

Approved March 19, 1990
Date

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The meeting was called to order by REPRESENTATIVE ROBERT D. MILLER at
Chairperson

2:25 a.m./p.m. on MARCH 14, 1990 in room 521-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Representative Samuelson, excused

Representative Russell, excused

Representative Gomez, excused

Committee staff present:

Mike Heim, Legislative Research Dept.

Theresa Kiernan, Revisor of Statutes' Office

Connie Smith, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Mrs. Ruth Price, representing Reading Fire Benefit District

Senator Marge Petty

The Chairman called the Committee's attention to HB 3077, concerning counties; relating to planning and zoning. The Chairman said the chair's intent is to amend HB 3077 from a 15 person board to a 20 person board which coincides with HB 3058. Vice-chairman Brown made the above motion; seconded by Representative Johnson. Discussion followed. Motion carried.

Vice-chairman Brown moved to pass HB 3077 favorably as amended; seconded by Representative Johnson. Motion carried.

Chairman Miller called the Committee's attention to SB 649.

SB 649 - Act concerning fire protection; relating to the issuance of bonds and no-fund warrants.

Theresa Kiernan, staff, gave an overview of SB 649. Committee asked questions of staff.

Vice-chairman Brown stated that Senator Karr was not present, who had requested the bill for several persons from the Reading Fire Benefit District.

Vice-chairman Brown recognized Mrs. Ruth Price, representing Reading Fire Benefit District, testified in support and submitted written testimony. (Attachment I) Mrs. Price had testified before the Tax Board of Appeals and had asked for a no-fund warrant for \$20,000.00 under emergency clause, KSA 31-301, which was granted. Mrs. Price stated she needs continued legislation in order to have any bond indebtedness to build a building for the rest of their fire equipment. Discussion followed.

Vice-chairman Brown closed the hearings on SB 649.

Vice-chairman Brown turned the Committee's attention to SB 479.

SB 479 - Act concerning public building commissions; relating to the issuance of revenue bonds.

Vice-chairman Brown asked staff to explain the bill. SB 479 makes technical changes to statutes dealing with public building commissions. Discussion followed. There were no proponents or opponents.

Representative Graeber moved to pass SB 479 favorably and put on the consent calendar; seconded by Representative Mollenkamp. Discussion followed.

Representative Patrick stated there should be some sort of consistency

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT,

room 521-S, Statehouse, at 2:25 a./p.m. on MARCH 14, 1990

in the percentages for a protest petition. Representative Patrick offered a substitute motion to amend by changing 10% to 5%; seconded by Representative Williams. Motion carried. Discussion followed.

Representative Graeber moved to pass SB 479 favorably as amended; seconded by Representative Mollenkamp. Motion carried.

Vice-chairman Brown turned the Committee's attention to SB 579.

SB 579 - Act concerning cities and counties; relating to the issuance of revenue bonds.

Vice-chairman Brown recognized Senator Petty, a sponsor of SB 579. Senator Petty stated the bill was placed on the consent calendar in the Senate. It clarifies that cities and counties shall have a priority lien in such facilities as long as the bonds remain outstanding. Discussion followed.

Vice-chairman Brown closed the hearing on SB 579.

Vice-chairman Brown called the Committee's attention to SB 566.

SB 566 - Act concerning sheriffs; relating to certain fees.

Vice-chairman Brown stated that Senator Johnston is a sponsor of SB 566. Vice-chairman Brown asked Mike Heim, staff, to explain the bill. Staff stated it gives an increase in the mileage rate for sheriffs for doing certain things. Discussion followed.

There were no proponents or opponents for the bill. Vice-chairman Brown closed the hearing on SB 566.

Meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE ON MARCH 14, 1990
by:

Ruth Price, representing the Reading Fire Benefit District

We were formed around KSA 31-301 with limited authority. On the advice of Lyon County Attorney Phil Winter and Senator Jerry Karr we are attempting to have legislation passed to provide us authority to buy equipment and acquire land.

The Fire District is the sole provider of fire protection for 115 sections of land or 64,000 acres located in Lyon and Osage Counties. The District is manned by volunteer firemen overseen by a salaried fire chief and a two member board. The majority of the aforementioned land is grass/pasture which historically and agriculturally is burned regularly each spring. The District borders the city of Emporia on the east, and therefore many small acreage homesites are also interspersed as the Fire District's responsibility. The equipment currently owned by the Fire District is as follows:

1959 model truck with a 750 gallon water tank which has deteriorated and can no longer reliably hold water for any extended road distance.

1982 3/4 ton, Four by Four with a pumping unit.

The District currently generates \$5,513.00 funding; obviously insufficient funds for any capital outlay, such as equipment. The mill levy was frozen, as we understood it, when planning the 1989 budget. There is no current indebtedness owed by the Fire District. Given the magnitude of the area, the Board feels it an impossible task to assure its patrons of even minimum protection from fire without investing in more effective and efficient equipment. The Board is also concerned with maintenance and upkeep of any newly purchased equipment and therefore propose to replace the city-owned cinderblock building which presently houses fire equipment with a metal building large enough to permit centralization of all equipment, personnel and headquarters.

Lastly, the District, by updating its fire protection capacity, feels certain that there will be an additional benefit to the patrons living within the area by reflecting a decrease in homeowners insurance/ fire protection rates.

As stated previously, the District currently generates \$5,513.00 as a result of its one mill levy, and this is not sufficient for the purchase of equipment. This past summer, our local telephone company replaced archaic equipment in our area which increased our fire phone costs threefold; \$86.40 per month in 1989 to \$268.66 per month in 1990 with a decrease in services offered prior to 1990. The Fire District has housed its equipment in whatever building was available prior to this time; it seems practical at this time, with the addition of another truck, to construct a metal building which would adequately provide shelter and repair space for all of our equipment. This present housing site has no room for expansion and will not house any more equipment. Should we have the number of fires and the wind that we experienced in 1989, it has become obvious that we cannot continue to operate

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3-14-90
Attach I

Testimony of Ruth Price-March 14, 1990

Page 2

adequately to assure even minimum protection for those living within our area. The addition of a fire chief with a salary of approximately \$600 plus the fee paid our volunteers demands a great percentage of our budgetary obligations.

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3-14-90
I-2