

Approved: 2-25-98
Date

MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON FEDERAL AND STATE AFFAIRS

The meeting was called to order by Senator Lana Oleen at 11:15 a.m. on February 23, 1998, in Room 254-E of the Capitol.

All members were present.

Committee staff present: Mary Galligan, Legislative Research Department
Robin Kempf, Legislative Research Department
Theresa Kiernan, Revisor of Statutes
Midge Donohue, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Maj. General James F. Rueger, Adjutant General
Colonel Russell C. Axtell, Jr., Kansas Air National Guard

Others attending: See attached list

Senator Oleen announced that today the committee was scheduled to consider the confirmation of Colonel Russell C. Axtell for appointment to the rank of Brigadier General in the Kansas Air National Guard. She called attention to information provided on the nominee and noted the confirmation process extended to the federal level.

The chair recognized Maj. General Rueger, Adjutant General for the State of Kansas. General Rueger told the committee it was an honor for him to be able to introduce Colonel Axtell. General Rueger said he has known Colonel Axtell for some time and decided to recommend appointment of Axtell to command the 184th Fighter Group. General Rueger complimented Colonel Axtell on his performance and remarked that he had a great amount of emotional intelligence which was an asset in working with people and getting the best out of them.

Colonel Axtell summarized the written information he had provided to the committee (Attachment #1), emphasizing his military background and telling the committee his entire military career has been with the Kansas Air National Guard.

Noting the important role the Guard plays in the state, a committee member asked Colonel Axtell what he considered to be the two major challenges of the position for which he is being considered. Colonel Axtell replied that downsizing or conversion of the entire military across the nation will be a major challenge. He said this may result in moving more military personnel into the Guard and Reserve units which would task them more. He spoke of staying current with new missions, such as becoming involved in the space program, and accepting new missions within the Guard for the good of the state in remaining viable in the future.

Senator Vidricksen asked Colonel Axtell to tell the committee about STARBASE, a military-sponsored youth program.

Colonel Axtell explained that STARBASE is a program the Guard has chosen to respond to a formal community mission. He said STARBASE started at the federal level in Michigan and evolved throughout the various states. Colonel Axtell told the committee the Kansas Air National Guard volunteered and became active in the program six years ago and now has one of the largest academies in the nation, with one in Topeka, one in Wichita, and a third soon to be started in Salina. He said the purpose of the program is to interest children in math and science by having them go to the base where there are volunteer instructors who are military personnel. He explained that the military personnel provide a role model and give the youngsters a chance to see math and science at work today. Colonel Axtell went on to say the program is something the Guard is very excited about and wants to expand to the rest of the state. To date, he said 30,000 kids had been exposed to the program in Kansas; 6,000 having had direct exposure through the classroom and the

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON FEDERAL AND STATE AFFAIRS, Room 254-E, Statehouse, at 11:15 a.m. on February 23, 1998.

remainder receiving exposure through teacher academies with the teachers taking the program back to their classrooms. Colonel Axtell advised that the program has four paid staff positions, two in Salina and two in Topeka, and the remainder are volunteers although they hope to hire two more instructors. He also indicated that future plans include a tracking system to do follow-up of student participants in future years.

It was noted that STARBASE is not well known and, at the request of the chair, Colonel Axtell agreed to provide an informational sheet on the program which is aimed at fifth and sixth graders who are at risk.

Responding to a question from a committee member, Colonel Axtell said his confirmation would result in his early retirement as a full-time technician. He stated he would become a "pure guardsman" militarily and be assigned to Topeka. Colonel Axtell indicated he plans to continue to reside in Wichita and commute to Topeka.

Senator Gooch, saying that the last information he had indicated there were no African American pilots in the Kansas Air Guard, asked Colonel Axtell what plans were in place to change that situation. Colonel Axtell replied that the Guard had tried hard but had not been successful in this regard. He said example and leadership would play a role in this effort, such as that provided by Colonel James Peterson, an African American navigator attached to the Wichita unit. Additionally, Colonel Axtell explained that an international Air Guard program, Diversity 2000, which will be looking at diversity across all Air Guard units with the hope of increasing African American membership. He told the committee the program has been accepted in Kansas and state headquarters has put together a committee to look at ways in which to increase diversity across the state with the hope it will be successful in coming up with good ideas on how to increase African American membership.

Senator Harrington moved to favorably recommend the confirmation of Colonel Axtell to the full Senate. Senator Gooch seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

Senator Oleen indicated she anticipated the full Senate would take action on the confirmation sometime this week.

The chair then recognized Senator Bleeker who introduced Matt Clarke and Jacob Maurer, 6th grade students from Great Bend who served as pages for the committee today.

Senator Oleen announced that Thursday and Friday the Senate Session would break at 11:00 a.m. and make it possible for subcommittee work at that time. She said the committee room and additional space would be available for the subcommittees to meet. Senator Oleen indicated there would be two subcommittees appointed, one chaired by the vice chair, Senator Harrington, and the other by the ranking minority member, Senator Jones. The chair advised that the two bills that would be assigned for subcommittee study are **SB 496**, relating to public records and bids and request for proposals, and **SB 322**, concerning licensure and regulation of private detectives and agencies. She asked the subcommittee chairs and committee members to let her know which bill they would like to work with to facilitate assignments.

Senator Oleen noted that there were a couple of bills in committee that had not been heard.

She directed attention to **SB 610**, concerning intoxicating liquors and beverages, and **SB 586**, relating to microbreweries, and indicated she would like action taken on the two bills. The chair said she would entertain a motion later in the week on **SB 564**, relating to the Kansas army and air national guard and the adjutant general.

Senator Becker moved for approval of the minutes of the February 19 meeting. Senator Harrington seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 11:55 a.m. The next meeting is scheduled for February 24, 1998.



Bill Graves,
Governor

STATE OF KANSAS
THE ADJUTANT GENERAL

2800 S.W. TOPEKA BLVD.
TOPEKA, KANSAS 66611-1287



Major General James F. Rueger
Adjutant General

MADAM CHAIRPERSON, MEMBERS OF THE FEDERAL AND STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE:

I AM RUSSELL C. AXTELL JR., AND I AM APPEARING BEFORE THIS COMMITTEE TO SEEK CONFIRMATION FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE RANK OF BRIGADIER GENERAL IN THE KANSAS AIR NATIONAL GUARD FOR MY ASSIGNMENT AS THE CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE KANSAS AIR NATIONAL GUARD.

MY ENTIRE MILITARY CAREER HAS BEEN WITH THE KANSAS AIR NATIONAL GUARD. I ENLISTED IN THE KANSAS AIR NATIONAL GUARD IN DECEMBER 1968. I ATTENDED PILOT TRAINING JULY 1969 THRU JULY 1970, F-100 TRAINING THE FALL OF 1970 AND F-105 TRAINING THE FALL OF 1971. IN MARCH 1973 I BECAME A FULL TIME EMPLOYEE OF THE KANSAS AIR NATIONAL GUARD AS AN INSTRUCTOR PILOT IN THE F-105. I SERVED IN VARIOUS CAPACITIES WITH THE 184TH FIGHTER GROUP INCLUDING SQUADRON SCHEDULER, SQUADRON OPERATIONS OFFICE, AND CHIEF OF ACADEMICS, CULMINATING AS DEPUTY COMMANDER OF RESOURCES. DURING THIS PERIOD I ALSO TRANSITIONED TO THE F-4D FIGHTER AIRCRAFT.

IN FEBRUARY 1986 I BECAME THE AIR NATIONAL ADVISOR FOR PLANS AND OPERATIONS TO THE COMMANDER OF WHAT IS NOW AIR COMBAT COMMAND, LANGLEY AFB, VA. FROM AUGUST 1987 TO MAY 1988 I ATTENDED INDUSTRIAL COLLEGE OF THE ARMED FORCES, A SENIOR SERVICE SCHOOL AT FT. MCNAIR, WASHINGTON DC. UPON GRADUATION I WAS ASSIGNED TO THE INFORMATION SERVICES DIVISION OF THE AIR NATIONAL GUARD SUPPORT CENTER IN WASHINGTON DC WHERE I WAS IN CHARGE OF LOCAL AREA NETWORK DEVELOPMENT, PROCUREMENT, AND INSTALLATION ACROSS THE AIR NATIONAL GUARD.

IN FEBRUARY 1990 I RETURNED TO KANSAS, ASSUMING COMMAND OF SMOKY HILL WEAPONS RANGE NEAR SALINA KANSAS. I ALSO RETURNED TO THE COCKPIT AS AN F-16 INSTRUCTOR PILOT. IN NOVEMBER OF 1993 I ASSUMED COMMAND OF THE 184TH FIGHTER GROUP. I COMMANDED THAT ORGANIZATION AS IT TRANSITIONED FROM THE LARGEST AIR NATIONAL GUARD UNIT IN THE UNITED STATES, FLYING F-16S, TO BECOME THE FIRST EVER HEAVY BOMBER UNIT IN THE AIR NATIONAL GUARD - THE 184TH BOMB WING WITH THEIR B-1B BOMBERS. I ASSUMED MY CURRENT POSITION OF CHIEF OF STAFF, KANSAS AIR NATIONAL GUARD IN JULY 1997. I WAS PROMOTED TO MY CURRENT GRADE OF COLONEL IN 1993.

Sen. Federal & State Affairs Comm.
Date: 2-23-98
Attachment: #1

I ATTENDED PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN WICHITA, KS, GRADUATING FROM SOUTHEAST HIGH SCHOOL. I GRADUATED FROM WICHITA STATE UNIVERSITY WITH A BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN AERONAUTICAL ENGINEERING.

I HAVE BEEN MARRIED TO THE FORMER JOLEEN TUTTLE, OF WICHITA, KS, FOR OVER 29 YEARS. WE HAVE TWO CHILDREN, ALECIA ANNETTE AND CHRISTOPHER ERIC, BOTH OF WHOM ARE MARRIED. ALECIA RESIDES IN HOUSTON, TX, WITH HER HUSBAND CHRIS HAVEN. ERIC RESIDES IN WICHITA, KS, WITH HIS WIFE CHRISTY. ERIC AND CHRISTY HAVE A DAUGHTER - OUR FIRST GRANDCHILD - TAYLOR NICHOLE.

I HAVE SERVED AS A MEMBER OF SEVERAL ORGANIZATIONS INCLUDING THE LIONS CLUB IN SALINA, KS AND THE EXCHANGE CLUB IN POQUOSON, VA. I AM CURRENTLY A MEMBER OF THE DERBY, KS ROTARY CLUB AND OF THE WAGONMASTERS OF WICHITA, KS. I HAVE SERVED ON VARIOUS BOARDS INCLUDING THE WICHITA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND THE QUIVERA COUNCIL BOY SCOUTS BOARD OF DIRECTORS. I AM CURRENTLY PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF STARBASE, A CIVILIAN/ NATIONAL GUARD YOUTH PROGRAM. I AM A PAST PRESIDENT OF THE KANSAS NATIONAL GUARD OFFICERS ASSOCIATION AND A CURRENT MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL GUARD OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES.

AS THE CHIEF OF STAFF FOR THE KANSAS AIR NATIONAL GUARD, I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR THE HEADQUARTERS FUNCTION OF THE KANSAS AIR NATIONAL GUARD AS THEY OVERSEE PROGRAMS AND PROVIDE OVERSIGHT FOR THE ENTIRE KANSAS AIR NATIONAL GUARD. I AM ALSO RESPONSIBLE FOR SPECIFIC ONGOING PROGRAMS IN THE KANSAS AIR NATIONAL GUARD SUCH A LONG RANG PLANNING, STRATEGIC PLANNING, AND KANSAS' STATE PARTNERSHIP FOR PEACE PROGRAM WITH THE UKRAINE.

THE KANSAS AIR NATIONAL GUARD CONSISTS OF APPROXIMATIELY 2400 PEOPLE OF WHICH OVER 900 ARE FULL TIME. THEY ARE ASSIGNED PRIMARLY TO THE TWO FLYING UNITS, THE 190TH ARW AT TOPEKA, KS AND THE 184TH BW AT WICHITA, KS.

I AM EXTREMELY PROUD TO HAVE SERVED IN THE KANSAS AIR NATIONAL GUARD THESE PAST 29 YEARS AND LOOK FORWARD TO CONTINUNING MY SERVICE TO THE STATE OF KANSAS AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA IN MY NEW ASSIGNMENT.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND SUPPORT.

RUSSELL C. AXTELL JR.
COLONEL, KANSAS AIR NATIONAL GUARD
CHIEF OF STAFF