

LEGISLATIVE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

March 4, 2014

1. Call to Order: Chairman Kelley called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. at the second floor conference room of the courthouse.
2. Roll Call: Committee members in attendance included Edwin Kelley, Fred Erwin, Holly Wahlstrom-Stratton, Ron Yadro, and Don Gardner; Edward Wenger and Larry Neuens were noted as excused. Also attending School District of Florence County Superintendent, Ben Niehaus, and Legislative Advisory Committee co-secretary Margie Yadro.
3. Approval and/or revisions to the current agenda. Kelley suggested moving items AB 448 and SB 469 to Old Business. Wahlstrom-Stratton motioned to approve the agenda with the recommended changes, supported by Gardner. Motion passed. Kelley welcomed Niehaus and expressed the committee's appreciation of his participation.
4. Approval of the February 4, 2014 Legislative Advisory Committee Minutes. Wahlstrom-Stratton asked that she be recorded as abstaining on item AB 448 last month. R. Yadro moved for the Minutes to be amended to reflect that change and then approved, seconded by Wahlstrom-Stratton. Motion passed.
5. **Old Business:**
 - A. County Board action on resolutions and bills: M. Yadro will follow up with Florence County Clerk Donna Trudell on county board legislative action taken in February, specifically AB-448 and AB-469, (both were tabled). Committee members questioned the direction of AB-469, related to public record fees. R. Yadro motioned to table for one month to allow for clarification, supported by Wahlstrom-Stratton. Motion passed.
 - B. K-12 Education Reform: School Superintendent Niehaus shared several comparison charts regarding local school district funding, enrollment, equalized aid, levy per student and the history of general aid and property tax values. Niehaus was asked to also provide neighboring district comparisons on state aid per student. Niehaus concluded by stating that he is supportive of seeking ways to maintain school revenue sources and opportunities.
 - C. Replies from Departments/Outside Agencies: AB 506 (SB 394) regarding professional land surveyors, etc. Forestry & Parks Administrator Smith noted that this could be an additional expense for county forests and would find this hard to support without exemptions. On a motion by Gardner, supported by Wahlstrom-Stratton, the item will be tabled indefinitely. Motion passed.
 - D. Niehaus read correspondence regarding LRB 2673, relating to transitioning from the current to a new school funding formula. Even though this seems to be a bi-partisan issue, Niehaus believed that this will not move forward as written until there are resources to cover districts negatively affected and held harmless during the change. Niehaus reported that many local school boards have sent resolutions in support of changing the formula. R. Yadro moved to send a letter for local County Board consideration to support this new school funding formula, seconded by Gardner. Motion passed.
6. **New Business:**

AB 512: relating to expanding the requirement of county board approval of a town amendment of its zoning ordinances. Wahlstrom-Stratton motioned to table this item indefinitely, supported by Gardner. Motion passed.

AB 661: relating to authorizing towns to withdraw from county zoning and requiring

certain towns to enact a zoning ordinance and a comprehensive plan. Florence County Towns' Association Chairman, Fred Erwin, has been approached on this issue for the Towns' Association meeting as two towns are believed to currently have limited zoning. Erwin motioned to send this on for comment to the County's Towns' Association and the County Zoning Administrator, supported by Wahlstrom-Stratton. Motion passed.

AB 691: relating to liability and immunity of sport shooting ranges. A motion made by R. Yadro requests recommendations from the Forestry & Parks, and Zoning Departments, along with the WDNR Game Warden, supported by Gardner. Motion passed.

AB 734: relating to powers and duties of the board of veterans affairs; reimbursement of veterans' tuition at tribal colleges; documentation for eligibility to veterans homes; operation of veterans homes; eligibility and procedural requirements for veterans home loans, veterans personal loans, county veterans service grants, and American Indian veterans grants; and funeral homes, burial, and disinterment of veterans. Wahlstrom-Stratton moved to send this for recommendation to Florence County Veterans Service Officer, Mike Theis, seconded by Gardner. Motion passed.

AB 750: relating to preemption of local ordinances that require employees of a local governmental unit, employees of a contractor of a local governmental unit, or employees who perform work funded by a local governmental unit to be paid at a minimum wage rate specified in the ordinance and preemption of residency requirements for laborers, workers, mechanics, and truck drivers employed on local projects of public works to which the prevailing wage law applies. Erwin motioned to send this to the County Town's Association Meeting and to the County Personnel Committee for recommendation, supported by R. Yadro. Motion passed.

SB 575: relating to payments to counties for designated county forest lands and distribution of amounts paid to municipalities by owners of closed managed forest lands. Erwin motioned to send this for comment to the County Towns' Association, and the County's Treasurer and Forestry & Parks Departments, seconded by Wahlstrom-Stratton. Motion passed.

SB 589: relating to the number of school days and hours of instruction held in a school year and state aid for summer classes. Niehaus expects that this budget neutral bi-partisan bill would cause no drastic changes locally, but would allow greater flexibility in the schedule. Wahlstrom-Stratton moved to send a letter of support for County Board Supervisors' consideration, supported by Gardner. Motion passed.

SB 622: relating to creation of a grant program for teachers employed by sparsely populated school districts, and granting rule-making authority. Niehaus plans to take this item to the School Board later this month and believes this program advantageous to the Florence County School District. Wahlstrom-Stratton moved to send a letter of support for County Board Supervisors' consideration pending approval of the local School Board members, seconded by R. Yadro. Motion passed.

Resolutions: None

Group Discussion: AB 732 and AB 700 – related to payment to counties for designated county forest lands and distribution of amounts paid to municipalities by owners of closed managed forest lands, and eligibility requirements under the MFL program. Erwin will research for next meeting. Niehaus will work toward a schedule sequence for school and county legislative support. It was the consensus of the committee to send AB 770 to the Human Service Department for recommendations and include on next month's agenda. On a motion by Erwin, supported by Wahlstrom-Stratton, all were in favor to adjourn until April 1, 2014.

Respectfully submitted,

Margie Yadro
Legislative Advisory Committee Secretary