

CITY OF PORTLAND
LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

AGENDA – January 12, 2015 MEETING

8:30 a.m.

Portland City Hall, 389 Congress Street, Room 209, Portland, Maine

- A. Attendance/Introductions:
Rep. Matt Moonen, Rep. Dick Farnsworth, Sen. Justin Alford, Councilor Mavodones, DHHS Director Dawn Stiles, Rep. Erik Jorgensen, Superintendent Manny Caulk, Councilor Ed Suslovic, Rep. Ben Chipman, Corporation Counsel Danielle West-Chuhta, Chamber President Chris Hall, Marcia Hart, VP Marketing, Portland Chamber, Mayor Michael Brennan, Councilor Marshall, Portland Phoenix publisher David Guerringue, Fire Chief Jerry LaMoria, Councilor Jill Duson, Councilor Brenerman
- B. Review/Discuss Proposed Legislative Bills/Priorities:
1. Revisions to state subdivision law to clarify that multifamily in one building is not a subdivision. Sponsor Diane Russell; but unclear if submitted.
 2. LR 1103 "An Act to Allow Standing Orders for the Drug Overdose Antidote Naloxone Hydrochloride" Sponsor Rep. Farnsworth.
 3. Proposed Civil Rights Act Amendment re: Buffer Zone. LR 1307 "An Act To Improve Public Safety and Protect Access to Health Care Facilities" Sponsor Rep. Linda Sanborn, Gorham
 4. LR 1104 "An Act To Require Pharmacies To Provide Disposal Receptacles for Used Needles" Sponsor Rep. Farnsworth, Portland.
 5. Local Option Tax. Sponsor Matt Moonen.
 6. Amend Dec. Judgment Act re: timing of appeals of development or project proposals. LR 1742 "An Act To Amend the Appeals Schedule for Development Proposals in the Uniform Declaratory Judgments Act" Sponsor Rep. Moonen, Portland
 7. Bill to allow owners of electric vehicle charging stations to charge for the electricity: Portland Committee and Delegation to support this
 - a. LR1489 "An Act To Allow Metering at Electric Vehicle Charging Stations" Sponsor, Rep. Rykerson, Kittery
 - b. LR879 "An Act To Allow Electricity To Be Resold for Charging Electric Vehicles" Sponsor Rep. Chipman, Portland
 - c. LR679 "An Act To Allow the Resale of Electricity by Electric Vehicle Charging Stations" Sponsor Sen. Millett, Cumberland

8. Schools.

- a. Longfellow School /Hall School construction; Committee will try to reach out to state re: school construction
- b. Teacher retirement contribution: requires the schools to pay \$1.2 to \$1.5 million, moving this cost to Portland's school budget; we need to fight this shift to the schools.
 - (1) Related Bills: LR 891 "An Act To Improve the Quality of Teachers" Sponsor Sen. Millett, Cumberland; LR134 "An Act To Ensure Proper Funding for Teacher Retirement" Sponsor Rep. Kumiega, III, Deer Isle; and LR707 "An Act To Return the Obligation To Fund Teacher Retirement Costs to the State" Sponsor Rep Stearns, Guilford.
 - (2) Charter School – LR1248 "An Act To Restore Local Control of Education to Towns" Sponsor Rep. McCabe, would require the state to take over full funding of charter schools. Part of budget proposal? How do they do this – reduce GPA?, Skowhegan; and LR1787 "An Act To Amend the Education Laws" Sponsor Rep. McCabe, Skowhegan
 - (3) Higher Education (USM)
 - (a) LR1516 "An Act To Increase Accountability and Efficiency at the University of Maine System" Sponsor Rep. Chipman, Portland, to require the University to fund 40% for the classroom instruction re: campuses/location; he supports increasing funding to the University.
 - (b) LR706 "An Act To Stabilize the Faculty and Programs at the University of Southern Maine" Sponsor Sen. Alfond; includes marketing \$\$ to attract and retain students at USM
 - (c) LR62 "An Act To Make College More Affordable for Maine Residents" Sponsor Rep. Millett, Cumberland

9. Electronic Cigarettes: The School Department has updated its policies to address e-cigarette issues, sales of which are up in this country. Per Councilor Suslovic: E-cigarettes are not covered by city regulations of cigarettes; ordinances may be amended to address issues.

- a. LR1517 "An Act To Bring the Tax on Electronic Cigarettes into Conformity with the Excise Tax on Tobacco Products" Sponsor Rep. DeChant, Bath; and LR216 "An Act To Protect Children and the Public from Electronic Cigarette Vapor" Sponsor Rep. McCabe, Skowhegan

10. Minimum Wage Increase:

- a. LR1518 "An Act To Provide for an Increase in the Minimum Wage" Sponsor Ben Chipman, would raise the minimum wage to \$10.00 an hour over a two-year period and then connect wage to the CPI moving forward over the years after the first two years' increase.

11. Bonds:

- a. LR1102 "An Act To Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue for Intermodal Transportation Facilities" Sponsor Rep. Farnsworth, Portland. [\$25 million].

- b. LR1548 “An Act To Address Unmet Public Transportation Needs”
Sponsor Rep. Jorgensen, Portland

12. State Budget.

- a. Eliminates Estate Tax in 2017
- b. Corporate Tax Rate reduction (.6% over two years)
- c. Revenue Sharing same in 2016; repealed in 2017
- d. Allow local communities to tax non-profits – this is how local communities could deal with proposal to repeal Revenue Sharing
- e. Homestead Exemption for under 65 year olds repealed
- f. Sales Tax will increase.

City needs to review the budget and determine implications on the City Departments; so that the delegation is aware of the proposed budget impacts on the City. On General Assistance (GA), qualification is somewhat subjective, but per Dawn Stiles, the City follows the guidelines the same as any other community. Council and Legislators need talking points on GA; can we send out a one-page sheet re: City Budget Implications?

OTHER: A Fire Tax is being considered by Maine Municipal Association which could address this issue.

- C. The next meeting of the Legislative Committee and Legislative Delegation will be January 30, 2015 at 8:30 a.m. in Room 209 of Portland City Hall.