

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

January 17, 1977
8:00 a.m.
Room 428A
State Capitol Building

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Lynch with all members present, except Representative Gunderson who was excused. The subject of the hearing: Military Affairs.

Fiscal Analyst explained his recommendation is \$155,000 over the Executive Budget with about \$100,000 per year included for maintenance and operations throughout the State.

Brigadier General Harry W. Thode, Assistant Adjutant General of the Montana Army National Guard distributed an information packet to the committee members and then explained the operation of the national guard, which has both federal and state missions. It is the only military organization which is available to the Governor in times of emergencies. The Army National Guard is located in 23 communities in the State and the Air National Guard is located in Great Falls.

The biggest costs to the National Guard are salaries, utilities, repairs and operations. Repair of facilities is being done almost only on an emergency basis.

The funding for the firefighter operations was not in the budget two years ago, but was under a separate bill. Prior to that time the firefighters were funded by the federal government. General Thode indicated that the most equitable approach now may be to go into a contract arrangement with the city. Firemen are only in Great Falls now. The question is are the firefighters more of an advantage to the State of the city. In Billings the city bought all the firefighting and snow removing equipment from the military. The staff of 15 at the airport keeps a crew on for 24 hours a day at the Great Falls airport. Firefighting services must be available any time an airplane is landing, requiring probably two per shift. Mr. Gosnell reported that in a survey during a period between 1973 and 1975 there were 80,000 departures at the Great Falls airport, 15,000 of these were military.

Senator Regan expressed her feelings that the State should not have the responsibility for either the security guards or the firemen, but a pro-rata cost for each landing should be changed instead.

Mr. Ed Eaton of the Budget Office has no quarrel with the LFA's recommended budget, however, expressed concern over the complex

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relationship which develops when contracting with the city. Both city and State derive some benefit from the services of the firemen at the airport. He suggested that the Airport Manager discuss the benefits with the committee and how the appropriations break down as he sees it. He said that budget amendments can be made only if there is money available.

General Thode discussed the situation with the security guards. Based on that experience, he seemed to feel that the contract with the city for services of firemen would be the best way to go.

Senator Regan stated that the services of the National Guard to the State during times of emergencies are not given free, but the State must pay for it in addition to supporting it. She used the example of the Guard being called to Warm Springs during the strike in November 1976 and the State received a bill of \$45,800 and transferred \$17,000 to the National Guard from the emergency fund.

General Thode explained that under a provision of the law the expenses incurred and related to State emergencies must be paid out of the general fund.

The armories are the responsibility of the States. They are funded 25% by the State and 75% by the federal government and built on State land. They become property of the State once completed.

The recommendation of decreasing the FTE staff by one "multilith operator" would leave the Office short handed as this man does many other administrative duties besides operating the multilith machine.

National Guard expansion to the Shelby area was explained. The Guard is looking at setting up an organization that would be one-half in Shelby and one-half in Havre and servicing both areas. There is a Civic Center building that could be used but it would require about \$15,000 to put the building in shape.

There being no further comments or questions, this hearing was closed. The Committee then took actions on other budgets as follows.

Legislative Council: After a short discussion, Senator Regan made a motion that we approve the Legislative Council's budget without those two employees we were going to transfer in from the Code and subject to our probably adding in the Western Task Force when we find out what it will cost. The motion was passed unanimously.

Consumer Council: Senator Lockrem expressed difficulties justifying another attorney. Chairman Lynch pointed out that both budget officers fully agree that this is a justified item and that should be kept in mind in evaluating this. Mr. Gosnell said that while there was some confusion as to the FTE situation, the total increase requested is 6%.

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It was felt that money would actually be saved by having a staff attorney than calling in expert witnesses or contracting for services. \$15,000 for an attorney is not unreasonable since they do not stay with the State if they are not paid professional wages. Senator Regan asked if we could send them a letter from the committee saying the committee would be watching to see if the services of the attorney are needed. Expert witnesses were considered under operating costs before and the funds for that expense would be decreased and used for paying an attorney on the staff. Chairman Lynch moved that the Consumer Council budget be approved as is. The motion was passed unanimously.

Legislative Auditor: Senator Regan expressed concern that two agencies would be set up to do the same thing. Senator Lockrem had information from Mr. Gosnell showing the total budget of audits at 9 million dollars, against 1.9 billion under the executive budget. Of the 30 FTEs requested in overall increases, 24 are for the legislative audit, which would strengthen the legislative branch since there are not annual sessions at the present time. Senator Regan said the legislative branch is going to show the greatest growth rate because they are getting a better grip of government. Mr. Gosnell said that as long agencies are not doing audits on the same subjects or problems, it could be effective. Senator Lockrem moved to approve the Legislative Auditor's budget as presented. The motion was passed unanimously.

Workers' Compensation Judge: Action will be held up until Mr. Gosnell gets more figures.

Environmental Quality Council: Action pending until the committee members have more information in the next day or two.

Commissioner on Campaign Finances and Practices: There are still issues and bills to be decided. Senator Regan discussed a bill which was introduced to remove the school trustees from this Commission. Sixty percent of John Hanson's work is school officials. Senator Lockrem had talked with Mr. Hanson about this and asked if this would reduce his workload by 60%; it would not because they still would have to be prepared for State elections every two years. Chairman Lynch felt that Mr. Hanson felt that the full intent of the bill passed by the legislature two years ago was not being accomplished with the size of his staff now and there is a need for additional FTEs. Chairman Lynch recommended to pass consideration of this budget for the day pending outcome of certain legislation.

Secretary of State: Chairman Lynch suggested entertaining a motion to pass the Secretary of State's budget with one more FTE and then go back and do the whole recodification subject separate from this. Mr. Gosnell recommended that Representative Scully be invited back to the

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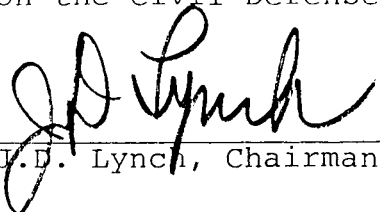
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Committee. HB 77 is doing what everybody seems to be saying we should not do, automate the system. Mr. Gosnell would like to find out what the mag card system would cost and how many FTEs they need. Senator Lockrem felt that this appropriations bill would be a late one that they would be sitting on. The request for one more FTE is justified. Senator Lockrem moved that the committee accept the Secretary of State's budget given the additional FTE for their Office and exclusive completely of the Administrative Code question. The motion was passed unanimously.

Office of the Governor: After a brief discussion of the budget requests for this office, it was felt that more information was needed. Mr. Gosnell said the Executive Budget wants to fund the Citizens Advisory Committee. Senator Regan commented that once created, the committee won't cost much this year, but it probably will in two bienniums. Senator Lockrem moved that we pass this one for the day until we find out more of what is going on with the Governor's budget. The motion was passed unanimously.

Military Affairs: Chairman Lynch favored the idea of pro-rating firemen, but felt there would be a fight on the floor about this issue. He said that paying 2/3 of the expenses and using 15-20% of the services is a question of abusing taxpayers money. There is a problem because the military paid for this before, but he truly questioned the principal of this. Representative Wood asked if the airport did not have the adequate fire department would the Guard have to provide their own; the answer was that they would probably be required to have adequate protection. Representative Wood then asked if it would be worthwhile to try to change if there would be problems with the city? Mr. Gosnell responded that the Guard does the snow removal, cleaning of the runway and the general maintenance. He felt that the pro-rating method would be about a \$60,000 savings to the State; this method is used generally throughout the country. Senator Regan moved that the committee accept the Military Affairs budget as recommended by the LFA with the idea that we up the maintenance and pay on the Great Falls Air Base use and the firemen become the responsibility of the Great Falls airport. The motion was passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 a.m. The next meeting will be tomorrow morning (8:00 a.m.) for hearing on the Civil Defense and State Auditor's budgets.


J.D. Lynch, Chairman

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