

Excerpt from the

REVISED MINUTES OF THE POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS INTERIM COMMITTEE Wednesday, May 17, 2006 – 2:00 p.m. – W025 House Building

Members Present:

Sen. Carlene M. Walker, Senate Chair
Rep. Brad L. Dee, House Chair
Sen. Fred J. Fife
Rep. David N. Cox
Rep. Julie Fisher
Rep. Kerry W. Gibson
Rep. Ann W. Hardy
Rep. M. Susan Lawrence
Rep. Karen W. Morgan
Rep. Joseph G. Murray
Rep. Peggy Wallace
Rep. Larry B. Wiley

Members Absent:

Sen. L. Alma Mansell
Pres. John L. Valentine
Rep. Brad King

Staff Present:

Mr. Joseph T. Wade, Policy Analyst
Mr. Robert H. Rees, Associate General Counsel
Ms. Wendy L. Bangerter, Legislative Secretary

3. Compliance with State Law Regarding Inspection of School Construction

Rep. Larry Wiley, sponsor to Master Study Resolution item #35, referred to information distributed in the committee packet regarding the inspection of school construction and the 1998 audit. He reviewed the list of recommendations from the packet. He requested the Committee's endorsement to request a followup audit that would include charter schools. He addressed the issue of those entities that are exempt from obtaining some of the construction permits as well as the accountability of inspectors.

Mr. Larry Newton, School Finance Director, USOE (Utah State Office of Education), emphasized that the problem is a lack of good communications between schools and municipalities. He stated that all SDBOs (school district building officials) have the responsibility to make sure schools are built and inspected to the proper code and local municipalities have the right and responsibility to review the monthly inspection reports. He reviewed efforts he had made during the past months to unify those two entities and update the Administrative Rule regarding inspection of school construction. He suggested that municipalities be responsible for the inspection of charter schools and be held accountable for their codes. He clarified that the State Superintendent has the authority to contract the inspection and charge back the cost if an inspection was found not in compliance. He instituted inspector cross checks for credentials and will begin posting all inspection reports on the USOE website. If the Legislature does not authorize an audit, USOE has authorized their internal auditor to do an audit.

Mr. Ron Ivey, Utah Chapter of Building Officials, stated there have been changes and progress since the last audit in 1998. He spoke in favor of another audit and their willingness to help with the workgroup. He recommended the elimination of the school exemption from municipal inspections.

Mr. Gary Payne, School District Building Official, stated that his group met with ICC (Inspector Code Council) executive committee and asked for more institutional type training code classes. He expressed concern that SDBOs are criticized and not respected in the same way as residential inspectors. He

reviewed their credentials and stated that his inspectors are more qualified for institutional and commercial inspections.

Ms. Jodi Hoffman, Utah League of Cities and Towns, spoke in favor of a workgroup and offered the League's assistance.

Mr. Larry Newton and Ms. Jodi Hoffman were asked to form a workgroup and include Rep. Wiley and all other interested parties. A progress report would be included on the November agenda.

Mr. Zane Woolstenhulme, SDBO, South Summit School District, stated that as far as South Summit is concerned, they have had good communications and working relationship with the municipal inspectors.

Mr. Randy Haslam, SDBO, Jordan School District, also reported having a good relationship with their city inspectors. He explained that a building code is a minimum standard, but that schools are and should be built to an even higher standard than code.

Assistant Superintendent Michael Johnson, Tooele School District, emphasized the importance of building schools above code. He stated they are cooperating with officials and are submitting reports to the county.

Mr. Stephen Oliver, Park City School District, refuted the allegation that Park City School District has spent a lot of money correcting problems in schools.