

MINUTES (as approved June 3, 2010)

Advisory Committee on Capitol Services
January 28, 2010 – Capitol Building Room W433

The meeting was called to order at 3:07 pm by Rep. Scott Bedke, co-chair. Present were Senators Stegner, Geddes, Cameron, Werk, Siddoway, and Bair; and Representatives Denney, Black and Saylor. Also present were Jan Frew and Ric Johnston, Division of Public Works; Sheila Ison, Dewain Gaudet, LaVerne Wiczorek, Glenn Harris, Adam Martineau and Robyn Lockett, Legislative Services Office; Michelle Lynch, Idaho State Historical Society; Judy Christensen and Terri Franks-Smith, Idaho House of Representatives; Sarah Jane McDonald, Jerry Csutorus and Jeannine Wood, Idaho Senate; and Bill Roden, Skip Smyser, Edward Lodge, and Julie Taylor, Idaho Legislative Advisors.

Rep. Bedke welcomed the committee and guests to week three of the legislative session. He asked for everyone's understanding as the bugs were being worked out of the new space, and as the flow of the building was determined, and asked for continued patience over the next several weeks.

Senator Joe Stegner, co-chair of the committee, reiterated that the Capitol is still a work in progress. He is committed to addressing any necessary building modifications, but is asking for consideration in trying new things and for everyone's patience. He explained that changes will not happen overnight, but he is interested in hearing everyone's input and opinion on building issues.

Skip Smyser, President of the Idaho Legislative Advisors, began by speaking on behalf of the lobbyists. He complimented the committee and staff on how well the Capitol turned out and said it is a pleasure to be back in the building. However, he does have a few issues to address. He said the most pressing issue facing the lobbyists is the location of Jan Eyth's desk. Mr. Smyser then welcomed Bill Roden and Julie Taylor to discuss this issue.

Julie Taylor described Ms. Eyth's role and function by stating that she is the "room mother" for the lobbyists. She has worked for them for over 30 years and is invaluable. She stocks their room with food and coffee, ensures that all committee agendas are posted, and tracks messages and appointments for the lobbyists. Her location in the main garden-level hallway keeps the lobbyists orientated. Ms. Eyth also acts as an information source for the public because of her prime location and is always eager to help. The lobbyists pay her a three-month salary from their dues.

Bill Roden continued by stating that Ms. Eyth is extremely valuable and plays a great role for the public, as well as the lobbyists. He said that visitors do stop at the Welcome Desk for assistance, but they also stop to see Ms. Eyth. He said that the desk she uses was made specifically for the Capitol and its location affords her the opportunity to serve both the public and the lobbying community.

The Pro Tem thanked Mr. Roden and said he enjoys watching Ms. Eyth interact with everyone. He then asked Mr. Roden if her position will be replaced when she retires.

Mr. Roden stated, yes, she will be replaced and the location of her desk could be revisited once she retires. Ms. Eyth is a special circumstance, he said.

Senator Dean Cameron asked Mr. Roden how her ability to deliver her services would change if she

is relocated.

Mr. Roden replied that the remoteness of the Welcome Desk would not allow her to view the lobby room directly and would jeopardize her ability to interface with lobbyists. Ms. Taylor stated the Ms. Eyth also serves as a security guard for the lobbyist room.

Senator Cameron asked if Ms. Eyth could participate from inside the lobbyist room and still fulfill her capabilities.

Mr. Roden stated that she may be able to, but the room is not large enough. It's adequate for the lobbyist's needs, but the wardrobe cupboards are too big and the coffee area is too small. Mr. Roden asked whether the cupboards could be moved into the IT room behind the lobbyist room or into the mechanical room.

Senator Stegner framed the issue for the rest of the committee. He recalled that having someone in the hall was never part of the designated plan. In retrospect, we would have designed the space better, but now he is caught off guard and surprised to see someone in the hallway. Generally, nothing was supposed to go in the hallways. That is why you don't see pop machines, for example, or too many chairs out in the hallways. That design was on purpose, he said. Plus, the propped open safe doors were not necessarily part of the vision either. Those doors narrow the hallway, but regardless, he stated that we need to establish policies and protocols that will live within the building for a long time. If we allow some people in the hallway, then others will make that same request. Maybe this is a Senate decision, not a building-wide decision, he said, because the desk is in the Senate corridor. All of these circumstances have led to these issues, he said, and he is not in a hurry to make a decision because we want the best long-term decision for the Capitol.

Rep. Max Black said that the vault doors are the main source of congestion. There is a lot of traffic and business at the beginning of the session, but he thinks the congestion may slow down.

The Pro Tem said that the safe doors are there regardless, but we have some sense of tradition to uphold in regards to Ms. Eyth. The Pro Tem hopes Ms. Eyth can be accommodated where she is until her decision to retire.

Rep. Bedke said that the location of Ms. Eyth's desk is most likely a Senate issue, but there is some overlap with this committee and the overall vision for the building. For now, the House will defer this decision to the Senate.

Senator Elliot Werk asked if the Legislature pays rent to be in the Capitol. He also asked if the lobbyists pay rent for their space. Senator Werk said that he would like to know how other state Capitols accommodate their lobbyists.

Rep. Bedke replied, "yes and yes, except for common space."

Sen. Cameron asked Robyn Lockett to speak to the feasibility of moving extra furniture into the IT room or into the mechanical room.

Ms. Lockett said that the fire marshal would not allow anything in the mechanical room and that space is not ours to negotiate anyhow. The IT room is the only secure space the IT staff has to

store IT equipment and it's full now, but other accommodations could be made, if necessary, for that space.

Sen. Stegner said that Ms. Lockett is correct, but there are other options. We haven't identified any good options quite yet, but we do have options.

Mr. Smyser thanked the committee for their consideration regarding Ms. Eyth. He then proceeded to say there are still several outstanding issues.

1. Lobbyists have been asked to leave the Welcome Room and committee rooms when they are not in use. This has upset the lobbyists because they feel they are giving up their right to use public spaces, just because they are lobbyists. Mr. Smyser explained that they want to be able to use empty rooms for a short meeting or to take a quick phone call.

2. Mr. Smyser said there are no benches outside of the committee rooms, which forces people to sit on the floor outside the room while they wait for committees to start.

Sen. Stegner replied that the Legislature plans to move benches from the rotunda areas to the wing hallways, and that issue is already being addressed. He also said that a policy regarding room use warrants some additional discussion.

The Pro Tem said he thinks there is a formal policy that implies there is always room for the general public in those rooms, though they can't have food in the committee rooms, they are always welcome there. It disturbs the Pro Tem that lobbyists have been asked to leave those rooms because it is the people's house and all people are welcome in the Capitol Building.

The Pro Tem made a motion that stated: This is the people's house and it should be utilized as such. All people should be able to use the committee rooms and the other public spaces, as long as that use doesn't interfere with legislative business and people utilize the building in appropriate ways.

Speaker Lawrence Denney seconded the motion.

Sen. Stegner said that they are discussing two different things: The Welcome Room and committee rooms and what constitutes appropriate use of each of those spaces.

The Pro Tem said that kids playing hide-and-seek, for example, is not appropriate use of space and they should be asked to leave, but other more traditional uses of space are fine.

Sen. Werk said that when lobbyists put their green name tags on, they are working. They are no longer members of the general public. He said that the Legislature has an obligation to the public, but that the discussion hasn't clarified to him the difference between lobbyists working in the building and the average Joe Public visiting the building. In essence, he stated that the lobbyists are "working."

Sen. Stegner said that LSO is still working to develop the tour program and the usage of the Welcome Room. Tour groups leave their coats and purses in that room while they tour, plus they watch the IPTV documentary in there, so it should be utilized solely for the purpose of the LSO tour program.

The Pro Tem stated that tour groups should not be leaving their personal items in that room for liability reasons.

Ms. Lockett clarified that groups do not leave their valuables in there, maybe some leave coats, but not purses.

Mr. Smyser said he just needs direction and policies to give to the lobbyists. He said they will do whatever is asked of them, but they just need to know the rules.

Rep. Bedke reiterated his request for patience as the Legislature works out the details of the building.

The Pro Tem said his motion entails good will and with good will, some common sense will arise. He stated that he sees no reason why folks can't use the Welcome Room if it's empty.

Sen. Stegner said the Pro Tem's motion should be limited to the committee rooms and the other meeting rooms, but not the Welcome Room.

The Pro Tem agreed to withdraw his motion if the maker of the second would agree.

The Speaker responded that as long as we are clear as to the use of these rooms, everyone will be respectful, but the motion will not be withdrawn.

Sen. Cameron said that there are too many mixed messages regarding space use, but he sees valid points on both sides. For example, in Massachusetts, there are ropes across the doorways that don't let anyone but committee members into committee meeting rooms. There should be a level of hierarchy and respect, but we don't want to kick folks out. The people ought to be allowed in, he said.

Rep. Bedke called for a vote. All voted in favor, and Rep. Bedke said that the Pro Tem's motion captures the spirit of the discussion, but he would also like written protocols for the various rooms being discussed.

Mr. Smyser continued with his list of building issues:

3. Drinks, including sodas, should be allowed in the committee rooms.
4. The plastic committee room agenda postings are in a difficult location to read.
5. He would like small tables in the restrooms for people to set purses, notebooks, etc. as there is no place to set those items currently.
6. Trash cans should be made available in the public spaces.
7. Vending machines would be nice to have since the lobbyists and public can't use the legislative dining room.

Mr. Smyser reiterated that the lobbyists just need direction and clarification and thanked the

committee for its time.

Sheila Ison reminded the lobbyists and the committee members that if they are talking in committee rooms when the rooms aren't in use, there is a chance their conversation could be overheard if the sound system is not turned to "off." IPTV and LSO remind the committee secretaries to turn the system off at the end of their committee meeting, but it's best to understand that whatever you say could inadvertently be streamed over the internet via Legislature Live.

Sen. Stegner said that the Senate has decided not to install vending machines because there is no good place for them. He's also not anxious to compete with the dining room vendor, or have pop spilled throughout the building. The members are dealing with their own spaces individually, but he realizes we need to deal with outside requests, such as water in the gift shop for example.

Rep. Bedke said the House has plans to have two vending machines in House space.

Rep. Black asked how the soda will be regulated. Who will monitor it and ensure it's not spilled or taken into the wrong room?

Sen. Stegner said it sounds like we need to allow water throughout the building and the committee will take up the food and drinks decisions as well, so there is building-wide consistency on this issue.

Sen. Cameron agreed and suggested the following:

- Pop and water for sale in the gift shop
- Water and other drinks should be allowed in the committee rooms
- Hearing rooms are not a good place for lunches
- He asked Ms. Lockett to write those protocols and she agreed. She stated she would work with the House and Senate Sergeants at Arms too, to ensure all interested parties are represented
- Copies of the guidelines should be posted and made available to everyone

Sen. Cameron then moved that drinks be allowed in the committee rooms. Rep. Black seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Ms. Lockett updated the committee on the Capitol Gift Shop. She stated that the gift shop is open Monday – Saturday from 10:00 am – 4:00 pm. Hours of business during the interim will most likely be Tuesday – Saturday. Ms. Lockett introduced Dewain Gaudet, the gift shop manager and thanked him for the good effort he's made getting the shop open in time for the Rededication Celebration. She explained that sales are going well and the merchandise selection has been popular. The shop has only been open 19 days thus far, so there is very little budget history to analyze. The shop needs to gross approximately \$360 per day in order to be self-sustainable, and Ms. Lockett said that the current average has been \$280 per day. Ms. Lockett is also planning to market the gift shop on the Internet and across the state to help increase sales and grow the shop over the next few years.

Ms. Lockett then gave a brief update on the Information Center. She introduced the Information Center Coordinator, LaVerne Wiczorek, and said the service she and the other staff provide has been very good.

Ms. Lockett then gave a brief update on the dining room operations and asked the committee for feedback and suggestions. Ronda DeGiorgio, the dining room caterer, said that she is happy with the business so far, but does appreciate feedback. The committee recommended that the dining room have a “suggestion box.” Rep. Bedke, the Pro Tem, and Rep. Steve Bair all said they have had good meals thus far and have heard good comments on the food as well.

The committee then discussed the committee hearing rooms and building punch list items. Jan Frew made a list of punch list items and assured the committee that each item would be addressed:

- The fan noise in Senator Jeff Siddoway’s office is too loud
- The fan noise in WW54 is still pretty loud
- The vents above the Lt. Governor in the Senate Chambers are blowing a lot of air, it’s practically windy in there
- ADA access routes from the Garden Level to the Wings Level are very cumbersome
 - Ms. Frew responded that the ADA task force met in December 2009 and determined that the building is technically ADA compliant. She has ordered more automatic door openers that will be installed soon. This will help people maneuver the doors between levels. Ms. Frew also explained that additional signage is being added to help navigate the space and furthermore, some door locks are being reversed in order to prevent anyone from being trapped anywhere along the ADA accessible path of egress
- Some of the restroom toilets need to be adjusted, they spray water when flushed
- Nice trash cans need to be added in the rotundas and in other public spaces. More recycling bins would be helpful
 - Ms. Frew said there are 35 recycling bins in the building already and that nice trash cans have been ordered
- Ms. Lockett was asked to start the process of evaluating the cost to place glass tops for all the new desks to protect their finish
- The base of the pillars in the Senate Chambers will need to be rounded during the interim. They are a tripping hazard
- The base of the stairs that lead from the Garden Level Rotunda up to the 1st Floor Rotunda are narrow and poorly lit and are a tripping hazard
- The plaster handrail in the House and Senate public viewing galleries is still quite low. Modifications should be made to help ensure no one falls over the railing

Ms. Frew added that there is a huge list of locking and security issues currently being addressed by the Division of Public Works. They are working through the challenges as they arise. She also noted that the JFAC sound panels are being replaced and the speakers are being angled downward in order to help enhance the sound quality in the JFAC room.

Rep. Bedke thanked the staff and the rest of the committee for their hard work and adjourned the meeting at 5:30 pm.

Minutes prepared by Robyn Lockett 02/02/2010.