

MINUTES

SERVICE COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

May 22, 1991

PRELIMINARY BUSINESS

The Service Committee of the Legislative Council was called to order by Senator Joseph J. Welsh, Chairperson, at 10:58 a.m. in Room 22 of the State House, Des Moines, Iowa. Members present, in addition to Chairperson Welsh, were:

Senator Bill Hutchins
Senator Jack Rife
Representative Kay Chapman
Representative John Connors
Representative Harold Van Maanen

Also present were Ms. Diane Bolender, Director, Legislative Service Bureau; Mr. Dennis Prouty, Director, Legislative Fiscal Bureau; Mr. Sanford Scharf, Director, Legislative Computer Support Bureau; Mr. William Angrick II, Citizens' Aide/Ombudsman; Ms. Judi Stageberg, Office of Citizens' Aide/Ombudsman; Ms. Kathy Hanlon, Legislative Service Bureau; Mr. Neal Baedke, Legislative Service Bureau; and other interested persons and members of legislative staff.

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL BUREAU PERSONNEL REPORT

Chairperson Welsh recognized Mr. Dennis Prouty, Director of the Legislative Fiscal Bureau, for presentation of his report. A copy of the report is on file in the Legislative Service Bureau. Mr. Prouty stated that his report consists of a listing, for the Committee's review, of persons who received merit increases since the last personnel report to the Committee. The Committee received and filed the report.

OFFICE OF CITIZENS' AIDE/OMBUDSMAN PERSONNEL REPORT

Chairperson Welsh recognized Mr. William Angrick II, Citizens' Aide/Ombudsman, for presentation of his report. Mr. Angrick noted that there had been no new personnel actions since his last report, but that he did wish to introduce Ms. Judi Stageberg, who had been employed by the Office of Citizens' Aide/Ombudsman approximately four months prior to today's Committee meeting. The Committee welcomed Ms. Stageberg.

LEGISLATIVE COMPUTER SUPPORT BUREAU PERSONNEL REPORT

Chairperson Welsh recognized Mr. Sanford Scharf, Director of the Legislative Computer Support Bureau, for presentation of his report. A copy of the report is on file in the Legislative Service Bureau. Mr. Scharf stated that his report consisted of notice that three of the employees of the Legislative Computer Support Bureau have completed probationary employment, and have received a one-step merit increase, and notice that Mr. Steve Nelson was hired on February 4, 1991, to fill the position of Computer Operator I.

LEGISLATIVE COMPUTER PROCESSOR COSTING INFORMATION

Chairperson Welsh stated that approximately a month and a half ago, Unisys Corporation had presented information on an equipment purchase proposal which has been analyzed and reviewed by Mr. Scharf and Mr. Prouty. Chairperson Welsh then recognized Mr. Sanford Scharf, Director of the Legislative Computer Support Bureau, for a presentation on the matter. Mr. Scharf began his presentation by distributing copies of a written report. A copy of the report is attached to these minutes and is incorporated by this reference. Mr. Scharf stated that Unisys is in the process of phasing out the processor currently in use in the legislative computer system and that all of the new Unisys software is being developed on the newer model processors. Mr. Scharf also noted the obsolescence factor in the maintenance costs for the current processor, by stating that when the current long-term lease expires for the existing seven-year-old system the maintenance costs will increase by approximately \$10,000 per month and the cost advantage of the current agreements will not be renegotiated because of the age of the equipment. Mr. Scharf said that the legislative computer system's current front end processor does not have sufficient memory to accommodate the latest Unisys software and this hinders the Bureau from adding terminals and making some needed connections.

Mr. Scharf stated that the proposed equipment upgrade includes direct personal computer (P.C.) support and programming capabilities between the mainframe and the local area network through a new release of Mapper. The release will be available as level 36 and will take advantage of the current P.C.s and available technology. He described a P.C. software program that uses Windows, called "Designer Workbench." The new release, Mr. Scharf said, is compatible with plans for future use of the legislative computer network and will provide for increased communication speed between the mainframe and the P.C. interface. Mr. Scharf noted that the proposed new processor is a much smaller machine and is much easier to repair, and many of the repairs are accomplished through self-maintenance diagnostics.

A reduction in overall maintenance costs and environmental costs could also be achieved through purchase of the new machinery, Mr. Scharf said. The savings in

environmental costs will not be to the Computer Support Bureau budget, but will be netted by the Buildings and Grounds Division of the Department of General Services through reduced power and air-conditioning demands, Mr. Scharf stated. The proposed upgrade to level 36, Mr. Scharf said, will assist in two-way communications between the legislative and executive branches. He noted that the current system permits the executive branch system to communicate with the legislative branch system, but does not allow the legislative branch system to transmit information to the executive branch system.

Mr. Scharf referred the Committee's attention to the handout which was previously distributed. He stated that the report contains the total proposed outright cost of the purchase and a proposed five-year lease purchase plan. Included in the cost, he said, is a 20 percent discount on the system and a \$20,000 trade-in allowance on the current communications equipment. Mr. Scharf added that he believes, if he implements certain cost-saving measures, he can undertake the project within the perimeters of his Bureau's current budget. He indicated that the cost-savings measures would include consolidation of maintenance on existing terminals, consolidation of communications on existing lines, and retirement of some of the old Xerox printers.

Mr. Dennis Prouty stated, given the cost estimates on the current system, the approximate break-even point on the new proposed purchase, as compared with the existing system, would be at the end of the third year of the lease purchase.

Chairperson Welsh inquired as to whether the cost of software was included in the proposed purchase figures. Mr. Scharf replied that he could obtain a discount on a software package upon purchase of the new equipment and that there would be a 50 percent savings in the Information Services Division's communications software included in the proposed package. All of these items, Mr. Scharf added, are included in the reported price.

Chairperson Welsh asked whether any of the Committee members had questions or comments on the proposal. Representative Chapman asked why the proposal had not been brought to the attention of the members prior to the Service Committee meeting. Chairperson Welsh indicated that the first he had heard of the proposal was a month ago, that there had not been any meetings of the Committee since that time, and that the time frame for the proposed discount is potentially scheduled to end shortly. Mr. Scharf indicated that he believes that the discount will, as other discounts have done, expire at the end of the current fiscal year, although he is not positive on this point. Representative Chapman indicated that she is uneasy about being confronted with a proposal of this magnitude when such short notice is given. Chairperson Welsh stated that if there are any objections to the proposal, it will not be undertaken. Representative Connors asked whether there was any possibility of negotiating the purchase price downward, to which Mr. Scharf replied that he believes that there is and that he would like to be afforded

the opportunity to negotiate on the price of the purchase. Senator Hutchins indicated that he feels the upgrading of equipment is a necessary and good business decision and that perhaps a subcommittee should be appointed to work with Mr. Scharf and Mr. Prouty to attempt to negotiate a more favorable offer. Representative Connors indicated that he felt that some deliberation was needed and that the proposal was moving rather rapidly forward despite its magnitude.

Senator Hutchins then moved that the Committee Chairperson appoint a bipartisan subcommittee to work with Mr. Scharf and Mr. Prouty to attempt to negotiate a more favorable price for the proposed purchase. Representative Van Maanen indicated his support for the motion. The motion was then adopted on a unanimous voice vote. Chairperson Welsh then appointed Senator Rife, Representatives Chapman and Van Maanen, and himself as members of the subcommittee.

PERSONNEL REPORT OF THE LEGISLATIVE SERVICE BUREAU

Chairperson Welsh recognized Ms. Diane Bolender, Director of the Legislative Service Bureau, for presentation of her report. A copy of the report is on file in the Legislative Service Bureau. Ms. Bolender stated that her report consisted of notification of the names of those persons who have received merit salary increases, notice of the completion of probationary employment periods by Legal Counsels Susan Crowley and Michael Kuehn, and the introduction of two persons who were employed by the Legislative Service Bureau to fill vacant positions since the last Service Committee meeting. Ms. Bolender then introduced Ms. Kathleen Hanlon, Research Analyst, and Mr. Neal Baedke, Proofreader. The Committee welcomed Ms. Hanlon and Mr. Baedke. Ms. Bolender next reported implementation of more specific vacation leave sharing procedures, based on the vacation leave sharing policy developed and approved by the Service Committee and Legislative Council, which are acceptable to the directors of the four central staff agencies. She also noted that an employee of the Legislative Service Bureau, Ms. Kathaleen Miklus, has exhausted all accumulated leave and is using vacation leave hours transferred from other legislative employees.

REDISTRICTING RESOURCE UTILIZATION

Chairperson Welsh stated that he had requested that Ms. Diane Bolender investigate the possibility of using the computer hardware and software that was purchased by the General Assembly for purposes of redrawing legislative districts, and for other redistricting purposes, such as those which will have to be conducted by the cities, counties, and school districts. Chairperson Welsh added that the proposal is to provide redistricting resources and assistance to those entities and to use profits received to recoup costs incurred for the computer hardware and

software and to pay for computer upgrades for the central legislative staff agencies' computers and for photocopying equipment. Chairperson Welsh then recognized Ms. Bolender for a report of her findings. Ms. Bolender stated that she spoke with Election Data Services, Inc. (E.D.S.) about the proposal, since the database for the software which was purchased by the General Assembly is by precinct and additional block level data will need to be added in order to do redistricting at the city, county, and school district levels. She said that E.D.S. informed her that to purchase the required information for all cities and counties in the state, it would cost approximately \$1,000 per county and if the information was purchased for selected counties, it would cost approximately \$1,500 per county. Ms. Bolender stated that she thought that it would be prudent to make an inquiry as to how many counties and cities would be interested in receiving this type of assistance and that she was considering writing each county, and each city over 10,000 in population, to determine how many would be interested in participating in the proposal. She added that school districts could also be written to, but their deadline for completion of redistricting does not arrive as quickly as it does for cities and counties. She said that a cost schedule could be developed to assist the various entities in determining whether the proposal would be worthwhile. A discussion ensued in which the size of cities which would require assistance was discussed and whether organizations such as the Iowa State Association of Counties, the League of Iowa Municipalities, and the Iowa School Board Association should be asked to include the inquiry in their monthly mailing. It was noted that for very small cities, redistricting could most likely be done as easily by hand as by computer and Representative Chapman and Ms. Bolender added that cities of under 3,500 population are not required to engage in the same process as cities of over 3,500 population.

Chairperson Welsh asked whether profits earned could be retained for central legislative staff use and Ms. Bolender stated that she believes it will be possible, but that the issue requires and that she will be doing further research. Ms. Bolender, in response to a question from Representative Van Maanen, stated that cities and counties have a deadline of November 15 and that they usually engage in their redistricting process between July 1 and November 15. School districts, she added, have until May 15, 1992, to complete their redistricting. She added that if the Legislative Service Bureau could receive word by July 1, that would be sufficient time for the Bureau to complete the process for interested cities and counties by November 15. Some concern was expressed about whether the Bureau would receive the replies back soon enough if the information was included in the next association mailings, and Chairperson Welsh requested unanimous consent for Ms. Bolender to send notice to potential interested entities using the most efficient postage method available. There were no objections and the request was adopted. Representative Connors queried whether the same services could be offered to other states and Chairperson Welsh indicated that, although that type of service might cause a conflict with E.D.S., it would not surprise him if requests to utilize the services and expertise of Mr. Gary Kaufman, Legal Counsel, were received.

Ms. Bolender stated that a letter to potentially interested entities would be prepared and sent and asked whether costing information, including a sliding-scale cost based on population, should be included in the letter. Committee members expressed assent to inclusion of the information, noting that it would be needed for counties and cities to make an appropriate decision. Senator Rife asked who did the redistricting plans for the cities, counties, and school districts ten years ago and Ms. Bolender replied that the entities did their own redistricting. She added that the redistricting statute also provides that, should the Secretary of State question a redistricting plan, the Legislative Service Bureau is required to review the plan, so that the Bureau will have to be careful that, if there is a question, the person who drafted the plan is not the same as the reviewer of the plan. She also stated that, in speaking to the legislative liaison from the League of Iowa Municipalities, she had been told that there is good potential for interest in the proposal on the part of larger cities.

ADIJOURNMENT

Chairperson Welsh asked whether there was any further business to come before the Committee. There was no other business and the Committee adjourned at 11:25 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

LESLIE E. WORKMAN,
Legal Counsel

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