIR STUTES moved and asked unanimous consent that Legislative Council approve the minutes dated December 18, 2019, as presented.

CHAIR STEVENS asked if there were corrections or additions to those minutes. Seeing none, the minutes were approved.

**III. RATIFICATION OF CHARITY EVENTS**

- A. 2020 Girl Scouts of Alaska Annual Auction**
- B. 28th Fahrenkamp-Kelly Classic Charity Putting Tournament**
- C. 57th Annual Legislative Skits**
- D. 5th Annual Juneau's Got Talent**
- E. Juneau Co-op Preschool Winter Feast**
- F. Juneau Animal Rescue 7th Annual Silent Auction**
- G. 2020 Kenai River Sportfishing Association Events**

[5:01:49 PM](#)

VICE-CHAIR STUTES moved and asked unanimous consent that Legislative Council ratify the Chair's sanctioning of the following charitable events per AS 24.60.080 (a)(2)(B): 2020 Girl Scouts of Alaska Annual Auction; 28th Fahrenkamp-Kelly Classic Charity Putting Tournament; 57th Annual Legislative Skits; 5th Annual Juneau's Got Talent; Juneau Co-op Preschool Winter Feast; Juneau Animal Rescue 7th Annual Silent Auction; 2020 Kenai River Sportfishing Association Events.

CHAIR STEVENS objected for purpose of discussion. He has sanctioned these events and verified they are 501(c)(3) organizations. He asked if there was any discussion. Seeing

none, he removed his objection and stated that the events have been ratified.

#### **IV. COMMITTEE BUSINESS**

##### **A. FY19 Legislature Audit**

CHAIR STEVENS noted this is not an action item, there will be no vote, but Council has an opportunity to hear from the Executive Director and ask questions.

JESSICA GEARY, Executive Director, Legislative Affairs Agency, explained that by statute the Legislature has an annual independent audit of its financials. The auditor was Elgee Rehfeld who won that contract through a competitive RFP (Request for Proposals) process. It was a clean audit with no exceptions, which is ideal. She said she was happy to answer any questions.

CHAIR STEVENS asked if there were questions; there were none.

##### **B. FY21 Legislature Budget**

CHAIR STEVENS asked for a motion.

[5:04:12 PM](#)

VICE-CHAIR STUTES moved that Legislative Council per AS 24.20.130 approve the FY21 Legislative Council Proposed budget and transmit it to the House and Senate Finance Committees for their review and action.

CHAIR STEVENS objected for purpose of discussion and asked Ms. Geary to please explain the budget and address any questions.

JESSICA GEARY, Executive Director, Legislative Affairs Agency, said that before members is the Legislative Council FY21 proposed budget and budget narrative. She said there were no substantive changes since being delivered to your offices last week.

Ms. Geary explained that in preparing the budget, she met with the Presiding Officers, Rules Chairs, and the Finance Co-Chairs or their staff to discuss the budget. There are no changes from last year. Within the budget request are two RDUs, which are appropriations, and there is another RDU within the Legislature that is the Legislative Budget & Audit Committee whose budget was already passed directly to the Finance Committees. Once they have this budget, they will have the entire Legislative budget and be able to get to work.

The entire budget is listed in the Overview Tab in the front of the budget that was distributed. We made some structural changes last year which made it easier to do business this year, but unfortunately had to keep those pages in the budget book, so you will see there are still pages for the House and Senate Per Diem Allocations, both ninety day and thirty day, and there is also Information and Teleconference. Those must remain in this year but will be removed next year. Again, there are no increments in our request. Our FY20 Management Plan equals FY21 Governor's Figures which equals our FY21 request. There is a small surplus in State Facilities Rent which will be offered up to the Finance Committees as a reduction. She said she was happy to answer any questions.

CHAIR STEVENS asked if there were questions. Seeing none, Speaker Edgmon has intent language.

SPEAKER EDGMON said when he met with Ms. Geary, she communicated that LAA was billed approximately \$12,000 by OMB for services rendered. Subsequently, there was a verbal commitment from OMB that this billing practice would not continue. It seemed appropriate that this might be worthy of having a discussion on the record to give LAA assurance from Legislative Council that they are not responsible for paying the \$12,000. He said he is prepared to offer an amendment to that effect.

CHAIR STEVENS said there is a motion before the Council and asked Speaker Edgmon for his amendment.

SPEAKER EDGMON moved that Legislative Council direct LAA to withhold payment for the FY20 invoiced amount of \$12,112 for OMB budget analyst time billed by the Governor's Office and exclude the billing from the Legislature's FY21 request.

CHAIR STEVENS said there is an amendment to the main motion and asked if there was discussion.

SENATOR STEDMAN said his concern is that the Governor was starting to muck around in our budget. We normally stay in our own back yard. He said he supports this, but his other concern is we have substantial budgetary time in Legislative Finance dealing with the difference between the OMB system and our system and if we are going to play the billing game, we could probably find a bill bigger than \$12,000 to send to him.

SENATOR COGHILL asked if this had done before, has the Legislature been billed previously.

JESSICA GEARY responded this is the first time we have ever been billed for OMB analyst time. In fact, OMB does not analyze our budget, we analyze it and submit numbers to them which they, in the past, put in their system without manipulating them.

REPRESENTATIVE KOPP said he sat on the Courts budget subcommittee and they too bristled at the bill from OMB to analyze their budget and had a similar view as expressed by Senators Coghill and Stedman.

CHAIR STEVENS asked if there were further comments on this amendment. Seeing none, he requested a roll call vote.

[5:10:15 PM](#)

A roll call vote was taken on the amendment.

YEAS: Senators Begich, Coghill, Giessel, Hoffman, Stedman, Stevens, von Imhof; Representatives Edgmon, Foster, Johnson, Johnston, Kopp, Thompson, Stutes.

NAYS: None

The motion passed 14-0.

CHAIR STEVENS said before the Council is an amended main motion. He asked if there was further discussion on the main motion to approve the Legislative budget. He removed his objection and asked for a roll call vote.

[5:11:19 PM](#)

A roll call vote was taken on the budget.

YEAS: Senators Begich, Coghill, Giessel, Hoffman, Stedman, Stevens, von Imhof; Representatives Edgmon, Foster, Johnson, Johnston, Kopp, Thompson, Stutes.

NAYS: None

The motion passed 14-0.

## **V. CONTRACT APPROVALS**

### **A. Ketchikan Office Space Lease Renewal**

[5:11:58 PM](#)

VICE-CHAIR STUTES moved that Legislative Council approve renewal No. 4 of the lease for Ketchikan Office Space in the amount of \$48,272.32.

CHAIR STEVENS objected for purpose of discussion and asked JC Kestel to provide a brief explanation and address any questions.

JC KESTEL, Procurement Officer, Legislative Affairs Agency, explained the original lease agreement between the Legislative Affairs Agency and Ketchikan Gateway Borough for office space in Ketchikan was for a five-year term that began March 1, 2012 and terminated February 28, 2017. There were five lease renewals available under the original lease agreement, each for a one-year period. We have exercised three of the renewal options.

Renewal No. 3 of the lease expires on February 29, 2020. The Legislative Affairs Agency would like approval to proceed with Renewal No. 4 for the period March 1, 2020, through February 28, 2021. If Legislative Council approves Renewal No. 4, this will leave one more renewal of the lease available. This lease renewal exceeds \$35,000 in one fiscal year; therefore, Legislative Council's approval is required.

CHAIR STEVENS asked if there were any questions.

SENATOR STEDMAN said in defense of the proposed lease, he would like to remind the Committee how successful it has been over the years since we relocated the Legislative Information Office (LIO) from the tourist area downtown, out approximately one mile to a Borough building which contains Borough offices, US Senate offices, and a few other offices, so it is a one-stop-shop with ample parking. It has been very convenient for the public and we have noticed a substantial increase in public visitation. He encouraged members to support this renewal. It has served us very well. Both he and the Representative have offices there, along with the LIO staff.

CHAIR STEVENS asked if there were further discussion or comments.

He removed his objection and asked for a roll call vote.

[5:14:59 PM](#)

A roll call vote was taken.

YEAS: Senators Begich, Coghill, Giessel, Hoffman, Stedman, Stevens, von Imhof; Representatives Edgmon, Foster, Johnson, Johnston, Kopp, Thompson, Stutes.

NAYS: None

The motion passed 14-0.

## **VI. ADJOURN**

CHAIR STEVENS said if there is nothing further to come before the Council, we are adjourned.

[5:15:44 PM](#)