

MEMORANDUM

TO: City Legislative Delegation, Mayor, and City Council

FROM: Danielle West-Chuhta
Acting Corporation Counsel

DATE: January 7, 2013

RE: Minutes of the City's Legislative Committee/Delegation Meeting
on January 4, 2013

Mayor Brennan called the meeting of the City's Legislative Committee with members of the City's Legislative Delegation to order at 8:00 a.m. Present at the meeting were members of the Legislative Delegation, members of the local press, City Councilors Jill Duson, Ed Suslovic, and David Marshall and Nicholas Mavodones; Superintendent of Schools Emanuel Caulk, School Board member Jaimey Caron and Justin Costa; and School Finance Director Mike Wilson; Also present for city staff: Danielle West-Chuhta, City Manager Mark Rees, and Economic Development Director Greg Mitchell.

I. Mayor reviewed the minutes of the December 13, 2012 meeting and gave a brief introduction

II. The Mayor went over the following Legislative Initiatives/Priorities:

A. Review/Discuss Committee Assignments

The Committee discussed the following committee assignments:

- Criminal Justice – Representative Mark Dion;
- Taxation - Representatives Matt Moonen and Anne Haskell;
- Health and Human Services – Representatives Peter Stuckey and Richard Farnsworth;
- Environment and Natural Resources – Representatives Ben Chipman and Denise Harlow
- Education Committee-No one from Portland (a concern for Portland but a Representative from Cape Elizabeth is on this Committee);
- Transportation Committee – No one from Portland; and
- Maine Resources Committee – No one from Portland

B. Lobster/By-Catch

The Committee discussed the following issues related to Lobster/By-Catch:

- If you are not fishing for lobster (instead you are ground fishing) you can't bring the lobster you catch into port;
- Lobster industry has opposed changing this;
- Maine is one of the only New England states that does not allow by-catch. Could bring millions of dollars back to Portland if it was allowed.
- This "problem" is caused by state law. Federal law allows boats to sell by-catch lobster;
- The city has worked hard to get the Maine law changed previously (Councilors Suslovic and Mavodones), but with no success;
- Representative Anne Haskell has said she would put a bill regarding this back in for the Legislature.
- Will the Governor's office support this issue?

C. Mayor's Coalition Update

Mayor Brennan stated that the Coalition met on December 19th to discuss the following priorities:

- Revenue sharing – make sure this is fully funded;
- Bonds
- Jobs Initiative – this would include more on the job training; capital for more small business development. The focus will be on job creation.
- Mental Health Issues – this issue has come up in Portland, Bangor and Augusta wanting a solution to this costly issue.
- GA – supporting the compromise from last year (put a working group report/summary on for next agenda). Going back would be an improvement over what we have now.

D. Curtailment Order

The Committee discussed the following related to curtailment order:

- Reviewing internal options/and not interrupt education services for students.
- \$870,000 out of Portland school budget/legislature will look at the order today. This will really be difficult for the City to come up with this money – Councilor Anton could brief.
- What happens with regard to the public vote of the budget? (Representative Russell asked for someone to research issue)
- The Legislature has used various methods to reduce budget including: a percentage reduction; stop-loss reduction; but the proposed reduction method is a mil rate reduction, which hurt Portland more – this is not fair

since it disproportionately effects high valuation communities. The reduction needs to be “equitable” as required by state law.

- \$30-\$50 million in the State rainy day fund – couldn’t they use this money and cut Portland’s reduction in half (School Department will come up with a proposal over the next week)
- Look at this with the Charter School.
- Who else would benefit from the alternative calculation methodologies like Cape Elizabeth, etc. (we will get something together outlining options) – find them so we can work together.
- The order also includes cuts to mental health, etc.

E. Cloture Deadline

Cloture deadline is January 18, 2013 at 4:00 p.m.

G. Other issues discussed

- Put curtailment/funding of schools on next agenda; improve education/student achievement and funding of charter schools.
- Put EcoMaine on next agenda.
- School construction bill regarding keeping Hall on the list but funding the construction of the school
- Regional bill to distribute funds to service center communities.
- Mayor Brennan also mentioned that the free clinic received \$90,000 in grant funding so it will remain operational over the next year.
- Councilor Suslovic brought up the topic of gun control and setting a firearm policy but state law preempts the city/towns, so Maine Municipal Association will bring forward. Police Department is looking at the issue of open carry again.

The meeting concluded with an update and discussion on the next meeting to be held on Friday, January 18th at 8:00 a.m. in Room 209.

The meeting adjourned.