



Legislative Committee May 4, 2021 Meeting Minutes

The May 4, 2021 remote Committee meeting was called to order by Chair Pious Ali at 8:09 AM on Zoom.

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

Councilor Mavodones made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from April 27, 2021, seconded by Councilor Fournier, vote 4-0.

There were no new, relevant bills slated for Committee discussion, and no discussion of testimony provided by staff.

Councilor Ali asked Kate Knox for information related to LD 1611. Kate said it was not clear to her if this bill would be relevant to Portland or not. Dena said Corporation Counsel had reviewed the bill language and also did not think the bill was relevant to the City, but that staff would continue to review the bill. Mr. Jennings said he had discussed the bill with MMA, and learned that the existing State law requires municipal approval; the last time the Portland Council reviewed this, they voted to make Portland a “dry town.” LD 1611 would allow any track within 25 miles to get a gaming license without municipal approval. MMA is not taking a position; Mr. Jennings said he did not see this as having a direct impact in Portland unless the Council permitted off-track betting or any of the other activities addressed in the bill.

Kate Knox reviewed a list of upcoming hearings and work sessions. Staff confirmed that testimony was submitted for LD 1448, and that they would try to make sure the Tax Assessor would provide verbal testimony as well. The Committee confirmed that councilors may testify as private individuals on any of the bills being heard; Mr. Jennings confirmed that staff would testify in opposition to LD 1238.

The Committee discussed LD 1342 and LD 1418, both of which were scheduled for an upcoming hearing and for which the Committee had expressed support. Mr. Jennings asked Kate for advice on whether Portland should weigh in. She said she was neutral because the local option discussion would be a more challenging argument to make because the State has more money than it normally does. She said Portland has been very out front on these issues in the past. Mr. Jennings said he was surprised at how supportive MMA's Legislative Policy Committee was on these bills. Councilor Mavodones said that if it wasn't believed that testifying wouldn't be detrimental to the bills, he would support weighing in.

Mr. Jennings asked Kate if she has heard any information about the full funding of revenue-sharing in the schools. She said she had heard similar information, but did not know for sure if this would occur. She said a draft of the supplemental budget may be available the week of May 10, 2021, and that could provide more information.

Councilor Ali suggested that items on the Committee's 2021 Work Plan be discussed at the following meeting.

Councilor Fournier made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Councilor Mavodones, vote 4-0. The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 AM.