ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

FEBRUARY 11, 2026
5:15 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT
Representative Sara Hannan, Chair
Representative Ashley Carrick
Representative Bryce Edgmon
Representative DeLena Johnson
Representative Chuck Kopp
Representative Calvin Schrage
Representative Louise Stutes
Senator Matt Claman
Senator Cathy Giessel
Senator Elvi Gray-Jackson
Senator Jesse Kiehl
Senator Löki Tobin(alternate)

MEMBERS ABSENT
Senator Gary Stevens, Vice Chair
Senator Lyman Hoffman
Senator Bert Stedman
Representative Donna Mears (alternate)

OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT

AGENDA
APPROVAL OF AGENDA
APPROVAL OF MINUTES
SANCTIONING OF CHARITABLE EVENTS
COMMITTEE BUSINESS
EXECUTIVE SESSION

SPEAKER REGISTER
Jessica Geary, Executive Director, Legislative Affairs Agency (LAA)
JC Kestel, Procurement Officer, LAA
Joel Rogozinski, Finance Manager, LAA
Megan Wallace, Chief Counsel, LAA

I. Call to Order

5:21:05 PM
CHAIR HANNAN called the Legislative Council meeting to order at 5:21pm on February 11, 2026, in Room 519 (House Finance) of the State Capitol.

Present at the call were Representatives Carrick, Edgmon, Kopp, Schrage, Stutes, Hannan; Senators Claman, Giessel, Gray-Jackson, Kiehl, Tobin.

Eleven members present.

Representative Johnson joined the meeting at 5:48pm.

II. Approval of the Agenda

5:22:15 PM
SENATOR GIESSEL moved and asked unanimous consent that Legislative Council approve the agenda as presented.

The motion passed without objection.

III. Approval of Minutes

a. December 16, 2026

5:22:43 PM
SENATOR GIESSEL moved and asked unanimous consent that Legislative Council approve the minutes dated December 16, 2025, as presented.

The motion passed without objection.

IV. Sanctioning of Charitable Events

a. Juneau Animal Rescue 2026 Fundraiser

b. Juneau Dance Theatre, Juneau's Got Talent

5:23:08 PM
SENATOR GIESSEL 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):

1. Juneau Animal Rescue 2026 Fundraiser
2. Juneau's Got Talent

CHAIR HANNAN objected for the purpose of discussion and stated that the 501(c)(3) status of both Juneau Animal Rescue and Juneau Dance Theatre has been verified.

There was no further discussion, Chair Hannan removed her objection, and the sanctioning of the two charitable events was ratified.

V. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

a. Capitol Snow Removal Contract Amendment

5:24:24 PM
SENATOR GIESSEL moved that Legislative Council adopt Amendment No. 1 of the Agency's contract for snow removal services provided by CuttingEdge Development, Inc.

CHAIR HANNAN objected for the purpose of discussion and asked Legislative Affairs Agency (LAA) Procurement Officer JC Kestel and Ernest Daigle to come forward and explain the need for the contract amendment and answer any questions.

JC KESTEL, Procurement Officer, Legislative Affairs Agency (LAA), explained that the contract before the committee to amend covers snow removal services for parking lots within the Capitol Complex. He noted that Juneau has experienced record snowfall and that approximately $45,000 had already been spent under the contract by the end of January. The Agency is requesting approval to amend the contract to increase the not-to-exceed amount to $90,000 for the remainder of the winter and to address several technical specifications in the contract.

SENATOR CLAMAN noted that heavy snowfall occurred in December, but recent conditions have been mostly rain. He asked whether, if snowfall remains limited for the rest of the season, the expenses might still fall within the original contract amount, acknowledging that weather cannot be predicted.

MR. KESTEL confirmed that the contract pays only for services that are performed. Noting that while it would be ideal if snowfall remained limited, Juneau can experience significant snow as late as April. He explained that the amendment is intended to ensure coverage for the remainder of the winter, with funds used only for services rendered.

Seeing no further discussion, Chair Hannan removed her objection and a roll call vote was taken.

5:27:20 PM
YEAS: Representatives Carrick, Edgmon, Kopp, Schrage, Stutes, Hannan; Senators Claman, Giessel, Gray-Jackson, Kiehl, Tobin

NAYS: none

The motion passed 11-0.

b. Legislature Independent Audit FY25

CHAIR HANNAN stated that this agenda item is not an action item and asked Legislative Affairs Agency Finance Manager Joel Rogozinski to present the annual audit.

JOEL ROGOZINSKI, Finance Manager, LAA, stated that before members was the FY25 Audit conducted by external auditors, Elgee Rehfeld. By statute, the legislature undergoes an annual independent audit of its internal controls and financial statements. He stated the outcome of the FY25 Audit was a clean audit with no exceptions.

CHAIR HANNAN thanked Mr. Rogozinski, who started with the Agency in June 2025, and commended him on a successful first audit.

c. Legislative Council FY27 Budget Proposal

5:29:28 PM
SENATOR GIESSEL moved that Legislative Council, per AS 24.20.130, approve transmittal of the FY27 Legislative Council Proposed Budget to the House and Senate Finance Committees for their review and action.

CHAIR HANNAN objected for the purpose of discussion and asked that Legislative Affairs Agency Executive Director Jessica Geary come forward to present the budget and answer any questions members may have.

JESSICA GEARY, Executive Director, LAA, presented the FY27 proposed budget and sectional narrative, outlining appropriations and allocations for Legislative Council. She stated in preparing the budget, she met with Presiding Officers, Rules Chairs, House and Senate Finance Committee staff, and the Legislative Council Chair. Council is responsible for authorizing the transmittal of the budget request to the Finance Committees for action.

She explained that the budget request includes two main appropriations: the Legislative Council appropriation, which funds administrative functions of the legislature, special committees, and offices such as Ethics, Ombudsman, and the Office of Victims' Rights; and the Legislative Operating Budget appropriation, which includes those functions directly connected to operations of the legislature, such as Session

Expenses, House and Senate Operations, and Legislators' Salaries and Allowances. This budget request does not include the Legislative Budget and Audit Committee appropriation which is submitted separately to the Finance Committees; together, these three appropriations make up the entire legislature's budget. She said she would highlight only significant items and welcomed questions throughout.

There are two allocations which require an increment. The first is the Legislature State Facilities Rent. The initial projection was a $46,000 increment to support existing statewide lease costs, however the Agency was able to negotiate a lower lease cost for Fairbanks and refine other estimates to reduce the total increment request to $27,700.

The Session Expenses allocation has a $2,552,200 increment broken down as follows:

(1) $912,200 for cost increases related to supporting a regular session. This allocation has been absorbing operating expense increases for the last several fiscal years by borrowing from the Legislative Operating budget, also known as the interim budget, or the special session contingency in those years when there was no special session. That practice is no longer sustainable, hence the increment request to ensure adequate funding for a regular session.
(2) $35,000 in additional receipt authority requested for the Legislative Lounge.
(3) $750,000 to restore special session contingency funding that was reduced or vetoed in the FY26 request.
(4) Finally, $855,000 to provide funding to maintain statewide Gavel to Gavel services.

This brings the total increment request in the FY27 Legislative Council budget to $2,579,900.

Ms. Geary ended her presentation by reminding members that, by statute, this committee is responsible for authorizing the transmittal of this budget request to the Finance Committees for action. She noted that by voting yes, members agree to pass this budget to Finance for any additional work or changes they may make.

REPRESENTATIVE CARRICK asked about the proposed increment of $912,200 for increased staff relocation and lodging stipends. She noted that while the proposal is not directly related to the reduction in staff range points in previous years, she inquired on how expansive the coverage might be for staff.

MS. GEARY explained that the initial approvals for staff relocation and the lodging stipend did not include associated increments, so those costs were absorbed. While a $117,000 increment was added when the lodging stipend increased from $30 to $37.50 per day, other costs have accumulated without specific funding requests. She clarified that although statewide salary adjustments for benefits and health insurance are budgeted, merit increases for staff with longevity are not, causing annual cost increases over time. Additionally, she stated that fluctuations in the legislator session per diem rate contribute to rising expenses, and the Agency has historically not requested increments to cover these cumulative cost increases.

REPRESENTATIVE KOPP commended Executive Director Geary for limiting the lease cost increase to $27,700 , noting that this amount does not account for inflation and higher utility expenses, and referenced prior lease proposals with high bid prices that were denied and rebid. He commented that those actions clearly helped reduce potential cost burdens and praised Ms. Geary and her team for their work.

REPRESENTATIVE CARRICK asked if the Legislative Council or the Legislature's budget had ever included expenses for Gavel Alaska previously.

MS. GEARY responded that no, it has not.

Seeing no further discussion, Chair Hannan removed her objection and a roll call vote was taken.

5:37:13 PM
YEAS: Representatives Carrick, Edgmon, Kopp, Schrage, Stutes, Hannan; Senators Claman, Giessel, Gray-Jackson, Kiehl, Tobin

NAYS: none

The motion passed 11-0.

VI. Executive Session

a. **RFQ 692—Senate and House Finance Committee Rooms Carpet Purchase**
b. **Executive Order 137 State Supreme Court Litigation Costs**

CHAIR HANNAN stated that Council would now go into Executive Session to discuss a carpet purchase RFQ and matters relating to the Council's Executive Order 137 litigation.

5:38:07 PM
SENATOR GIESSEL 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 people may remain in the room or online for the Executive Session: Jessica Geary, Santé Lesh, Sabrina Javier, Joel Rogozinski, JC Kestel, Ernest Daigle, Emily Nauman, Megan Wallace, Zach Lawhorne, Helen Phillips, Tallulah Lastufka, any legislators not on Legislative Council, and any staff of Legislative Council members.

5:39:00 PM
Council went into Executive Session.

6:07:31 PM
Council came out of Executive Session.

6:07:49 PM
Roll was taken to establish a quorum. Present at the call were Representatives Carrick, Edgmon, Johnson, Kopp, Schrage, Stutes, Hannan; Senators Claman, Giessel, Gray-Jackson, Kiehl, Tobin.

Twelve members present.

a. **RFQ 692—Senate and House Finance Committee Rooms Carpet Purchase**

6:08:57 PM
SENATOR GIESSEL moved that Legislative Council authorize the Legislative Affairs Agency to award the purchase of carpet to a vendor responsive to RFQ 692 in an amount not to exceed $66,000.

CHAIR HANNAN objected for the purpose of discussion and asked Procurement Officer JC Kestel and Contract Officer Ernest Daigle to speak to this item and answer any questions.

JC KESTEL, Procurement Officer, LAA, explained that the carpet in the Senate and House Finance committee rooms and adjacent offices has exceeded its expected lifespan, with the Senate Finance carpet nearing thirty years old and the House Finance carpet more than thirty years old, noting the condition shows significant wear particularly in the Senate Finance room.

He continued that the Agency issued RFQ 692 for carpet replacement in those areas and received several bids after the

RFQ closed. The Agency is awaiting product samples, which may take several weeks, to ensure the materials meet the specifications and quality standards before making a final determination. He said the Agency is requesting Legislative Council approval to award the contract to the lowest cost vendor that is determined to be most responsive to the RFQ.

Seeing no questions, Chair Hannan removed her objection and a roll call vote was taken.

6:11:25 PM
YEAS: Representatives Carrick, Edgmon, Johnson, Kopp, Schrage, Stutes, Hannan; Senators Claman, Giessel, Gray-Jackson, Kiehl, Tobin

NAYS: none

The motion passed 12-0.

b. Executive Order 137 State Supreme Court Litigation Costs

6:12:13 PM
SENATOR GIESSEL moved that Legislative Council approve an amendment to the existing contract with Stoel Rives relating to litigation involving the governor's issuance of Executive Order 137, to increase the contract amount by $85,000 for a total amount not to exceed $185,000, for legal services, litigation, and appeal costs.

CHAIR HANNAN objected for the purpose of discussion and asked Legal Services Chief Counsel Megan Wallace to speak on this matter and take any questions.

MEGAN WALLACE, Chief Counsel, LAA, stated that on September 10, 2025, Legislative Council authorized a contract with Stoel Rives to pursue litigation regarding the governor's issuance of Executive Order 137 (EO 137). She reported that on December 31, 2025, the Juneau Superior Court issued a favorable ruling finding the governor's issuance of EO 137 unconstitutional, after which the governor appealed the decision to the Alaska Supreme Court. She explained that the original contract authorization did not include costs associated with defending the appeal and that the amendment request before Council is for an additional $85,000 to cover the cost of the appeal.

Seeing no questions, Chair Hannan removed her objection and a roll call vote was taken.

6:14:15 PM
YEAS: Representatives Carrick, Edgmon, Kopp, Schrage, Stutes, Hannan; Senators Claman, Giessel, Gray-Jackson, Kiehl, Tobin

NAYS: none

The motion passed 11-0.

VII. Adjourn

SENATOR GRAY-JACKSON thanked staff for their presentations.

There being no further comments or business before the committee, the Legislative Council meeting was adjourned at 6:15pm.
6:15:28 PM