

Advisory Committee on Capitol Services

**Capitol Building
Senate Minority Caucus Room
Boise, Idaho
June 7, 2012**

MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 1:33 p.m. by Co-Chair, Senator Chuck Winder. Capitol Services Committee members in attendance were Senate Pro Tem Brent Hill, Senators Patti Anne Lodge and Edgar Malepeai; House Speaker Lawrence Denney, Co-Chair, Representative Scott Bedke, and Representatives Max Black and John Rusche, the latter who was sitting in for Representative Wendy Jaquet.

Also present were Jeff Youtz, Legislative Services Office (LSO) Director, Michelle O'Brien and Robyn Lockett, LSO staff; Mary Sue Jones, Senate staff; Jeff Tucker, IPTV; and two visiting students from NNU to study parliamentary procedure.

Co-Chair Winder welcomed the committee, guests and staff.

JFAC Room:

Jeff Youtz, LSO Director, began the meeting by discussing the acoustic improvements that have taken place to improve the sound quality in the JFAC committee room. These include installing new acoustical panels over the old panels on the walls, placing individual speakers at the committee members' desks, back cushions on the benches in the public seating area and repositioning of the large speakers in the room. The feedback received from committee members, guests and staff has been very positive. The Capitol Commission budgeted \$34,000 for the project and it was completed for \$32,644.

WW17 Hearing Room:

The committee then received an update on the improvements to Senate Hearing Room WW17, known as the "Flex Room". This room did not get finished to everyone's satisfaction during the Capitol Restoration project. Senate leadership, working with input from LSO Director Jeff Youtz and the Division of Public Works, approved a design configuration that will not only allow this room to function as a hearing room, but will also accommodate other types of meetings and conferences. There will be a permanent raised dais installed as in other hearing rooms to cover the exposed cables but a large twenty-two foot mahogany boat-style conference table will be installed, rather than using the typical dais desks. The conference table will have two embedded State Seals laser-cut from the historic trees from the Territorial Capitol, and will also have power, data and sound capabilities installed. A rail will

also be installed across the front of the dais for safety and aesthetic purposes. The Idaho Capitol Commission approved \$42,700 for the project which is expected to be completed by September 1.

Director Youtz turned over the podium to Michelle O'Brien, who he explained is the Special Projects Coordinator for LSO. Ms. O'Brien will be handling the Capitol Tours program, the Capitol Gift Shop, the Capitol Dining Room vendor, and other Capitol facility issues such as signage in the building. She also provides fiscal support and back-up for the LSO Fiscal/Human Resources Officer.

Capitol Tours:

Ms. O'Brien updated the committee on the Capitol Tour Program, which in 2011 escorted 12,100 visitors through the building. These visitors comprised 272 groups, 154 of which were schools. For calendar year 2012, the tour program is on track to exceed the 2011 numbers. The Information Center developed a "Visitor's Guest Book" for the Capitol Building, which contains some interesting statistics. The signatures and comments from visitors represent 117 of Idaho's cities, 48 states and 57 foreign countries.

Gift Shop:

In Fiscal Year 2011 the Capitol Gift Shop sold 15,758 items with net sales of \$40,400. For Fiscal Year 2012 the Gift Shop projection is 15,300 items sold with net sales of \$41,100. There are 133 active vendors, 120 of which are from Idaho.

Pro Tem Hill asked what would happen if the Gift Shop fell to a level where it is not self-sustaining. Ms. O'Brien answered that there was a contingency fund established when the Gift Shop was created to act as a safety net until such time as the Gift Shop became self-supporting. Since the shop basically reached self-supporting status in about six months, that contingency fund is still there if needed. Both Mr. Youtz and Ms. O'Brien expanded on the fact that Dewain Gaudet, the Gift Shop Manager, also functions as the unofficial ambassador for the Capitol Building during the interim, since he is many times the first person touring visitors meet. He hands out the self-guided tour booklets, starts the videos in the Visitor's Welcome Room and gives general information and directions. Both Representative Bedke and Black stated how good the Capitol grounds and building look, and how many guests compliment the building as an outstanding Capitol.

Capitol Dining Room Vendor Selection:

Next on the agenda were the interviews and selection of a vendor for the Capitol Dining Room for the upcoming two-year period. Three food service vendors sent in requests to be considered. They were Ronda DeGiorgio, owner of Rooster's Eatery; Brenda and Dave Miller of Cuisine Concierge Management; and Kevin Servatius, manager of the Galley Restaurant in the basement of the LBJ Building.

Director Youtz first introduced Ronda DeGiorgio, who has been the vendor in the dining room for the past three years. Ms. DeGiorgio began her time with a breakdown of how the session went for her and her staff. It has become easier since her staff now know the names and faces of the Legislature and

everyone is familiar with the operation. There was an increase in in-house sales, but a downturn for catering. They will be making a renewed effort to advertise their catering capacity. Their sales were approximately \$770 a day or \$47,000 for the session, with January being the slowest month. Her profit for the session was \$6,000 after her operating costs. The only negative comment she received was on the cost of meals. However, she did try to keep those down and still make the operation profitable. She and her staff look forward to coming back to the Capitol building.

There was a brief discussion on what types of breakfast foods Rooster's has available in the dining room, and that they do have a variety of breakfast foods that are not advertised. Pro Tem Hill asked if being the vendor in the dining room is "worth it" to her and her business. Ms. DeGiorgio answered that it is, due to the exposure and advertising it provides, and other contracts she believes they receive as a result of their business in the Capitol Building during the high-profile legislative session.

Cuisine Concierge Management was the next interview, and Brenda and Dave Miller and Chef Brent Edwards took the podium for their time with the committee.

Mr. Miller explained that Cuisine Concierge Management is a customer service-based business with many years in the food industry, including the cafeteria operation for the WGI/Tax Commission building. Mr. Miller passed out an example of their current menu used at another venue, and explained their pricing and food items available. They know they would have adjustments to make for particular aspects of being in the Capitol building but they are experienced, with large volumes as well as small, in other contracts they hold. There was a brief discussion on how they would handle the varying numbers of customers from day to day during a session and also some further explanations on their food items and pricing.

After the interview with Cuisine Concierge Management concluded, Kevin Servatius from The Galley took the podium for his interview with the committee. Mr. Servatius has served many members of the Legislature for years as the owner of The Galley. He is very excited to have the opportunity to present his proposal to the committee. The Legislative Dining Room under his service would provide quality, made from scratch cooking and low prices. He would bring in students preparing to graduate from College of Western Idaho's culinary arts program, to give them work experience, in addition to other trained staff. Mr. Servatius would also return a percentage of his profits to the Idaho Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired. Mr. Servatius was thanked for his time, and after his departure the committee began deliberations on the prospective vendors.

The discussion generally reflected the committee's observation that, lacking any serious complaints or problems with the current vendor, there didn't seem to be a compelling reason to change. However, it was also noted that the incumbent vendor will always have a big advantage in the interview process because outside vendors really don't know what they are getting into regarding number of customers, sales and other operational logistics.

The committee was impressed with the presentations of all three vendors. A motion was made by Speaker Denney to recommend that Legislative Council retain Rooster's Eatery as the vendor for the

Capitol Dining Room for the period of July 2012 through June 2014. The motion was seconded by Representative Black and passed on a unanimous voice vote.

After the decision was reached to retain the current vendor, changes to the vendor contract were taken up by the committee. Mr. Youtz outlined the proposed changes, which included making the dining room open to the public, removing LSO from the financial operation and making the vendor a direct sales operation, and inserting language addressing the need for additional data on volume of customers and sales. Representative Bedke made a motion to approve the proposed contract recommendation to the Legislative Council, and it was seconded by Pro Tem Hill. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

Open Discussion, Miscellaneous Issues:

Chairman Winder began the open discussion period by calling on Representative Bedke. Representative Bedke had recently attended a ceremony in the building, and was concerned about the noise and general lack of respect given to the event by some of the visitors who happened to be in the building. He proposed adding additional signage to inform visitors that an event or ceremony is in progress, and for visitors to please be respectful. Pro Tem Hill asked how many signs would be needed, and Representative Bedke responded that he thought three would be adequate, one for each of the main entrances to the second floor rotunda. A motion was made by Representative Bedke for the Legislative Service Office to acquire the signs to announce "Ceremony in Progress, Please be Respectful." The motion was seconded by Senator Lodge and passed on a unanimous voice vote.

Jeff Tucker from Idaho Public Television then discussed a proposed project to create an online virtual tour of the Capitol Building. The Idaho Commission for Libraries has received a grant to purchase mobile video conferencing equipment for the Capitol Building as part of an educational outreach effort. The equipment will be able to go almost anywhere in the Capitol Building. The project will include a scripted video tour, which will allow the legislature and LSO to provide tours to students and other groups who cannot come to Boise, but it will also allow live video conferencing as well, so the video tour can be personalized or address specific purposes. IPTV and LSO will keep the committee updated as this project continues to develop.

Director Youtz then briefed the committee on an effort underway by the Department of Administration to set up administrative rules for the use of the interior of the Capitol Building. Given the recent experience with the courts regarding tents on the exterior grounds, it appears advisable that either statutes or rules be developed which carry more weight than internal "policies of use", which have not stood up well in the court system. Mr. Youtz will keep the committee apprised of the progress.

Pro Tem Hill made a motion to accept the committee minutes from the October 24, 2011 meeting. The motion was seconded by Speaker Denney and passed on a unanimous voice vote.

Representative Rusche made a motion to adjourn, and this was seconded by Pro Tem Hill. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

The Advisory Committee on Capitol Services adjourned at 3:45 p.m.

