

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL**

**DECEMBER 19, 2022
1:00 PM**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Sara Hannan, Chair
Senator Lora Reinbold, Vice Chair
Representative Matt Claman
Representative Bryce Edgmon
Representative Neal Foster
Representative Louise Stutes
Representative Cathy Tilton
Representative Chris Tuck
Senator Click Bishop
Senator Shelley Hughes (alternate)
Senator Peter Micciche
Senator Mike Shower
Senator Bert Stedman
Senator Gary Stevens

MEMBERS ABSENT

Senator Lyman Hoffman

OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Mike Cronk
Representative Kevin McCabe
Representative Laddie Shaw
Senator Elvi Gray-Jackson

AGENDA

APPROVAL OF AGENDA
APPROVAL OF MINUTES
COMMITTEE BUSINESS - EXECUTIVE SESSION
COMMITTEE BUSINESS

SPEAKER REGISTER

Jessica Geary, Executive Director, Legislative Affairs
Agency (LAA)
Emily Nauman, Deputy Director, Legal Services
Tim Powers, Manager, Information and Teleconference, LAA
Tim Banaszak, Chief Information Officer, Integrated
Technology Services, LAA

I. CALL TO ORDER

[1:05:07 PM](#)

CHAIR HANNAN called the Legislative Council meeting to order at 1:05 PM. Present at the call were: Representatives Edgmon, Foster, Hannan, Stutes, Tilton; Senators Bishop, Micciche, Hughes, Reinbold, Shower, Stedman, Stevens.

Twelve members present.

Representative Claman joined at 1:07 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

[1:06:30 PM](#)

VICE CHAIR REINBOLD moved and asked unanimous consent that Legislative Council approve the agenda as presented.

The agenda was approved without objection.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

[1:06:48 PM](#)

VICE-CHAIR REINBOLD moved and asked unanimous consent that Legislative Council approve the minutes dated: June 15, 2022; June 29, 2022; July 13, 2022; August 18, 2022; September 30, 2022; and October 14, 2022, as presented.

The minutes were approved without objection.

IV. COMMITTEE BUSINESS-EXECUTIVE SESSION

CHAIR HANNAN stated that the Committee would go into Executive Session to consider a construction contract for the Assembly Building remodel, an Anchorage security contract, a discussion of Legal Services drafting volume, and a consideration of litigation related to social media.

[1:07:55 PM](#)

VICE CHAIR REINBOLD moved that Legislative Council go into Executive Session under Uniform Rule 22(B)(1), discussion of matters, the immediate knowledge of which would adversely affect the finances of a government unit and 22(B)(3), discussion of a matter that may, by law, be required to be confidential. The following individuals may remain in the room or on-line during executive session: Jessica Geary, Megan Wallace, Emily Nauman, Santé Lesh, Molly Kiesel, Rayme Vinson, JC Kestel, Wayne Jensen, Chris Gilberto, Pat Shanley, Serge Lesh, Mike Warena, Hilary Martin, any legislators not on

Legislative Council, and any staff of Legislative Council members.

[1:08:57 PM](#)

A roll call vote was taken.

YEAS: Representatives Edgmon, Foster, Hannan, Stutes, Tilton; Senators Bishop, Micciche, Hughes, Reinbold, Shower, Stedman, Stevens.

NAYS: None.

The motion passed 12-0.

[1:09:44 PM](#)

Council went into Executive Session.

[3:16:39 PM](#)

Council came out of Executive Session.

A roll call was taken to establish quorum.

Representatives Edgmon, Foster, Hannan, Stutes, Tilton; Senators Bishop, Micciche, Hughes, Shower, Stedman, Stevens.

Eleven members present.

A. Approval of Construction Contract for Assembly Building Remodel

[3:17:39 PM](#)

SENATE PRESIDENT MICCICHE moved that Legislative Council authorize a construction services contract with Dawson Construction in an amount not to exceed \$8,588,266 for the Assembly Building Remodel project. He further moved that Legislative Council request that the Finance Committees authorize a \$2,000,000 grant from the Juneau Community Foundation in the FY 2024 Capital Budget to be used to offset the cost of the Assembly Building Remodel project.

CHAIR HANNAN objected for the purpose of discussion and asked Ms. Geary to summarize the item.

JESSICA GEARY, Executive Director of the Legislative Affairs Agency (LAA) said that this construction contract would authorize work to begin on the Assembly Building, turning the building into thirty-three separate apartment units that will be move-in ready. She stated there is an option to realize savings based on the process undertaken with Dawson

Construction, there is a guaranteed maximum price of \$8,588,266 which means the contract price will not exceed that. When the \$2,000,000 grant from the Juneau Community Foundation (JCF) is factored in, it reduces the cost to just over \$6,500,00.

SENATOR STEVENS thanked the Juneau Community Foundation for their donation and ongoing support.

REPRESENTATIVE TILTON thanked the Juneau Community Foundation for their help and for bringing this issue forward. She stated that she is not a fan of the legislature being a landlord and competing with the private sector. She added that she understands that there is a need for housing in the Juneau area and the need for keeping staff safe, but said there are a lot of unanswered questions.

SENATOR SHOWER said he concurred with Representative Tilton's comments and that he had predicted that the cost of the project would go up and predicts that it will probably go up again. He stated that he believes the Committee should explore other options.

SENATOR HUGHES said she agreed with Representative Tilton's statements; however, she said she was going to be a yes because this project will be approved and the legislature needs to be able to receive the JCF grant. She said that she also had predicted that the project cost would increase. She said she is concerned that this project is happening before providing space in Southcentral to hold floor sessions, which she believes is important in the future to have a place to hold special sessions and that should be a priority over this project.

REPRESENTATIVE STUTES said she was grateful to the Juneau Community Foundation and that this is a positive move to take care of the members of the legislature. She said she does not see it as going into the rental business, but rather a way to provide for legislative members who are serving Alaska.

REPRESENTATIVE EDGMON stated he will be a yes but that this is an awkward vote because the legislature doesn't evaluate other projects like this. He said it is a unique situation and a one-time opportunity to be gifted a building; it is money that has already been appropriated in addition to the program receipt authority to receive the grant money.

SENATOR STEDMAN thanked the Juneau Community Foundation. He said one of the biggest challenges the legislature has is

housing, particularly in the summer months if there is a special session, which are held in the capital. He said Juneau will also experience a lot of growth in tourism, along with the rest of Southeast Alaska, in the next several years so housing is going to be even tighter. He continued he thinks this is the right move and we will work through the finances to ensure legislators do not have a free ride. He concluded that this will be beneficial to the legislature and the community of Juneau.

[3:26:34 PM](#)

There was no further discussion, and a roll call vote was taken.

YEAS: Representatives Edgmon, Foster, Hannan, Stutes; Senators Bishop, Hughes, Micciche, Stedman, Stevens.

NAYS: Representative Tilton; Senator Shower.

The motion passed 9-2.

B. Anchorage Legislative Office Building Security Contract

[3:27:40 PM](#)

SENATE PRESIDENT MICCICHE moved that Legislative Council authorize a contract for an amount not to exceed \$188,000 from January 1, 2023, through December 31, 2023. He further moved that Legislative Council add an increment to the security services budget for \$100,000 to cover the additional cost.

MS. GEARY stated that approval of this contract would allow the legislature to enter into a one year contract with the company currently providing services on a temporary basis. The total amount of the contract is \$188,000, which is about \$100,000 more than currently budgeted; therefore, an increment of \$100,000 is requested for inclusion in the FY 2024 budget.

[3:29:12 PM](#)

There was no further discussion, and a roll call vote was taken.

YEAS: Representatives Edgmon, Foster, Hannan, Stutes, Tilton; Senators Bishop, Hughes, Micciche, Shower, Stedman, Stevens.

NAYS: None.

The motion passed 11-0.

C. Legal Services Drafting Volume Discussion

3:30:10 PM

SENATE PRESIDENT MICCICHE moved that Legislative Council approve the following language changes to the Legal Services Priority Policy:

- (A) number ten, after the words, "drafting of", add, "ten or less new measures per legislator"; and
- (B) number eleven, delete the words, "sectional summaries for introduced measures."; and
- (C) add a new number twelve that states, "drafting of eleven or more new measures per legislator move to the bottom of the Priority Policy as per Legal Services workload allows."; and
- (D) this motion would allow for conforming and technical changes by Legislative Legal.

Senate President Micciche, in speaking to the motion, said that this policy change does not limit legislators from attempting to write more than ten, it just drops them to the bottom of the priority list to help manage the workload. He continued that this eliminates the requirement for sectional summaries for introduced measures, a task that is not being done currently, and it leaves on the priority list ten or less measures per legislator, which drops the workload but still allows those measures to be considered as a lower priority.

REPRESENTATIVE EDGMON stated his support and clarified that while this is a policy that does not have the binding authority of a uniform rule, it is a directive from Legislative Council that Legal Services can act upon.

REPRESENTATIVE TILTON stated her support for this motion, which leaves open the possibility that the next legislature could determine whether they want to have limitations.

SENATOR SHOWER asked Legal for an interpretation of Senator Micciche's amendment; specifically, he wanted confirmation that Legal Services agreed that these policy changes do not limit the drafting of measures, but rather, after ten measures, any additional measures move to the bottom of the priority list and would be drafted eventually.

EMILY NAUMAN, Deputy Director of Legal Services, stated how this would function on a practical level is that the first new bill requests of a legislature would fall in the Priority Policy where they do now, at number ten. The eleventh bill request would come after what is currently Priority Policy

number eleven ("legal research or opinions that do not relate to introduced bills") and would be the very last item on the Priority Policy. She emphasized that it is always Legal Service's goal to finish all the work on their desks, she believes it would all get done eventually, just at a lower priority.

SENATOR SHOWER expressed his appreciation for all the fantastic work done by Legal Services. He asked for the record that Ms. Nauman make clear that this change does not limit the filing of bills, it simply means that if a legislator reaches ten, any additional measures requested by that legislator are just a lower priority.

MS. NAUMAN confirmed that these changes would not, in any way, prevent a legislator from filing a bill or from introducing a bill, it simply puts that eleventh plus bill lower on the Legal Services Priority Policy. In practice, it may result in a delay in the legislator getting a draft of that eleventh bill, but it does not restrict in any way what the legislator does with that bill once they get it.

[3:38:10 PM](#)

There was no further discussion, and a roll call vote was taken.

YEAS: Representatives Edgmon, Foster, Hannan, Stutes, Tilton, Tuck; Senators Bishop, Micciche, Shower, Stedman, Stevens.

NAYS: None.

The motion passed 11-0.

CHAIR HANNAN stated that while Council has now amended the Legal Services Priority Policy, and as was said in discussion, Council has not put forward any changes to Uniform Rules nor proposed any changes to the Uniform Rules. She continued that today's actions are the start of a discussion that may result in changes to the Uniform Rules in the future, to modernize the Rules and any policies to further manage the workload, as it is her belief that the issues that brought about these policy changes have not gone away.

[3:39:44 PM](#)

SENATOR STEVENS moved that Legislative Council approve the following additional changes to the Legal Services Priority Policy:

- (A) number ten, after "measures" insert, "during the first sixty days of each legislative session."; and
- (B) number thirteen, add, "drafting of new measures after the first sixty days of each legislative session."

SENATOR STEVENS, in speaking to the motion, asked Ms. Nauman if this language works with the amendment that was just approved.

MS. NAUMAN stated that she believed it could work if Legal were given the authority to make conforming changes.

DISCUSSION FOLLOWED regarding the personal bill deadline in Uniform Rules (No. 44) and the intent, with this motion, to include in the Priority Policy only, that personal bills submitted after the sixtieth day in the first legislative session will be a lower priority for Legal Services.

MS. NAUMAN, responding to a question by Chair Hannan, said that that the wording of the motion should include allowing for conforming changes to ensure all the changes work together.

SENATOR STEVENS amended his motion to include allowing conforming and technical changes by Legal Services.

[3:43:28 PM](#)

There was no further discussion, and a roll call vote was taken.

YEAS: Representatives Edgmon, Foster, Hannan, Stutes, Tuck; Senators Bishop, Micciche, Stedman, Stevens.

NAYS: Representative Tilton.

The motion passed 9-1.

CHAIR HANNAN reminded members that Legislative Council policies can be amended at any time. Some of the topics currently being discussed may be revisited and refined by a future Legislative Council.

V. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

A. Approval of Teleconference/Videoconference Integration Design Services

[3:45:15 PM](#)

SENATE PRESIDENT MICCICHE moved that the Legislative Council authorize K2 Audiovisual, Acoustics and Technology Design firm to design an audiovisual system for the Capitol Complex committee rooms and chambers in an amount not to exceed \$73,450 using existing capital funds.

CHAIR HANNAN objected for the purposes of discussion and asked Tim Powers to speak to this item.

TIM POWERS, Information and Teleconference Manager, said that this proposal is for K2 to provide audio design services to modernize the audiovisual (AV) systems throughout the Capitol. He explained that most of the systems in the Capitol have been in place since the 1990s or early 2000s; while a few specific rooms have slightly newer technology, none are at a level that allows for integration of programs such as Microsoft Teams. Committee operations during the pandemic made clear that there was extremely limited ability for third party video streaming platforms such as Teams or Zoom to interface with the existing teleconference audio system.

Mr. Powers said that because it was important to find a company with experience in the unique legislative setting, he contacted National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), for assistance in identifying a company that could design an AV system for all nine committee rooms, the Speaker's Chambers, and the House and Senate Chambers. He specified that, for the House and Senate Chambers, he sought input from the Sergeant-at-Arms who explained that the current design does not work as they would like and the workarounds in place are inefficient.

Mr. Powers noted that while prior Alaska AV vendors have done good work, they did not have experience specific to the legislative setting, which resulted in systems that do not work exactly as they should for the particular needs of the legislature. Initially, NCSL recommended two companies; however, one was a hardware provider, who also recommended K2 for the design work he was seeking. K2 has worked in many state legislatures, as well as Congress in D.C.; and he noted that K2 had two representatives on teleconference for any questions.

Mr. Powers said that the scope of the work of this \$75,000 proposal included K2 representatives flying to Juneau to assess the layout of the Capitol, including existing wire paths and specific room needs; designing a turn-key building-wide AV system that can be used to go out to bid for installation of the system should Council choose to do so; and

a site visit should a system be installed to ensure it was installed to the desired standards. He noted that not included in this proposal is travel for construction oversight, which can be added as necessary.

Mr. Powers, in response to a question from Representative Edgmon about whether Wi-Fi improvements could or would be included in this work, said that Wi-Fi improvements were not part of the scope of this proposal and that perhaps Mr. Banaszak and IT could provide some information about improving Wi-Fi reception in the Capitol.

[3:50:49 PM](#)

There was no further discussion, and a roll call vote was taken.

YEAS: Representatives Edgmon, Foster, Hannan, Stutes, Tilton, Tuck; Senators Bishop, Micciche, Stedman, Stevens.

NAYS: None.

The motion passed 10-0.

B. Approval of IT Equipment Purchases-Firewall/VPN Connections

[3:51:50 PM](#)

SENATE PRESIDENT MICCICHE moved that the Legislative Council authorize the purchase of replacement firewall and VPN cybersecurity equipment for a price not to exceed \$171,084 using existing capital funds.

CHAIR HANNAN objected for the purposes of discussion and asked Tim Banaszak to speak to this item.

TIM BANASZAK, Chief Information Officer, Integrated Technology Services, joined by teleconference and noted that with him online was Shay Wilson, Network Supervisor, who is responsible for the legislature's applications, network, and security systems. He first responded to Representative Edgmon's Wi-Fi question that IT has been working throughout the interim to improve Wi-Fi coverage.

Mr. Banaszak, moving back to the current item, said he was requesting Legislative Council's approval to fund replacement of current firewalls and secure VPN (Virtual Private Network) for remote access in Juneau and Anchorage. These items in both locations have reached their end-of-life and will not be supported after March 2023. These critical hardware systems protect and provide the legislature's secure connections to

the internet, including the akleg.gov public website, BASIS, internal websites with partner agencies in the Executive Branch, state accounting and payroll systems, and remote access to legislative systems. In short, without this hardware, the legislature cannot safely conduct business that requires secure technology. He noted that through a competitively sourced cooperative purchasing agreement per section 37 of the Legislative Procurement Procedures, IT solicited quotes from three vendors: Structured; Network Consulting Services, Inc.; and World Wide Technology. The lowest bid proposal was from Structured for \$171,084. He recommended that Legislative Council authorize the use of existing capital funds for these necessary cybersecurity hardware tools in an amount not to exceed the lowest bid of \$171,084.

Discussion followed.

[3:56:10 PM](#)

A roll call vote was taken.

YEAS: Representatives Edgmon, Foster, Hannan, Stutes, Tilton, Tuck; Senators Bishop, Micciche, Shower, Stedman, Stevens.

NAYS: None.

The motion passed 11-0.

VI. ADJOURN

There being no further business before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 3:58 PM.

[3:58:29 PM](#)