

# MINUTES

## SERVICE COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

June 14, 1995

### PRELIMINARY BUSINESS

The June 14, 1995, meeting of the Service Committee of the Legislative Council was called to order by Senator Mike Gronstal, Chairperson, at 10:20 a.m., in Room 22 of the Statehouse. Members of the Committee who were present at the meeting, in addition to Chairperson Gronstal, were as follows:

Senator Wally Horn  
Representative John Connors  
Representative Brent Siegrist

Also present at the meeting were Ms. Diane Bolender, Director of the Legislative Service Bureau; Mr. Dennis Prouty, Director of the Legislative Fiscal Bureau; Mr. Sanford Scharf, Director of the Legislative Computer Support Bureau; Mr. William Angrick, Citizens' Aide/Ombudsman; Mr. Duncan Fowler, Deputy Citizens' Aide/Ombudsman; members of legislative staff; and other interested persons.

Chairperson Gronstal noted that the first order of business was the election of the Committee chairperson. Representative Connors nominated and moved that Senator Gronstal be elected the Committee chairperson. Representative Siegrist seconded the motion. There were no other nominations. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

### ANNUAL PERSONNEL REPORTS OF THE CENTRAL LEGISLATIVE STAFF AGENCIES

Chairperson Gronstal recognized Ms. Diane Bolender, Director of the Legislative Service Bureau, regarding the submission of the annual personnel reports. Copies of the annual personnel reports are on file in the Legislative Service Bureau. Ms. Bolender commented that the Personnel Guidelines of the Central Legislative Staff Agencies require that each of the agencies annually submit a report detailing the agencies' classification systems, employee positions within each agency and their review dates, overtime totals, organization tables, and personnel guidelines. She noted that a copy of only the changes to the personnel guidelines was included, since most of the guidelines had remained the same. She noted that new members to the Committee were provided with complete sets of the guidelines and that she has complete sets of the guidelines for any other member who wishes the revised complete set.

Representative Connors moved that the annual reports be received and filed. There was no discussion and the motion was adopted on a unanimous voice vote.

#### PERSONNEL REPORT OF THE LEGISLATIVE FISCAL BUREAU

Chairperson Gronstal recognized Mr. Dennis Prouty, Director of the Legislative Fiscal Bureau, for presentation of a personnel report. Copies of the report are on file in the Legislative Service Bureau. Mr. Prouty indicated that his report consisted of notification of merit increases, which do not require Committee approval. He noted that he had no promotions, resignations, family leave, or other personnel actions to report. Chairperson Gronstal asked whether there were any objections to the receipt and filing of the report by unanimous consent. There were no objections or discussion and the report was received and filed.

#### PERSONNEL REPORT OF THE LEGISLATIVE SERVICE BUREAU

Chairperson Gronstal recognized Ms. Diane Bolender, Director of the Legislative Service Bureau, for presentation of a personnel report. Copies of the report are on file in the Legislative Service Bureau. Ms. Bolender indicated that her report includes a number of items, including notice of merit increases; a listing of part-time personnel; notification of vacant positions filled; a listing of resignations, terminations, and retirements; notice of a classifications change; notice of family leave; and two items that require Committee and Council approval. The first item, she indicated, relates to the filling of a vacant Proofreader position at a level above step one. Ms. Bolender stated that the person who was selected to fill the vacancy, Mr. Dan Degen, is currently serving as a temporary Proofreader and is currently being paid at the level at which she wishes to hire him as a permanent Proofreader. The second item, Ms. Bolender said, is a promotion of Mr. Ed Cook from Legal Counsel to Legal Counsel I. She noted that the promotion represents a one step increase from grade 30 to grade 32. Representative Connors moved that the Committee receive, file, and recommend for approval the recommendations contained in the report. Chairperson Gronstal noting that neither item represented more than a one step increase asked if there were any questions regarding the report. There were no questions of Ms. Bolender regarding her report and the motion carried on a unanimous voice vote.

#### PERSONNEL REPORT OF THE LEGISLATIVE COMPUTER SUPPORT BUREAU

Chairperson Gronstal recognized Mr. Sanford Scharf, Director of the Legislative Computer Support Bureau, for presentation of a personnel report. Copies of the report are on file in the Legislative Service Bureau. Mr. Scharf stated that his report consists of a notice of the granting of a merit increase, the resignation of Mr. Steve Casey, the rehiring of Mr. Joe Kroes as a Computer Systems Engineer, and of the proposed promotion of two individuals, Mr. Bryan Boyd and Mr. Roel Campos. Mr. Scharf noted that the two latter actions, promoting Mr. Boyd from a Computer Systems Engineer I to a Computer Systems Engineer II and promoting Mr. Campos from a Computer Systems Analyst II to a Computer Systems Analyst III, both require Council approval. Chairperson Gronstal noted that the proposed promotions provide for increases, which would, when added together with merit increases granted, grant the individuals three step increases in pay in one year. He then commented that there have been different interpretations of the policy regarding the maximum number of step increases that are allowable within a year, and that the Senate's understanding of the policy was that a maximum of two steps, or approximately a ten percent increase, was the maximum allowable within a year. He added that there has also been some discussion as to whether persons in some agencies were being moved through the job series rapidly. He noted that the Senate's understanding was not

necessarily the House of Representative's understanding of the policy, but that he did not wish to foreclose discussion of the policy question by proceeding with approval of the promotions at this time. After some discussion, Representative Connors moved that the Committee defer action on the report and action on the report was deferred.

#### PERSONNEL REPORT OF THE OFFICE OF CITIZENS' AIDE/OMBUDSMAN

Chairperson Gronstal next recognized Mr. William Angrick, Citizens' Aide/Ombudsman, for presentation of a personnel report. Copies of the report are on file in the Legislative Service Bureau. Mr. Angrick noted that his report includes a brief administrative report on the implementation of the Clean Air Act and the establishment of the Small Business Ombudsman. The Clean Air Act raises many implementation issues, including the impending requirements necessitating the purchase of air pollution cleaning equipment by small businesses. He also noted that his report also contains requests for approval for a reclassification of an individual, the awarding of a meritorious step increase, and two promotions. The reclassification, he noted, is due to the fact that Ms. Judith Green's duties are more similar to the description of the Finance Officer position than the Executive Secretary position that she currently holds. He noted that the meritorious step increase which he is requesting for Mr. Steven Exley is based on the large number of contacts and cases that he has handled as well as the completion of various important and complex administrative assignments. He stated that the other actions for which he is seeking approval are for the promotion of Ms. Ruth Cooperrider from Legal Counsel II to Senior Legal Counsel and the promotion of Ms. Connie Bencke from Assistant II to Assistant III. Mr. Angrick added that in the case of Ms. Bencke, the request for promotion precedes her eligibility for a merit step increase, effectively making the promotion a two step increase, instead of a three step increase, but the situation for Ms. Cooperrider is the same as for the promotions requested by Mr. Scharf for employees of the Computer Support Bureau.

Chairperson Gronstal asked whether there were any questions of Mr. Angrick. Representative Connors asked whether the reclassification of Ms. Green involved a fiscal impact since the reclassification was the same grade. Mr. Angrick indicated that it did not, since Ms. Green is at the top of her range, and that it would not since Ms. Green has not been eligible for merit increases since 1992. He did, however, add that arguably the reclassification did make a change in her merit increase review date, but that since she was not eligible for merit increases currently, the difference did not result in a fiscal impact. Senator Horn asked whether Ms. Green had to undergo any sort of testing or possess any particular license to qualify for the Finance Officer position and Mr. Angrick indicated that there were no tests or licenses required for the position, and that Ms. Green met the requirements specified for the particular position. Senator Horn asked about the size of the Citizens' Aide/Ombudsman's Office, whether the Executive Secretary position was still needed, and whether the size of the office warranted a Fiscal Officer position. Mr. Angrick indicated that his office contains 13 individuals; that although a case might be made for one or another of the other secretaries to move into the Executive Secretary position, no new position would be created by moving Ms. Green from the Executive Secretary position to the Financial Officer position; and that the office receives approximately \$85,000 in grant moneys which must be accounted for in addition to the balance of the office budget which totals approximately \$600,000. Chairperson Gronstal asked whether there was any additional discussion of the report. There was no additional discussion and Chairperson Gronstal received unanimous consent to defer action on the report.

### VACATION BUY-OUT NOTIFICATION

Chairperson Gronstal recognized Ms. Diane Bolender for a presentation regarding the vacation buy-out notification. Chairperson Gronstal asked whether there was any written material in the meeting materials to accompany the presentation and Ms. Bolender responded in the negative. Ms. Bolender explained that at the close of the previous fiscal year the Legislative Council authorized the Legislative Branch agencies to participate, with the Executive Branch, in a vacation buy-out program. The program applies, she said, to those employees who have accumulated 160 hours or more of vacation leave by the end of the fiscal year. She indicated that the Senate and the House Staffs and the Central Staff Agencies have again all decided that they wish to participate with the Executive Branch in the program, as previously authorized by the Legislative Council, and they are notifying the Committee of that participation. There were no further questions and the report was received and filed.

### REPORT OF THE COMPUTER USER COMMITTEE

Chairperson Gronstal recognized Mr. Dennis Prouty for presentation of the report of the Computer User Policy Direction Committee. A copy of the report is on file in the Legislative Service Bureau. Mr. Prouty noted that the Computer User Policy Direction Committee has met six times since the last report to the Committee and that he wished to highlight some of the more major results of those meetings which are outlined in the Committee report.

Mr. Prouty stated that the Committee's actions have included the following: a recommendation for the adoption of the proposed access policy, directing the Computer Support Bureau to develop plans to provide legislative information by 1996 via the INTERNET; an agreement that Unisys should investigate solutions to the BILLBOOK strike-through and underscore problems in order to provide user-friendly access to bill and amendment information to legislators; directing the Computer Support Bureau to investigate the feasibility of installing public access kiosks in several locations in the State Capitol; discussing the applicability of the public records law to the provision of electronic records; and discussing various ongoing and future computer projects.

There were no further questions and Chairperson Gronstal asked for unanimous consent to receive and file the report. There were no objections and the report was received and filed.

### PERSONNEL GUIDELINES AMENDMENTS

Chairperson Gronstal recognized Ms. Diane Bolender for presentation of amendments to the Personnel Guidelines for the Central Legislative Staff Agencies. A copy of the proposed amendments is on file in the Legislative Service Bureau. Ms. Bolender stated that a review of the guidelines had resulted in recommendations for four updates to the current staff guidelines. The changes include, she said, deletion of a reference to a date that has passed and provision for Service Committee review, deletion of an obsolete reference to Olympic leave, the addition of the word "probationary" before the word "period" in a provision relating to new employees, and attachment of the personal financial disclosure form used by the Central Legislative Staff Agencies. There were no questions regarding the report and Representative Connors moved that

the report be received, filed, and recommended for approval. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

#### LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PAY RESOLUTION

Chairperson Gronstal recognized Ms. Bolender for presentation of the proposed Legislative Council Pay Resolution. A copy of the resolution is on file in the Legislative Service Bureau. Ms. Bolender noted that the resolution that is in the members' packets had passed through several drafts and asked whether there were any specific questions that the members had that she might address. Chairperson Gronstal commented that during the 1995 legislative session the Senate had passed SCR 4, which incorporated the Senate's understanding of past personnel policies for the Central Legislative Staff Agencies, but that the House had not adopted SCR 4. Representative Connors noted that historically the issue of Central Staff Agency personnel policies had been dealt with through action of the Legislative Council, not action by the General Assembly. Chairperson Gronstal stated that the problem he is concerned with is the differences between the Legislative Council Resolution and the resolutions dealing with the salaries of members and staff of the two chambers of the General Assembly. Chairperson Gronstal asked if any of the Committee members or agency directors had any comments regarding the policy. Mr. Scharf noted that the current policy adopted by the Legislative Council distinguishes between job performance and changes in job requirements by treating merit increases and promotions of employees separately. He said that the current guidelines specify that, when an employee's pay grade changes by three or more grades as the result of a promotion, the employee may receive a three step increase over a twelve-month period. He also expressed concern that employees who have been recommended to receive promotions at the June meeting have expectations regarding those promotions based on current policy. Ms. Bolender commented that at the time the current policy was adopted, it was based on the practices of the Executive Branch and represented an effort to conform legislative employment policies with those of the Executive Branch. She noted that the Executive Branch no longer uses steps as the basis for salary increases for professional employees. Mr. Angrick emphasized the differences in what merit increases and promotions are intended to accomplish. Chairperson Gronstal indicated that his concerns were not intended to call staff performance or any director's recommendations into question, but are a result of a perception that employees are perhaps being advanced too rapidly. Ms. Bolender noted that in each case presented, the individuals listed had exceeded the minimum qualifications for the position.

The Committee then discussed the language of the joint pay resolution and a copy of the legislative pay matrix was requested and then distributed to each of the Committee members. The Committee discussed past efforts to equalize salary policies, what the perceptions of current policies are, and differences between current practices for staff of the chambers and the staff of the Central Staff Agencies. Chairperson Gronstal expressed a preference to defer action on the pay resolution and continue discussions on how to conform Central Staff salary policy with the policies of the Senate and House.

After an extended general discussion among the members and agency directors, Representative Connors noted that in the past the Service Committee had made efforts to make the different policies equivalent. He noted also that the Service Committee has the authority to control the rate at which employees are promoted and expressed his preference for continuing

current policy. Chairperson Gronstal stated his desire to conform Central Staff policy to that used in the chambers and again expressed his preference for deferring action on the Legislative Council Pay Resolution. Chairperson Gronstal asked the Committee members how they wished to proceed. After some discussion, Chairperson Gronstal requested unanimous consent to defer action on the Legislative Council Pay Resolution. There were no objections.

The Committee then took up the issue of the promotions of staff of the Central Staff Agencies that had been deferred earlier in the meeting. Chairperson Gronstal noted that approval of any of the promotions should not indicate that past policies relating to promotions would be continued and that employees of the Central Staff Agencies should be on notice that the policies concerning salary increases due to promotions are in limbo. Representative Connors moved to recommend that the Legislative Council approve the promotions of Mr. Brian Boyd and Mr. Roel Campos from the Computer Support Bureau. The motion carried on a unanimous voice vote. The Committee then took up the report of the Citizens' Aide Ombudsman's Office. Representative Connors moved that the report be received, filed, and any recommendations contained in the report be approved by the Legislative Council. The motion carried on a unanimous voice vote.

Chairperson Gronstal suggested that the Committee members familiarize themselves with the language of the pay resolution adopted by the Senate before the next meeting of the Committee.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

Representative Connors requested that the Committee meet in Executive Session to discuss personnel matters. The Committee met in Executive Session from 11:10 to 11:15 a.m.

#### OTHER BUSINESS - ADJOURNMENT

When the Committee reconvened, there was no other business to come before the Committee and the Committee adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Leslie E.W. Hickey  
Legal Counsel