

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE ADMINISTRATION
MONTANA STATE LEGISLATURE

February 7, 1985

The meeting of the Legislative Administration Committee was called to order by Chairman Menahan at 3:20 p.m., Thursday, February 7, in Room 437 of the State Capitol Building.

ROLL CALL: Members present were Menahan, Keyser, Brown, Donaldson, and Zabrocki. Others present were Reps. Bob Marks, Gerry Driscoll, and Dave Brown, and Barbara Buda, Chuckie Cramer, and Ed Smith.

Chairman Menahan explained that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss having packets of bills for each day delivered to the House members.

In response to a question on personnel and cost, Barbara Buda expressed her opinion that because of the workload, her office would not be able to handle the change. She indicated that if she were to do it, they would first require a large room where all the colored bills could be stored. Bills would have to be held until the day they were on the agenda--otherwise they would be reprinting bills. The agenda would have to be set by a certain time, and it would then take about four people 3-6 hours to put the packets together, at a cost of \$60-120 a night. A printer would have to be on hand at a cost of \$29-57 per night. In the case of an addendum to the agenda, she was not sure what would be done.

In response to why the House can't have packets when the Senate does, Ed Smith indicated that the problem was numbers, both members and volume of bills. He added that he could not personally recommend that the House distribute packets.

Further discussion centered around some members wanting bills only on second reading and others wanting them for first and third reading also. Chuckie Cramer reminded the Committee that members had a choice at the beginning of the session as to when they wanted to receive bills. She also indicated that because of the volume of bills in addition to status, journal, agenda, and fiscal notes, there would not be room in Bills Distribution to store bills until they come up. In addition, all the bills for committee members come from Bills Distribution. She indicated they would not have the personnel or storage space to pull daily packets.

Dave Brown said he did not understand why during the last two sessions he received bills in addition to first, second and third reading copies, and he received the agenda the night before so there was time to review the bills before session. He indicated that in the Senate one person distributes all the packets in about an hour.

Rep. Driscoll indicated that last session members had a choice of receiving a packet or receiving the bills on the desk. He said 40 members received second reading only and waived the 24-hour rule.

Chuckie Cramer said that at the beginning of the session her office handed out packets as a favor, but when others found out she received 40-50 requests for daily agenda packets. At that point she asked for a policy, and was told there would be no daily agenda packets. She said the only people who did not accept that were Reps. Driscoll and Brown and indicated that she would be willing to put on an extra page for them rather than going to extra printing or hours unless everyone wants it. She added that she could not do both and that in mid-session they are not set up to make 100 daily agenda packets for each day. Rep. D. Brown noted that leadership do get packets each day.

Rep. Marks indicated that he thought packets were convenient and would like to see if it could be done, but he saw a problem when exceptions were made. He indicated that the bills were not coming out as soon as they have in the past, and that it is confusing to receive bills during session. He indicated he would like to try packets, and if problems occurred they could take another look.

Ed Smith responded that bills have to be up the night before to be on the desks, and if a bill is not in Bills Distribution by 5:00 or 6:00, it is not put on the agenda. He added that the Senate does many reprints at great expense. Barbara Buda confirmed that point.

Discussion then turned to who would file bills for the members and if expense would be balanced by convenience for the legislators.

Chuckie Cramer said that the issue was that everyone should be treated the same. Otherwise there is too much confusion.

In response to questions by Rep. Marks, Chuckie Cramer indicated that what would be done is that only agenda items would be passed out. Dave Brown said that what he wanted was to receive only the new bills that are on the agenda for a day, and bills that are not considered that day he would be responsible for holding until they are considered. Those bills would not be distributed again. Driscoll agreed that that was what he wanted also, and added that only second reading bills should be distributed since most people don't want first or third reading. Chuckie Cramer responded that it is difficult to do it one way for some and another way for others.

Discussion followed on why there were problems this session. Chuckie Cramer indicated that before the people who got packets were an exception. Other problems cited were not enough pages to file bills, and the earlier starting times which allows less time for legislators to review bills. In response to a comment that last session printers

printed on overtime, Barbara Buda stated that they are printing 16 hours a day now and that by 4:30 they have almost every bill printed. She said the system now is better and faster than last session.


Rep. Marks suggested that an attempt be made to give everyone second reading bills minus what was on from the day before. Chuckie Cramer replied that there would be no problem if bills were coming up the next day, but if they were held longer it would be a problem. Rep. Marks asked if bills could be stored downstairs. Barbara Buda replied that it was possible, but she was not sure how much that would involve.

Rep. Marks recommended that the Committee ask Barbara Buda, Chuckie Cramer, and the Speaker or Ed Smith to work together to come up with a way to accomplish the goal and that they submit a proposal to the Committee, including costs involved. Everyone would be given the same thing. The problem with waiving the 24-hour rule was also discussed.

The Committee agreed to accept Rep. Marks' recommendation, and to meet again on Monday, February 11, to consider proposals.

Rep. D. Brown added that another problem was getting enough copies of bills for constituents and others. Chuckie Cramer responded that those requests are low priority. Barbara Buda indicated that there was a quick turn-around time on reprinting, so this should not be a large problem. Chuckie Cramer added that she needs to have defined a priority list.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:02 p.m.



CHAIRMAN WILLIAM "RED" MENAHAN

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT

February 11

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MR. SPEAKER,

We your committee on Legislative Administration and Bills and Journal recommend that the following employees be hired for the Forty-Ninth Legislature:

Pages for the Week of February 11 - February 16, 1985

Darci Pelton

Julie Geren

Joey Roberts

Kimberly Geisse

Anne Arvish

Nanette Dowling

Cheri Andriolo

W. Red Menahan

William "Red" Menahan

Chairman.