

Legislative Committee Meeting Minutes

March 30, 2021

The March 30, 2021, remote Committee meeting was called to order by Chair Pious Ali at 8:01 AM on Zoom.

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

Councilor Fournier made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from March 23, 2021, seconded by Councilor Mavodones, no amendments, vote 4-0.

Kate Knox provided the committee with an update of upcoming hearings, printing of bills and legislative meetings in regards to the budget.

Councilor Fournier inquired about ***LD 1086 (An Act To Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue To Upgrade Customs Facilities at the Portland International Jetport and the Bangor International Airport To Promote International Tourism and Commerce)***. Kate Knox shared that the bill is sponsored by Representative Bailey and that he had an information session with the local delegation and Portland and Bangor Jetport administrations regarding the need to add customs to the Jetport to allow direct international flights and expand the use of the Portland Jetport. As for the Bangor Airport, they have the customs facilities but are missing the commercial goods. This bill will offer the opportunity to expand the use of both locations and expand the opportunity for direct international travel. Mr. Jennings said that he has been working for several years with Mr. Bradbury and his team has developed a plan to build that type of facility at the Jetport as it is a major priority to welcome direct international flights into Portland. Councilor Fournier said she would like to advocate for that expansion but is concerned if there is going to be any detention center that is part of the plan, and would like for the Committee to have a chance to discuss it. Committee agreed to testify in support of LD 1086. Mr. Jennings recommended for Mr. Bradbury to testify on behalf of the City. Councilor Fournier said that she would like to include her concerns and ask that any sort of detention facility is in the forefront of our mind as we are welcoming international travel.

Kate Knox asked the committee whether they would like to testify in regards to ***LD 910 (An Act To Amend the General Assistance Laws Governing Reimbursement)***, Mr. Jennings expressed the importance of this bill for Social Services. The Committee members agreed to support and testify.

Dena Libner reviewed the City staff feedback on new bills. The following were discussed by the Committee:

LD 1171 *An Act To Curtail No-knock Warrants* -Staff supports this bill but recommend some minor modifications to the language. Councilor Fournier asked about the modification to the language and if this was something that the Committee should testify in support of. Dena agreed to provide more information about staff recommendations regarding language.

LD 1127 *An Act To Prohibit the Use of "No-knock" Warrants* -Staff oppose this bill. The use of these warrants is rare, but staff believe they should continue to be an option to protect the suspect(s), occupants, others nearby, and officers. Committee members indicated they would like to discuss this further at the next meeting.

LD 1143 *An Act To Protect Tenants from Unnecessary Evictions* - Staff are reviewing this bill, with feedback to be provided at the next meeting. Mayor Snyder expressed her concerns about it and asked for the bill to be flagged.

LD 1164 *An Act To Expand the Application Period for Absentee Ballot Requests and Allow Early Processing of Absentee Ballots* - Maine Town and City Clerks Association will be testifying in opposition. Councilor Ali asked Kathy Jones why the Association opposes it, and Kathy said that they aren't in favor of the part where the third-day cut off or absentee ballots is taken away. This bill is restricting that, and allowing absentee voting all the way up to election day at 8:00 pm in the presence of the Clerk's office which will cause a hardship on all municipal and town clerks.

LD 1177 *An Act To Increase Access to Intranasal Naloxone Hydrochloride for Syringe Services Programs* -With Portland's exchange program being open 7 days along with other mechanisms for NARCAN distribution in Portland, staff believe they're generally meeting the need for NARCAN availability in this community. The need for this increased access may be greater in other parts of the State. Council Fournier asks if the vending machine will allow greater access to NARCAN during hours when the program is not in operation. Dena will provide additional information at the next meeting.

LD 1226 *Resolve, Directing the Permanent Commission on the Status of Racial, Indigenous and Maine Tribal Populations To Examine Restorative Justice* - Staff are reviewing this bill and will provide feedback as soon as possible.

LD 1238 *An Act To Protect Women's Single-sex Shelters* - City of Portland does not operate a single-sex shelter, but staff is supportive of this change from a public safety perspective.

Councilor Fournier felt perplexed with the language of the bill. She requested for the bill to be monitored closely and is strongly opposed if the bill limits access to shelter to members of the LGBTQ community.

Councilor Fournier made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Councilor Mavodones, vote 4-0. The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 AM.