

FISCAL COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL COURT

MINUTES

December 11, 2020

The Fiscal Committee of the General Court met on Friday, December 11, 2020 at 10:00 a.m. via audio conference.

Members in attendance were as follows:

Representative Ken Weyler, Chairman
Representative Lynne Ober
Representative Peter Leishman
Representative Tracy Emerick
Representative Karen Umberger
Senator Gary Daniels
Senator Jeb Bradley (Alternate)
Senator Erin Hennessey (Alternate)
Senator Cindy Rosenwald
Senator Lou D'Allesandro

The audio conference convened at 10:01 a.m., with the assistance of Michael Kane, Legislative Budget Assistant.

OFFICIAL AUDIO CONFERENCE MEETING PROCEDURES:

The Chair opened the meeting with the following Right-to-Know checklist;

“As Chair of the Fiscal Committee, I find that due to the State of Emergency declared by the Governor as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic, and in accordance with the Governor's Emergency Order #12, pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04 as extended, this public body is authorized to meet electronically. Please note that there is no physical location to observe and listen contemporaneously to this meeting, which was authorized pursuant to the Governor's Emergency Order.”

“However, in accordance with the Emergency Order, I have confirmed that we are; A) providing public access to the meeting by telephone, with additional access possibility by video or other electronic means. Through VAST Conference meeting, all Members of the Committee and the staff of State Agencies with agenda items have the ability to communicate contemporaneously during this meeting through this platform and the public has access to contemporaneously listen and, if necessary, participate in this meeting by dialing the following number: 1-800-356-8278 and the six digit conference code 125563 followed by the pound (#) sign.”

“B) Providing public notice of the necessary information for accessing the meeting. We previously gave notice to the public of the necessary information for accessing the meeting. The instructions have been provided in the House and Senate Calendar, the Fiscal Committee agenda, and the website of the Office of the Legislative Budget Assistant.”

“C) Providing a mechanism for the public to alert the public body during the meeting if there are problems with access. If anyone has a problem, please e-mail LBA_Fiscal@leg.state.nh.us.”

“D) Adjourning the meeting if the public is unable to access the meeting. If the public is unable to access the meeting, the meeting will be adjourned and rescheduled. Please note that all votes taken during this meeting shall be done by roll call vote”

At the request of Representative Ober, due to audio problems, the Committee recessed at 10:12 a.m., and reconvened at 10:31 a.m.

ATTENDANCE ROLL CALL:

The Chair called the meeting to order and asked Representative Umberger to call the Roll.

Requesting that Members acknowledge their presence and state their location, Representative Umberger called the Roll of voting members.

Representative Weyler – Present/in Kingston, alone in room
Representative Ober – Present/in Hudson, her husband is in the home
Representative Umberger – Present/at home in Kearsarge
Representative Leishman – Present/ at home in Peterborough, alone
Representative Emerick – Present/at home in Hampton, alone
Senator Daniels – Present/in his home office in Milford, alone in the room
Senator Bradley (Alternate for Senator Morse) – Present/at his condo with his wife
Karen
Senator Hennessey (Alternate for Senator Giuda) – Present/at home in
Littleton and her children are in and out of the room
Senator Rosenwald – Present/at home in Nashua, alone in the room
Senator D’Allesandro – Present/at home in Manchester, alone

ORGANIZATION OF COMMITTEE:

On a motion by Senator Bradley, seconded by Representative Emerick, that Senator Daniels be nominated as Vice Chairman of the Fiscal Committee.

A roll call was taken, and the results were as follows:

Representative Ober – Yes
Representative Leishman – Yes
Representative Emerick – Yes
Representative Umberger – Yes
Senator Daniels – Yes

Senator Bradley (Alternate) – Yes
Senator Hennessey (Alternate) – Yes
Senator Rosenwald – Yes
Senator D’Allesandro – Yes
Representative Weyler – Yes (10-Yes; 0-No)
MOTION ADOPTED.

By unanimous vote Senator Daniels was duly elected Vice Chairman of the Fiscal Committee.

On a motion by Representative Leishman, seconded by Senator Hennessey, that Representative Umberger be nominated as Clerk of the Fiscal Committee.

A roll call was taken, and the results were as follows:

Representative Ober – Yes
Representative Leishman – Yes
Representative Emerick – Yes
Representative Umberger – Yes
Senator Daniels – Yes
Senator Bradley (Alternate) – Yes
Senator Hennessey (Alternate) – Yes
Senator Rosenwald – Yes
Senator D’Allesandro – Yes
Representative Weyler – Yes (10-Yes; 0-No)
MOTION ADOPTED.

By unanimous vote Representative Umberger was duly elected Clerk of the Fiscal Committee.

RSA 14:30 APPOINTMENT AND COMPENSATION OF LEGISLATIVE BUDGET ASSISTANT:

On a motion by Representative Ober, seconded by Senator D’Allesandro, that Michael Kane be appointed as the Legislative Budget Assistant, pursuant to the provisions of RSA 14:30, for a two-year term.

A roll call was taken, and the results were as follows:

Representative Ober – Yes
Representative Leishman – Yes
Representative Emerick – Yes
Representative Umberger – Yes
Senator Daniels – Yes
Senator Bradley (Alternate) – Yes

Senator Hennessey (Alternate) – Yes
Senator Rosenwald – Yes
Senator D’Allesandro – Yes
Representative Weyler – Yes (10-Yes; 0-No)
MOTION ADOPTED.

ADOPTION OF FISCAL COMMITTEE RULES AND PROCEDURES:

Michael Kane, Legislative Budget Assistant, outlined the rules and procedures as they relate to Committee actions.

On a motion by Representative Ober, seconded by Senator D’Allesandro, that the Committee adopt the Fiscal Committee rules and procedures consistent with past practices as outlined in Attachment A, which will be attached to the minutes as part of the official record.

A roll call was taken, and the results were as follows:

Representative Ober – Yes
Representative Leishman – Yes
Representative Emerick – Yes
Representative Umberger – Yes
Senator Daniels – Yes
Senator Bradley (Alternate) – Yes
Senator Hennessey (Alternate) – Yes
Senator Rosenwald – Yes
Senator D’Allesandro – Yes
Representative Weyler – Yes (10-Yes; 0-No)
MOTION ADOPTED.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES:

On a motion by Senator D’Allesandro, seconded by Senator Rosenwald, that the minutes of the November 20, 2020 meeting be accepted as written.

A roll call was taken, and the results were as follows:

Representative Ober – Yes
Representative Leishman – Yes
Representative Emerick – Abstained
Representative Umberger – Abstained
Senator Daniels – Abstained
Senator Bradley (Alternate) – Abstained
Senator Hennessey (Alternate) – Yes

Senator Rosenwald – Yes
Senator D’Allesandro – Yes
Representative Weyler – Yes (6-Yes; 4-Abstained)
MOTION ADOPTED.

RSA 14:30-a, VI FISCAL COMMITTEE APPROVAL REQUIRED FOR ACCEPTANCE AND EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS OVER \$100,000 FROM ANY NON-STATE SOURCE AND RSA 124:15 POSITIONS AUTHORIZED:

CONSENT CALENDAR

FIS 20-256 Department of Education – On a motion by Senator Hennessey, seconded by Senator Bradley, that the Committee approve the request of the Department of Education seeking authorization through June 30, 2021 to; 1) accept and expend \$10,114,548 in federal grant funds, and 2) establish two (2) full time temporary positions consisting of; a Program Specialist III (LG 23) and an Administrator I (LG 27).

Frank Edelblut, Commissioner, Department of Education responded to questions of the Committee.

The Committee requested the Department provide their published policy brief on the federal grant, address how local school district budgets would be affected, and further provide the Departments thoughts for providing equitable funding for all public school students.

A roll call was taken, and the results were as follows:

Representative Ober – Yes
Representative Leishman – No
Representative Emerick – Yes
Representative Umberger – Yes
Senator Daniels – Yes
Senator Bradley (Alternate) – Yes
Senator Hennessey (Alternate) – Yes
Senator Rosenwald – No
Senator D’Allesandro – No
Representative Weyler – Yes (7-Yes; 3-No)
MOTION ADOPTED.

MISCELLANEOUS:

Office of Legislative Budget Assistant – Michael Kane, Legislative Budget Assistant, respectfully requested the Committee accept, place on file, and release the Fiscal Year 2020 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for the State of New Hampshire, and the Turnpike, Liquor, and Lottery Annual Reports when they become available.

On a motion by Representative Umberger, seconded by Senator D'Allesandro, that the Committee accept the reports, place on file, and release in the usual manner.

A roll call was taken, and the results were as follows:

Representative Ober – Yes
Representative Leishman – Yes
Representative Emerick – Yes
Representative Umberger – Yes
Senator Daniels – Yes
Senator Bradley (Alternate) – Yes
Senator Hennessey (Alternate) – Yes
Senator Rosenwald – Yes
Senator D'Allesandro – Yes
Representative Weyler – Yes (10-Yes; 0-No)
MOTION ADOPTED.

FOR THE RECORD – THE PASSING OF HOUSE SPEAKER RICHARD “DICK” HINCH:

REP. LEISHMAN: “Now I had the pleasure of getting to know Dick Hinch back in 2018. Several of us, including Senator Daniels, were appointed to the Regulatory Reform Steering Committee by the Governor and I could tell you that I guess I was the lone Democrat on the Committee, but Dick Hinch made everyone feel welcome. We worked on legislation that we all got behind. I believe even Senator Bradley signed onto our bill at the time. But Dick Hinch was just a super, super gentleman in my mind and a super legislator. He knew how to bring people together.”

“And a more personal story. When my son passed away, I looked up at the memorial service and there was Dick Hinch. And he came over and gave me this huge bear hug, and I'll never forget him for that. So I just wanted to say we've lost such a terrific colleague and the House is worst for it.”

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: “I agree. And the fact he was unanimously elected, both in the caucus and in the House, was testament to his personality that we all recognized as being a very open and very charming person, and it's a terrible loss to the state. Anyone else?”

SEN. D'ALLESANDRO: “Well said by Representative Leishman. Well said by Kenny Weyler. Yeah. Any time -- any time you lose someone it's -- it's problematic. It's a real tragedy. But Speaker Hinch's situation eight days as Speaker of the House of Representatives, just a great tragedy, and our sincerest condolences to his family.”

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: "Very good."

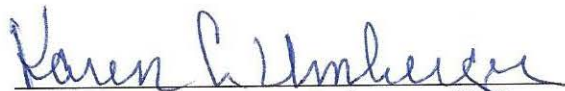
REP. OBER: "Mr. Chairman, the minutes perhaps should provide that every member of Fiscal is in agreement with the remarks that have been said."

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: "Thank you very much. I think that's appropriate to go in the minutes."

DATE OF NEXT MEETING AND ADJOURNMENT:

The Chair scheduled the next regular meeting of the Fiscal Committee for Friday, January 15, 2021 at 10:00 a.m.

On a motion by Senator D'Allesandro, seconded by Senator Hennessey, that the meeting adjourn, whereupon the Committee adjourned by consensus at 11:15 a.m.


Representative Karen Umberger, Clerk