ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

APRIL 30, 2024
5:30 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT
Senator Elvi Gray-Jackson, Chair
Representative Kevin McCabe, Vice Chair
Senator Click Bishop
Senator Matt Claman
Senator Jesse Kiehl
Senator Donny Olson
Senator Bert Stedman (alternate)
Senator Gary Stevens
Representative Bryce Edgmon
Representative Sara Hannan
Representative Craig Johnson
Representative George Rauscher
Representative Dan Saddler
Representative Cathy Tilton

MEMBERS ABSENT
Senator Lyman Hoffman

OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT
None

AGENDA
APPROVAL OF AGENDA
APPROVAL OF MINUTES
RATIFICATION OF CHARITY EVENTS
CONTRACT APPROVALS
EXECUTIVE SESSION
COMMITTEE BUSINESS

SPEAKER REGISTER
Jessica Geary, Executive Director, Legislative Affairs Agency (LAA)
Shay Wilson, Chief Information Officer (CIO), LAA
JC Kestel, Procurement Officer, LAA
Emily Nauman, Legislative Legal Services Director, LAA

I. CALL TO ORDER

5:32:04 PM
CHAIR GRAY-JACKSON called the Legislative Council meeting to order at 5:32 pm on April 30, 2024, in Room 532 (Senate Finance) of the State Capitol. Present at the call were: Senators Bishop, Claman, Gray-Jackson, Kiehl, Olson, Stedman, Stevens; Representatives Edgmon, Hannan, McCabe, Johnson, Rauscher, Saddler, Tilton.

Fourteen members present.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

5:33:02 PM
VICE CHAIR MCCABE moved that Legislative Council approve the agenda as presented.

The motion passed without objection.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

5:33:24 PM
VICE CHAIR MCCABE moved that Legislative Council approve the minutes for the February 28, 2024, Legislative Council meeting.

The motion passed without objection.

IV. RATIFICATION OF CHARITY EVENTS

5:33:43 PM
VICE CHAIR MCCABE moved that Legislative Council ratify the Chair's sanctioning of the following charitable events per AS 24.60.080 (a)(2)(B): Legislative Skits on April 27, 2024, and Victim Servies Awards on April 25, 2024.

CHAIR GRAY-JACKSON objected for the purpose of discussion and confirmed the previously sanctioned list of events are 501(c)(3) charities. The Chair removed her objection and asked for additional comments or discussion for the ratification of the events.

There was no discussion and the motion passed without objection.

V. CONTACT APPROVALS

a. FY25 Computer Hardware Refresh

5:34:29 PM

VICE CHAIR MCCABE moved that Legislative Council approve the FY25 computer hardware refresh expenditure of $213,238.00 out of existing capital funds.

CHAIR GRAY-JACKSON objected for the purpose of discussion and asked Shay Wilson, Chief Information Officer, to speak to the item and answer any questions.

SHAY WILSON, Chief Information Officer, Legislative Affairs Agency (LAA), stated before Council members is a memo regarding the annual hardware refresh for fiscal year 2025, which comes before Council every year for approval to replace outdated technology equipment across the legislature. This year's proposal includes Legal Services and the Legislative Information Office, which were inadvertently excluded from annual requests in the past. Without this expenditure, the Division of Technology and Information (DTI) would not be able to replace equipment as it breaks down or loses functionality due to aging, thereby making the legislature less productive when work cannot be accomplished without the necessary technology support. The total cost of the FY25 hardware refresh is $213,238 to be paid out of existing capital funds. The cost, replacement equipment list, and quantities were reviewed by the IT Subcommittee which recommends Legislative Council approve this proposal.

CHAIR GRAY-JACKSON, noting there were no follow up questions, removed her objection and called for the vote.

5:36:18 PM

YEAS: Senators Bishop, Claman, Gray-Jackson, Kiehl, Olson, Stedman, Stevens; Representatives Edgmon, Hannan, Johnson, McCabe, Rauscher, Saddler, Tilton

NAYS: None

The motion passed 14-0.

VI. EXECUTIVE SESSION

a. RFP 672 Office Space in Anchorage (OVR)

CHAIR GRAY-JACKSON said Council would go into Executive Session to consider a Notice of Intent to Award for office space in Anchorage for the Office of Victims' Rights.

5:37:43 PM
VICE CHAIR MCCABE moved and asked unanimous consent 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 online during Executive Session: Jessica Geary, Santé Lesh, JC Kestel, Ernest Daigle, Emily Nauman, Shay Wilson, Angela Garay, Michael Shaffer, Linnea Dishner, any legislators not on Legislative Council, and any staff of Legislative Council members.

5:38:33 PM
A roll call vote was taken.

YEAS: Senators Bishop, Claman, Gray-Jackson, Kiehl, Olson, Stedman, Stevens; Representatives Edgmon, Hannan, Johnson, McCabe, Rauscher, Saddler, Tilton

NAYS: None

The motion passed 14-0.

5:39:09 PM
Council went into Executive Session.

5:50:29 PM
Council came out of Executive Session.

A roll call vote was taken to establish a quorum.

Present at the call were Senators, Bishop, Claman, Gray-Jackson, Kiehl, Olson, Stedman, Stevens; Representatives Edgmon, Hannan, Johnson, McCabe, Rauscher, Saddler, Tilton.

Fourteen members present.

5:51:08 PM
VICE CHAIR MCCABE moved that Legislative Council approve the award of RFP 672 for Anchorage office space to L92, LLC, for a five-year lease and five optional two-year renewals.

CHAIR GRAY-JACKSON objected for the purpose of discussion and asked JC Kestel, Procurement Officer, to speak to this item and answer any questions.

JC KESTEL, Procurement Officer, LAA, stated that on February 28, 2024, LAA issued RFP 672 to solicit proposals for office space in the downtown Anchorage area for the Office of Victims' Rights. The RFP closed on April 9, and there were two proposals received, one from the Alaska Bar Association, and the other from L92, LLC. There was a Proposal Evaluation Committee (PEC) comprised of staff from the Office of Victims' Rights who scored the proposals after conducting site visits and reviewing proposals. The PEC awarded the Alaska Bar Association with 81.33 points, and L92, LLC, with 87.03 points. Enclosed in members' packets is a summary of the proposals. Based on the above information and the information provided in your packet, LAA recommends the award of RFP 672, to L92, LLC, for the lease.

CHAIR GRAY-JACKSON removed her objection and asked for a roll call vote.

5:52:48 PM
YEAS: Senators Bishop, Claman, Gray-Jackson, Kiehl, Olson, Stedman, Stevens; Representatives Edgmon, Hannan, Johnson, McCabe, Rauscher, Saddler, Tilton

NAYS: None

The motion passed 14-0.

VII. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

a. Travel and Per Diem Policy Amendment re: Wallet Funds

5:53:38 PM
VICE CHAIR MCCABE moved that Legislative Council adopt the Travel and Per Diem Policy as amended.

CHAIR GRAY-JACKSON objected for the purpose of discussion and asked Ms. Geary to explain the amendment and answer any questions.

JESSICA GEARY, Executive Director, LAA, stated in members' packets is a memo explaining the change to the Legislative Council Travel and Per Diem Policy. This proposed change is to clarify the requirements for use of wallet funds when seeking reimbursement. She said it can be an onerous process to turn in all the receipts and wallet history to the Accounting Office for reimbursement, and a lot of time is spent by both the traveler and Accounting staff. This policy change does not reduce the required back-up but does put in policy what is needed for reimbursement.

SENATOR STEVENS asked how the policy change would make the process less onerous.

MS. GEARY clarified the change does not eliminate the requirement but enshrines the requirement in policy so Accounting has something to point to. What often happens is Accounting must defend why they need certain receipts and backup documentation to go with the expenditure to substantiate the claim. The intent of the amendment is to clarify the policy so individuals know what to expect. In response to a follow-up comment by Senate President Stevens, Ms. Geary agreed the policy change does not make it less onerous; LAA cannot change the requirements of what is needed for the accounting file.

SENATOR CLAMAN said he thinks the practical effect of the policy for a long time has been that, if members can afford to, they should save their wallet funds for other travel and don't use them for legislative travel.

CHAIR GRAY-JACKSON removed her objection and asked for a roll call vote.

5:56:19 PM
YEAS: Senators Bishop, Claman, Gray-Jackson, Kiehl, Olson, Stedman, Stevens; Representatives Edgmon, Hannan, Johnson, McCabe, Rauscher, Saddler, Tilton

NAYS: None

The motion passed 14-0.

b. Four-Year Technology Plan

5:57:04 PM
VICE CHAIR MCCABE moved that Legislative Council adopt the Four-Year Technology Plan, 2024-2027.

CHAIR GRAY-JACKSON objected for the purpose of discussion and asked Shay Wilson, CIO, to explain the Four-Year Technology Plan and answer any questions.

SHAY WILSON Chief Information Officer, Legislative Affairs Agency (LAA), stated this item is the Legislature's Four-Year Technology Plan which was developed by the Division of Technology and Information (DTI) with review and input by the IT Subcommittee. He said as everyone is aware, technology is an important facet of the legislature's work process. In the quickly changing environment of technology, it is critical to have a guide to help ensure limited resources are used to the greatest benefit and target spending to meet the legislature's technology priorities. This plan is arranged in three parts: the first section defines the structure and responsibilities of IT; the second section outlines the initiatives and principles that guide the work; and finally, the last section details projects and priorities for the next four years. He said he recommends Legislative Council adopt the 2024-2027 Four-Year Technology Plan as a guiding document for DTI to use. Adoption does not approve any funding, bypass procurement rules, or signify Council's support of any of the individual projects included in the plan. Specific requests will still come before Council as appropriate. It also does not preclude DTI from any additional initiatives or projects.

In response to a question by Representative Edgmon, Mr. Wilson said the plan was developed internally with ideas from the IT Subcommittee and DTI staff.

SPEAKER TILTON asked if there had been discussion regarding the two-step verification that she heard has caused a lot of challenges for members and staff.

MR. WILSON confirmed there have been many discussions about the Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) process which requires that additional verification. He said it is the standard of technology, and everyone is moving there. DTI realizes there are difficulties with MFA and are trying to make the process as seamless as possible so legislative work is not disrupted, but still allowing for that extra verification.

SPEAKER TILTON indicated her hope is MFA will continue to be part of the discussion moving forward.

CHAIR GRAY-JACKSON removed her objection and asked for a roll call vote.

6:00:44 PM
YEAS: Senators Bishop, Claman, Gray-Jackson, Kiehl, Olson Stedman, Stevens; Representatives Edgmon, Hannan, Johnson, McCabe, Rauscher, Saddler, Tilton

NAYS: None

The motion passed 14-0.

c. Social Media Policy Update

CHAIR GRAY-JACKSON reminded members that this agenda item is for information purposes only; it is not an action item, and a vote will not be held on the amended Social Media Policy today. However, Ms. Nauman has important information about a recent US Supreme Court case to share so members are fully informed and can determine whether an update to the Legislature's Social Media Policy is warranted in the near future.

6:02:23 PM
EMILY NAUMAN, Legal Services Director, LAA, presented to Council a review of the recent US Supreme Court case *Lindke v. Freed*, which may impact legislator use of social media. Ms. Nauman used the following documents in her presentation, which are available on BASIS:

- PowerPoint slides;
- Memo to the Chair; and
- Draft of amended Social Media Policy.

TRANSCRIPTION NOTE: The discussion is not recorded in the written transcript; it is available online via audio transcript or by viewing the recorded stream.

6:33:50 PM
CHAIR GRAY-JACKSON, at the conclusion of Ms. Nauman's presentation, reminded members that this item will come back before Council at a future meeting and that a draft of the amended Social Media Policy as currently proposed is in their packets. She urged members to review the language, reach out to Legal Services with questions, and be ready to discuss.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

CHAIR GRAY-JACKSON, after confirming there were no additional comments by members, advised that the next Legislative Council meeting will be June 17, 2024, in Anchorage. She added that, subject to change, future interim Council meetings are anticipated in August, late September, and early December. She noted that the meeting schedule is based on deadline driven dates for contracts, leases, and RFPs. The Chair thanked members, LAA staff, and her staff for their contributions.

6:35:04 PM
With no further business before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 6:35 pm.