

Minutes of the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee*

February 6, 2003

Senate Majority Caucus Room

Boise, Idaho

Co-chair Senator Shawn Keough called the meeting to order at 3:35 p.m. Committee members Senators John Andreason, Bert Marley, and Marti Calabretta, and Representatives Margaret Henbest, Debbie Field, and Donna Boe attended. Representative Maxine Bell was unable to attend. Staff members Rakesh Mohan, Director, and Margaret Campbell, Administrative Assistant, also were present, as were other OPE staff intermittently throughout the meeting.

The committee previously had approved minutes of the November 22, 2002 meeting.

ADOPTION OF COMMITTEE RULES

Representative Field moved to adopt the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee rules and Senator Calabretta seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

AGENCIES STATUS REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OFFICE OF PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS' RECOMMENDATIONS: *MANAGEMENT OF STATE AGENCY PASSENGER VEHICLES: A FOLLOW-UP REPORT*

A.J. Burns, Senior Performance Evaluator, presented a summary of the agencies' responses to the report recommendations. In response to questions, Ms. Burns said the category of "partially implemented/will implement" ranged widely from agencies just beginning the process of implementation to nearly completing the process. All agencies in that category indicated they would implement recommendations by December 2003.

Representative Field moved to request another follow-up response from the agencies in a year. Senator Marley seconded the motion.

In discussion, Senator Marley said he was amazed how agencies were dragging their feet and defending their turf. He said after the issuance of the Governor's Executive Order and three performance evaluations, agencies were making some progress, but not enough. Members discussed the response of several agencies.

Representative Field asked if the Governor had considered adding more travel management policies. Co-chair Keough called on Brad Foltman, Division of Financial Management, to address the Committee. Foltman said some agencies did not understand the importance of having written policies and the Executive Branch intended to work with agencies to reinforce this point.

The motion to request another follow-up response from the agencies passed unanimously by voice vote.

* Subject to approval by the majority of the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee.

Members discussed the timing of the next vehicle follow-up and requested OPE provide a follow-up report by the beginning of the 2004 Legislative session. The Committee requested that OPE distribute the current report to JFAC, Germane Committee Chairs, Majority and Minority Leadership, and the Governor. Co-chair Keough asked OPE to check with the JFAC chairs about a presentation of findings in a meeting of JFAC.

SELECTION OF EVALUATION TOPICS

Mr. Mohan provided the Committee with eight proposed topics for selection: public education, strategic planning and performance reporting, higher education, Idaho Lottery, child protective services, child support enforcement, nursing homes and home health agency oversight, and ITRMC process and information technology contracting. Mr. Mohan said topics came from various sources including conversations with members of the Legislature, staff from Budget and Policy and the Division of Financial Management, and staff research from OPE.

Senator Calabretta said the scope of any evaluation should include the question, "Are there basic fiscal control policies?"

Members discussed an evaluation of public education. Representative Field presented the House Majority's priorities for a scope of public education. **Representative Field moved to table evaluation work on higher education and to conduct an evaluation on public education, focusing on six top priorities of the House Majority Leadership.**

In discussion, members voiced support of an evaluation of public education, but indicated different priorities. They suggested using the scope OPE provided in the Committee's notebook and adding to it as resources allowed. The Committee asked OPE to meet with Majority and Minority Leadership and bring back a prioritized list for consideration. They expressed concerns that an evaluation of three different-sized school districts would limit the sample size and distort statewide findings.

Representative Henbest said it was important to include the potential for cost savings in the scope of an evaluation. She said issues of local control should only be considered if the state "could get anything out of it."

Representative Field recommended OPE meet with Majority and Minority Leadership and build a scope for JLOC to consider. Senator Calabretta suggested the first evaluation could be a pilot for performance audits on all districts. Members discussed audit efforts in Arizona and Florida school districts and expressed an interest in looking at the whole system over time.

Representative Field restated her earlier motion to put all OPE resources on an evaluation of public education and meet with Legislative Leadership to develop a scope for JLOC approval. Senator Marley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Co-chair Keough asked if the Committee needed to prioritize any other topics for evaluation. Mr. Mohan said the public education evaluation would keep OPE busy for now. At the next meeting, the Committee may want to select another topic to keep in reserve.

Representative Field moved to consider the status of the remaining topics at the next JLOC meeting. Senator Marley seconded the motion and it passed unanimously by voice vote.

NEXT JLOC MEETING AND OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Mohan said the office had recently received a number of questions from Legislators. He said staff had responded to the questions as the information was readily available, detailed review was not required, and staff resources were available. Mr. Mohan said responding to these requests had the potential to answer questions on topics that typically were submitted as requests for evaluations. In addition to being responsive to legislative information needs, he said it would save state resources by not conducting studies on topics that do not need a full performance evaluation. He was seeking the Committee's approval to continue this method of response. In discussion, members asked about the Committee's rules and whether rule changes were needed to specifically authorize staff to perform this kind of work. Co-chair Keough requested OPE to review the rules and report to JLOC at the next meeting.

Members discussed a recommendation from Senator Hal Bunderson to authorize Mr. Mohan to assist the Department of Health and Welfare in preparing child support recommendations for the 2004 Legislative session. Members said they were uncomfortable with staff serving in this capacity. They questioned whether providing this type of assistance could result in conflicts of interest if OPE were asked to conduct future evaluation work in areas where they had assisted with policy development. Co-chair Keough said she appreciated Senator Bunderson's recommendation and compliment to the staff, but the Committee would decline. The co-chairs would let Senator Bunderson know of their decision in a letter.

The meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.