

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Kenny Wilk at 9:00 a.m. on January 23, 2001 in Room 514-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except: Representative Spangler

Committee staff present: Alan Conroy, Legislative Research
Rae Anne Davis, Legislative Research
Jim Wilson, Revisor of Statutes
Mike Corrigan, Revisor of Statutes
Nikki Feuerborn, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee: Honorable Kay McFarland, Chief Justice, Kansas Supreme Court
Honorable Judge John White, Chief Judge of the 31st Judicial District, Iola
Jerry Sloan, Office of Judicial Administration
Kathy Porter, Office of Judicial Administration
Secretary Richards, Department of Revenue

Others attending: See Attached

Copies of a follow-up letter from Bobbi Mariani, Director of the Division of Personnel Services, regarding her presentation to the Committee on January 10, 2001, were distributed (Attachment 1).

The Honorable Kay McFarland, Chief Justice of the Kansas Supreme Court, appeared before the Committee, and urged them to enact legislation that would enable the court to submit its budget requests directly to the Legislature, bypassing the state budget director (Attachment 2). She said the unified court system will have a budget shortfall of about \$1 million this fiscal year and that the Director of the Budget, Duane Goossen, cut the agency's budget request for fiscal year 2002 by \$3 million. Chief Justice McFarland informed the Committee that they have their own budget personnel who go through a "winnowing" process before their budget is ever submitted. She emphasized that they were a separate branch of government and not part of the executive branch as the Budget Division was treating them.

Chief Justice McFarland also reminded the Committee that they are required by law to have District Judicial Offices open and staffed in 110 county court houses no matter what the work load. There is no way for the district courts to control the number of persons who must be served as well as work with unfunded state and federal mandates which can be costly when they require more personnel. Judges in many areas are required to travel distances between court settings and with the proposed reduction of their travel expenses, such expenses have to come out of the salaries area.

Chief Justice McFarland also presented a progress report on the implementation of the Nonjudicial Salary Initiative Plan. She thanked the Committee for their support in upgrading salaries as it appears to be helping to offset the previous turnover problems with nonjudicial staff.

Jerry Sloan, Office of Judicial Administration, further explained the implementation process and benefits of the NJSI plan which was implemented in July of 2000 (Attachment 3). The increase in starting salaries and the opportunity for movement up a more competitive salary scale has attracted more qualified applicants. As nearly 20% of the nonjudicial personnel are reaching the top of the pay plan, Mr. Sloan said they recommended a realistic COLA be developed for such persons. It would be funded through docket fees. A new employee evaluation process is being designed to provide each employee with a clear statement of what is expected for that employee to perform required job duties in a successful manner. A pay for performance component is also being designed as well as a training program for the supervisors. The pay for performance component will be funded from the raised docket fees with no funding required from the State General Fund..

Judge John White, Chief Judge of the 31st Judicial District, Iola, presented a review of the nonjudicial salary pay plan as provided for by in 2000 **HB 2027** (Attachment 4).

Kathy Porter, Office of Judicial Administration, reported that the Pay Plan Phase II has not been implemented at this point though they were in hopes of doing so this next fiscal year. The Judicial Council has recommended there be no further raising of docket fees, however, as the case loads increase, so will the amount collected from docket fees. Phase II will include the reclassification of many employees.

Steve Richards, Secretary of the Department of Revenue, reviewed his professional experience and presented an overview of the Kansas Department of Revenue (Attachment 5). The satisfactory progress of the 2001 income tax processing was discussed along with the existing problem of aging infrastructure and the unavailability of temporary workers to open mail and enter the data. The amount of \$1.3 million will be needed in the next fiscal year to replace software and a stamper which is used to encode and stamp the incoming checks.

Representative Bethell moved for the introduction of two bills which would “fix” 2000 **HB 2700** by removing the controversial language regarding background checks for healthcare providers. This bill was vetoed by the Governor. The language in one proposed bill would include merely expanding the list of prohibited crimes. The other bill would address all the policies in the vetoed bill. The motion was seconded by Representative Landwehr. Motion carried.

Representative Nichols moved for the introduction of legislation which would reauthorize the one-half of the retirement dividend payment for KPERS. Motion was seconded by Representative Hermes. Motion carried.

Representative Nichols moved for the introduction of legislation which would limit credit card solicitation on college campuses in Kansas. Motion was seconded by Representative Ballard. Motion carried.

-
Representative Neufeld moved that the minutes of January 10 and January 11, 2001, be approved. Motion seconded by Representative Campbell. Representative Ballard pointed out that she, not Representative Landwehr, had seconded the motion made by Representative Bethell on January 11, 2001. Motion carried with the technical change.

The meeting was adjourned. The next meeting is scheduled for January 24, 2001.

CONTINUATION SHEET