

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF  
HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE ON ELECTED OFFICIALS  
MONTANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

January 14, 1977  
8:00 a.m.  
Room 428A  
State Capitol Building

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Lynch, with all members present except Senator Lockrem who was excused. The subject of the hearing at this meeting was the Office of the Governor.

Mr. Gosnell explained that the LFA recommended budget is \$36,000 less than the Executive Budget and 1 FTE (a budget analyst) less than the Executive. He found that the budget analyst is not necessary if the workload remains at the current level.

Michael Billings, Director of the Office of the Budget and Program Planning, reported that they are carrying on the HB 643 type functions of last legislature with the current staff level. They have added research and data processing positions in place of other positions. The functions of the Office are divided along budget and planning lines with a special research function. They have also developed on executive planning process and have analysts doing some work. Mr. Billings has collective bargaining task force responsibilities which takes a great deal of time in determining policy for collective bargaining.

In response to Chairman Lynch's comment that the Lt. Governor is losing the duties related to energy, the Deputy Director for Budget David Lewis explained that the Energy Research and Conservation Office which is headed by Bill Christiansen will serve as staff to Lt. Governor Schwinden. He added that there are no staff increases in the combination of the two offices.

The Executive Assistant to the Governor Keith Cobol reported that the duties of Lt. Governor Schwinden have been expanded by the Governor even though the energy issues have been transferred to Christiansen. The responsibilities of the natural resource agencies will come under the Lt. Governor.

Senator Regan asked if there are any new programs which are funded by federal funds that are coming into the Office of the Governor that the Committee is not aware of. The answer was the Powder River project which is included in the Lt. Governor's budget and "self-destructs" after fiscal year '78.

Chairman Lynch commended Mr. Billings for presenting disagreements to the budget recommended by the Fiscal Analyst as this gives the committee members something for comparison.

Mr. Billings discussed a study that is in progress now with the purpose of getting to the taxpayers through interviews asking about feelings along the lines of economic development, labor, etc. This would give

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the government some input from the taxpayers and an indication of the direction they want the State to take. They have contracted with Montana State University to conduct a survey, and Mr. Billings should receive a report of their findings shortly.

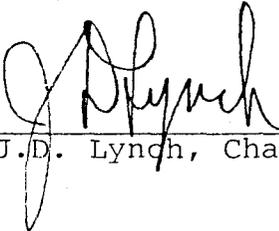
Mr. Billings said that there is alot of merit to having the payroll functions all under one office, but that something could be worked out if it is put under the Auditor's office.

The discussion on the overall zero-based budget (HB 86) will be held at a later meeting. Mr. Billings indicated additional people may be required if it is passed.

Mr. Lewis said that Lt. Governor Schwinden's office has requested \$27,900 a year for a Citizen's Advisory Council on energy matters. Mr. Cobol explained that the Governor issued an Executive Order establishing this committee of 60 members but that it has functioned without any funding, travel money or meeting expenses for the year. If there is to be an energy council, it must be funded.

The hearing for the State Auditor's office will be cancelled today as Mr. Omholt is ill. This will be rescheduled early next week.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 a.m. The next meeting will be held at 8:00 a.m. Monday, January 17, 1977.



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J.D. Lynch, Chairman

jlm