



Legislative Committee January 26, 2021 Meeting Minutes

The January 26, 2021 remote Committee meeting was called to order by Chair Pious Ali at 8:00 AM on Zoom.

Councilor Pious Ali (Chair), Councilor April Fournier, Mayor Kate Snyder, Jon Jennings (City Manager), Dena Libner (Chief of Staff), Kathy Jones (City Clerk), Kate Knox (Bernstein Shur), Alysia Melnick (Bernstein Shur), Chris Feeney (Bernstein Shur), and Roberto Rodriguez (School Board Chair) were present.

Councilor Fournier made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from January 26, 2021, seconded by Mayor Snyder, no amendments, vote 3-0.

Kate Knox provided the committee with an update from the State Legislation. She stated that the committees have started to meet again and that bills are slowly getting printed. The appropriation group is working through the supplemental budget and that Governor Mills budget proposal to tax PPP loans are not in alignment with the Federal government. Mayor Snyder asked for a refresher about the PPP loans, if the first round of PPP loans were subjected to State income tax. Kate Knox believed this is the first round of PPP Loans and offered some clarification but will follow up with the Mayor in regards to the federal guidance about taking PPP loans.

Kate Knox reviewed the list of new bills with the Committee. Members agreed for her to continue monitoring the following bills:

- LD132 An Act To Implement the Attorney General's Recommendations on Data Collection in Order To Eliminate Profiling in Maine
- LD135 An Act To Address Issues in Funding Prekindergarten Programs
- LD148 An Act To Establish Ongoing Absentee Voting
- LD163 An Act To Revise Maine's Environmental Laws
- LD175 An Act To Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue To Create and Enhance Regional Homeless Shelters
- LD179 An Act To Exclude Energy Efficiency Improvements from Property Tax

- LD183 An Act To Require Education about African-American History and the History of Genocide

Kate Knox will touch base with the Director of Portland Water District in regards to LD129 (Resolve, To Protect Consumers of Public Drinking Water by Establishing Maximum Contaminant Levels for Certain Substances and Contaminants).

Mr. Jennings recommended for LD 137 to be reviewed by Mrs. Gina Tapp, City of Portland, HR Director. Dena to follow up.

Kathy Jones gave feedback in regard to LD 148, stating the City of Portland pilot-tested it in 2010 and there were multiple issues that came out of it, such as ballots sent to people who had moved and ballots received from people who weren't registered. Alysia mentioned that the State is working on creating synergy between the State and municipalities for a faster process when it comes to change of addresses.

Mr. Jennings will review LD 150 (An Act To Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue To Fund Hazardous Substance Site) and LD 181 (An Act To Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue To Complete the Renovation of a Wharf and Bulkhead in Portland for Marine Research) with staff and report back.

Kate Knox to contact Dan Haley in regard to LD 152 (An Act To Address Training Requirements for Harbor Masters) and recommended that Corporation Counsel review LD 155 (Resolve, Directing the Board of Pesticides Control To Prohibit the Use of Certain Neonicotinoids for Outdoor Residential Use) to make sure it doesn't change the City's pesticide ordinance.

Dena provided feedback in regard to LD 183 (An Act To Establish Juneteenth as a Paid State Holiday), stating that the cost to the City is about 250,000.00 per every additional paid holiday added.

The committee agreed for the following bills to be monitored by the School Department:

- LD 156 An Act To Promote School Attendance by Exempting Virtual Public Charter School and Private School Students from Immunization Requirements
- LD 176 An Act To Facilitate a Grade 9 to 16 School Project

The Committee will continue monitoring the above bills only if they hear back from the School Department regarding their prioritization..

Kathy Jones inquired about LD 186, which bill was not listed to be discussed at this meeting. All members of the committee expressed their opposition to the bill. Alysia mentioned that the bill is going to the Transportation Committee and suggested for the bill to be flagged to Senator Chipman and asked him to let us know if it is going anywhere. Kate Knox will send the bill to Dena to circulate.

Alysia gave an update about a public hearing on two election bills to allow municipalities that conduct their own elections to begin to process ballots on the seventh day instead of the fourth day immediately prior to Election Day, extending it by three days. The hearing will be happening on Monday. Kathy Jones stated that this will be very helpful to be able to start the process three days earlier. The Committee agreed for Bernstein Shur to weigh in on the subject.

Dena provided feedback from the staff that was requested by the Committee and Bernstein Shur in regards to the following bills:

- **LD 57 (An Act to Reduce the Landfilling of Municipal Solid Waste):** Public Works is supportive of it and has worked closely with EcoMaine.
- **LD 58 (An Act to Improve Information Sharing by Criminal Justice Agencies with Government Agencies Responsible for Investigating Child or Adult Abuse):** The Police Department is very supportive of it.
- **LD 69 (An Act to Reduce Duplicative Permitting Reviews for Projects Under the Site Location of Development Laws):** Permitting Department said it will not have any negative impact.
- **LD 81 (An Act To Ensure the Safety of Children Experiencing Homelessness by Extending Shelter Placement Periods):** Little to no impact in City-run shelters. Positive change for the teen shelters run by Preble Street and their guests.

- **LD 100 (An Act To Establish the General Election Date in United States Presidential Election Years as a State Holiday):** Flagged by staff due to the potential cost of it, about 250,000.00. Kathy Jones was concerned about the post office, especially during elections, although Kate Knox confirmed this bill would not result in post office closure
- **LD 102 (An Act To Extend the Time Frame for Processing Absentee Ballots) and LD 112 (An Act To Facilitate the Timely and Accurate Counting of Absentee Ballots By Extending the Processing Period):** Kathy Jones said her staff will appreciate the extra time and was supportive of both bills
- **LD 108 (An Act To Improve Public Safety by Repealing the Single-use Plastic Carry out Bag Ban):** Per feedback provided by Corporation Counsel, this will not preclude the City own locally run program.

Mr. Jennings asked for clarification in regards to LD 69 that there will not be any loss to the City.

Chairman Councilor Ali moved forward to discuss the Legislative Committee Work Plan, scheduled to be discussed in the City Council workshop scheduled for later in the day.

Chairman Councilor Ali confirmed with the Committee members that there will not be any amendments done to the work plan, and that he will be presenting the work plan in tonight's council workshop. Mayor Snyder made a motion and it was second by Councilor Fournier. Vote 3-0

Chairman Councilor Ali made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mayor Snyder, vote 3-0. The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 AM.