

**MINUTES OF THE
GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS INTERIM COMMITTEE**
Wednesday, April 18, 2007 – 9:00 a.m. – Room W025 House Building

Members Present:

Sen. Peter C. Knudson, Senate Chair
Rep. Glenn A. Donnelson, House Chair
Sen. Gregory S. Bell
Sen. Brent H. Goodfellow
Rep. Douglas C. Aagard
Rep. DeMar Bud Bowman
Rep. Lorie D. Fowlke
Rep. Neil A. Hansen
Rep. Neal B. Hendrickson
Rep. Eric K. Hutchings
Rep. John G. Mathis

Rep. Curtis Oda
Rep. Larry B. Wiley

Members Absent:

Pres. John L. Valentine
Rep. Keith Grover

Staff Present:

Mr. Benjamin N. Christensen, Policy Analyst
Mr. Eric N. Weeks, Associate General Counsel
Ms. A. Brooke Ollerton, Legislative Secretary

Note: A list of others present, a copy of related materials, and an audio recording of the meeting can be found at www.le.utah.gov.

1. Committee Business

Chair Knudson called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. He excused Rep. Grover and invited committee members to introduce themselves.

MOTION: Rep. Bowman moved to approve the minutes of the November 15, 2006 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Government Operations Subject Area Overview and 2007 Bills Passed

Mr. Christensen referred the Committee to "General Subject Area Issues," which was distributed in the mailing packet and provided in his slide presentation. He described some of the areas over which the Committee has code responsibilities and mentioned agencies with which it works.

Mr. Weeks gave a slide presentation, "2007 General Session Review: Legislation Related To Government Operations," and distributed copies of the presentation. He referred to "Summaries of Government Operations Related Bills Passed During the 2007 General Session," which was included in the mailing packet, and discussed legislation passed in the 2007 General Session regarding open and public meetings, state employee compensation, election law, campaign finance, legislative ethics, state land, and state construction and facilities.

3. Department of Administrative Services - Agency Overview

Ms. Kim Hood, Executive Director, DAS (Department of Administrative Services), introduced herself and the directors of the divisions under DAS.

Mr. Marvin Dodge, Deputy Director, DAS, distributed and provided a slide presentation "Department of Administrative Services - Overview." He described the responsibilities, budget, and accomplishments of each division within DAS and answered questions from the Committee about the functions of the department.

In response to a question from Sen. Goodfellow, Ms. Margaret Chambers, Director, Fleet Operations explained that no ethanol fueling stations were being closed, but several CNG (compressed natural gas)

stations would be. She explained that the CNG stations were originally open to private businesses, but over time they were not using CNG. In addition, individual private citizens, to whom the division had never intended to provide CNG, had begun to use the stations. She also answered questions about the state's use of alternate fuels and the effect of high gas prices on the division's budget.

Chair Knudson asked Ms. Chambers to provide the Committee with statistics about which fuels the state uses. She indicated that she would.

Chair Knudson asked if the state purchases insurance policies on its property.

Mr. Roger Livingston, Director, Division of Risk Management, affirmed that the state is fully self-insured on liability, but it purchases surplus coverage on property.

Rep. Hansen asked if State Archives documents were available electronically.

Ms. Patricia Smith-Mansfield, Director, State Archives, said her agency started digitizing documents two years ago and had made over 300,000 digital images available online.

Rep. Aagard asked about any progress made on purchasing card use after a report on a purchasing cards audit, which was presented to the Committee in the last interim.

Mr. Douglas Richins, Director, Division of Purchasing, explained that it had implemented one recommendation of the audit, which was an internal audit system of its agencies to ensure that supervisors appropriately approve and document purchases.

Rep. Mathis asked if preference was given to Utah companies in awarding contracts.

Mr. Richins responded that Utah has a reciprocal preference law, which means that the state does not prefer Utah-produced goods or services unless the companies are discriminated against in other states.

Sen. Goodfellow asked for an overview of services that have been privatized over the last couple of years.

Mr. Richins responded that most recently the state privatized copy centers and has saved over \$800,000 as a result. In addition, about eight years ago it closed the state-operated office supply store and now contracts with private companies for supplies. He mentioned that the state has a privatization policy board that actively reviews areas that can be serviced by the private sector.

4. Voter Designation of Political Party Affiliation for Primary Elections -- Sunset Review

Mr. Christensen gave a slide presentation, "Broad Election Issues," a copy of which was distributed at the meeting. He highlighted parts of the Utah Constitution relating to voting rights and pointed out that a balance is needed between voting rights and the need to administer fair, orderly elections.

Mr. Weeks continued the slide presentation, outlining information regarding registering to vote and designation of party affiliation. He pointed out that approximately 56 percent of active Utah voters are unaffiliated. Currently, registered voters cannot change their affiliation during the 30 days before a regular primary election. However, Section 20A-2-107.5 allows an unaffiliated voter to affiliate with a

party at the polling place on the date of a regular primary election. The section is due to sunset July 1, 2008.

Mr. Todd Weiler, Vice Chair, Utah Republican Party, asked that the Committee allow the party time to review the statute and return in a future meeting with an official position. He said that in the 2006 primary election, approximately 16,000 people affiliated on the day of the election. He feared that non-Republicans may register as Republicans for the primary only and vote for the weaker candidate in order to give the Democratic candidate a better chance of winning. He answered questions from the Committee.

Mr. Todd Taylor, Executive Director, Utah Democratic Party, stated that the current system is working. He said that since Democratic primary elections are open to all voters, the sunset does not affect his party one way or another. He stated that he would support whatever process would be easiest for voters to participate in elections.

Mr. Frank Fluckiger, State Chairman, Utah Constitution Party, spoke in favor of allowing the statute to sunset.

5. Other Items / Adjourn

Chair Knudson referred to, "Letter to Legislative Management Committee Re: 2007 Study Items for the Government Operations Interim Committee," which was distributed prior to the meeting. He explained that the Committee needed to inform legislative management what it would study during the 2007 interim. He asked committee members to prioritize the issues on "2007 Potential Study Items," which was distributed in the mailing packet, and return it to the chairs or staff.

MOTION: Rep. Hansen moved to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously with Rep. Donnelson and Rep. Hendrickson absent for the vote.

Chair Knudson adjourned the meeting at 11:02 a.m.