

MINUTES

ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

May 11, 1994

The meeting was called to order by the Chairperson, Senator William Palmer, at 11:18 a.m. in Room 22 of the State Capitol Building. In addition to Chairperson Palmer, the following members were present:

Senator Florence Buhr
Senator Maggie Tinsman
Representative Pam Jochum
Representative Brent Siegrist

Also present during the meeting were Ms. Diane Bolender, Director, Mr. Richard Johnson, Deputy Director, and Mr. Mark Johnson, Legal Counsel, Legislative Service Bureau; other legislative staff members; and other interested persons.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

Ms. Diane Bolender, Director, Legislative Service Bureau, discussed a proposed policy which relates to accessibility for persons with disabilities to legislative agencies which was prepared by a staff committee composed of the Secretary of the Senate, the Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives, the Director of the Legislative Service Bureau, and the Director of the Legislative Fiscal Bureau. She asked that the policy be considered by the Administration Committee for recommendation to and approval by the Legislative Council. A copy of the proposed policy is attached to and made a part of these minutes. She discussed the provision of printed materials, interpreting services, assistive listening systems, telephone access, and physical access to persons with disabilities who wish to utilize the State Capitol Building and participate in the process. She stated that under the proposed policy each of the agencies of the General Assembly will, upon request, read printed materials aloud and provide either an audio cassette tape, large print, computer disk for conversion to synthetic speech, or Braille as soon as reasonably possible. She explained that under the proposal the General Assembly will provide an interpreter if given 48 hours' notice and that assistive listening devices will be installed in the Senate and House chambers and a portable system will be available for use in the committee rooms. Potential vendors have been contacted and will be meeting with staff on May 12, 1994, to discuss the costs and installation of assistive listening devices, she said. She continued that a teletypewriter for the deaf is available and explained that the Senate and House lobbies are open and accessible to the public and that a person with a physical disability could request to be present on the floor of the Senate or House during debate and could request that a meeting be held in a committee room that is accessible.

Ms. Bolender discussed the Department of General Services estimate that it would cost approximately \$61,000 to renovate the galleries to ensure that they are accessible to persons who are physically disabled. Chairperson Palmer asked whether it would be a viable option to provide televised proceedings in an accessible room rather than to renovate the galleries. Ms. Bolender mentioned that the state of Nebraska provides a similar televised service. Senator Buhr stated that she thought that providing television of the sessions was a good idea. Senator Buhr expressed concern over the accessibility of the meeting room for the Health and Human Rights Appropriations Subcommittee and the fact that persons with disabilities are often in attendance. She commented on the interpretive services and the costs associated with offering them and the fact that committee meetings and debate are often called on short notice or schedules are changed. She added that generally deaf persons bring their own interpreter with them. Senator Tinsman explained that she had canvassed the Capitol looking for an appropriate room to hold the Health and Human Rights Appropriations Subcommittee meetings, and she recommends that the majority leadership of both the Senate and the House of Representatives give priority consideration to the Health and Human Rights Appropriations Subcommittee needs when scheduling the committee rooms. Senator Tinsman stated that she agreed with the televised viewing rather than renovation of the galleries. Representative Jochum commented on the fact that if there were a fire or other natural disaster, the elevators would not be operational and that there is really no other way downstairs from the galleries for a person in a wheelchair or a person with a physical disability.

No action was taken on the proposed policy pending the receipt of additional cost information.

UPDATE ON IOWA ADMINISTRATIVE CODE

Ms. Bolender updated the Committee on the progress the Legislative Service Bureau has made to computerize the Iowa Administrative Code. She stated that the proofreading process is almost complete and that the Bureau is preparing and proofing the Administrative Code updates. She added that a Request For Information had been distributed and that four vendors had responded. She commented that money could be generated by selling portions of the database.

UPDATE ON MEAD DATA CENTRAL CONTRACT PRICING

Mr. Mark Johnson, Legislative Service Bureau, explained that he had made an initial offer to Mead Data in the amount of \$22,500 per year and that Mead Data Central had counteroffered with a proposal of \$13,125 per year for the purchase of the Iowa Code and the Iowa Court Rules on electronic tape. Chairperson Palmer stated that he thought the Bureau should stay firmly at the price of \$22,500. Ms. Bolender added that the price for the contract four years ago was \$12,500 per year.

CD-ROM REPORT

Mr. Richard Johnson, Deputy Director, Legislative Service Bureau, informed the Committee of the Bureau's efforts to publish the Code database on CD-ROM and market it. He stated that approximately 350 copies of the CD-ROM had been purchased from the vendor and that the Legislative Service Bureau had sold 175 copies and the Iowa State Bar Association had purchased approximately 175 copies. He commented that many of the smaller school districts have acquired CD-ROM technology and have purchased the CD-ROM. He continued that the 1993 and 1994 Session Laws and three or four sets of executive branch agency administrative rules will be added to the 1995 Code and Court Rules database and marketed in a similar manner this year.

Mr. Johnson stated that the issue of the distribution of free copies of the Iowa Code has not been resolved and that there has been a specific request that the CD-ROM not be included as an option for free distribution. He explained that the single user CD-ROM has been sold to private entities for \$295 plus tax and to governmental entities for \$80 and that the paper version of the Iowa Code is sold for approximately \$230. He commented that he hoped to see the production costs for this year's CD-ROM decrease.

ADDITIONAL BUSINESS

Chairperson Palmer expressed concern over the fact that the State Capitol Building is in violation of numerous building and fire code regulations and stated that he has asked Ms. Bolender to work with the Department of General Services to obtain an estimate of the costs to deal with the violations that directly affect the health and safety of the employees. He commented that public employees should not be required to work in a building with lower safety standards than private sector employees enjoy and suggested that money should be spent to make the needed repairs.

Senator Tinsman questioned where the necessary money would come from and whether these expenditures would jeopardize the state's ending fiscal year balance under GAAP principles. Chairperson Palmer responded that the Legislative Council has authority under Section 2.43 of the Iowa Code which allows the Council to use moneys from any funds in the state treasury not otherwise appropriated for renovation, remodeling, or preparation of the legislative chambers, legislative offices, or other areas or facilities used or to be used by the legislative branch of government. He continued that the ending balance may be affected, but that the Committee must measure the health and safety of their employees versus GAAP accounting principles. Senator Tinsman stated that she would support obtaining a cost estimate.

Representative Jochum asked whether the infrastructure study which is being conducted by Iowa State University would include a study of the needs of the State Capitol Building. Chairperson Palmer responded that the Capitol Building would be included in the survey, but that it probably would not entail an in-depth analysis such as would be necessary for these purposes. Chairperson Palmer requested that Ms. Bolender continue to work with the

Department of General Services and asked that the information relating to employee health and safety concerns be distributed before or at the next Administration Committee meeting.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Chairperson Palmer made a motion that the Administration Committee Report to the Legislative Council recommend the following:

1. That in lieu of the proposal to modify the galleries in the Senate and House of Representatives so that they are accessible to persons with disabilities, the Legislative Council consider the installation of closed circuit television cameras in each chamber for telecast of the proceedings of each house to a committee room that is accessible to persons with disabilities.
2. That the legislative leadership in each chamber give priority consideration next session to assigning a committee room in the Capitol, which is readily and conveniently accessible to persons with disabilities, to the Health and Human Rights Appropriations Subcommittee.
3. That the Committee strongly supports the offer of \$22,500 to Mead Data Central concerning the renewal of the contract for sale to Mead Data Central of the Iowa Code database.
4. That the Legislative Service Bureau solicit from the Department of General Services information and an estimate concerning the cost of correcting the most serious building and fire code violations in the physical facilities used by the General Assembly, the legislative agencies under the jurisdiction of the Legislative Council, and the public.

The motion was seconded and approved.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairperson Palmer adjourned the meeting at 11:57 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

JULIE SMITH
Legal Counsel