



**Legislative Committee
and
Board of Directors
UPDATE**

January 12, 2010

Salem – Room 113 at the Local Government Center holds a lot of people and Monday morning it was filled with one of the largest crowds to attend an AOC Legislative Committee meeting.

A promised discussion of Measures 66 and 67 was on the agenda. Not a discussion over the process of discussion, but rather a civilized, respectful and engaging discussion about the merits of the measures and what AOC, as an organization, should do.

AOC President Steve Grasty moderated the discussion, which lasted nearly an hour and a half. Clackamas County Commissioner Jim Bernard moved that the Legislative Committee approve a letter from AOC to legislative leadership explaining how AOC has engaged in a spirited debate and pledging to work with the legislature regardless of the outcome of the vote on the measures. The motion was approved.

AOC staff drafted a letter that, in characteristic AOC fashion, was word-smithed by nearly 40 elected officials. In the end it reads

The Association of Oregon Counties has undertaken a spirited debate on Measures 66 and 67. AOC is much like the legislature in that our members represent all corners of the state. And, just as with the legislature, there are a variety of concerns and opinions within our organization.

With that in mind, the membership determined not to take a position on Measures 66 and 67.

Oregon counties deliver a vast array of services on behalf of the state at the local level. We fully recognize that if these measures fail, the legislature will be faced with difficult funding choices. If these measures pass, the state still faces difficult funding decisions as we move into the 2011-13 budget cycle. As your partners in the delivery of vital public services, AOC is committed to working with you to ensure that limited dollars are invested strategically.

President Grasty signed the letter and it has been sent to legislative leaders.

Committee Reports. In Oregon, issues of public concern and impact to Oregon Counties are discussed by AOC Steering Committees. Those committees are afforded the opportunity to make a report on their activities at the Legislative Committee meeting. These are their stories, uh, reports, briefly, for this memo.....

Governance. Vice Chair Earl Fisher reported that Governance Steering Committee discussed the work plan for the coming year Monday morning. The committee determined it would be helpful to compose a mission statement and consider additions to some of the committee principles. The committee also took action supporting LC 207, related to clarifying recreational immunity, which will be introduced as a House Rules committee bill for the February session. The Legislative Committee concurred.

Energy and Environment. The E&E Steering Committee met on Friday, January 8th. Two new members were appointed to the committee to represent solid waste interests – Jennifer Purcell with Tillamook Co, and Jeff Bickford with Marion Co. The Committee heard a presentation about ProjectDX – a program used by counties to help administer financing to residents and businesses for energy efficiency upgrades. They also heard an update on Senator Wyden's proposed Eastern Oregon forest legislation. The 2010 workplan was reviewed. Collaboration with other AOC steering committees continues to be a priority. One upcoming issue that E&E will be looking into with the Transportation Steering Committee is how gas tax revenues will be maintained as the Oregon low carbon fuel standard is adopted and alternative fuels and electric vehicles become encouraged and more popular.

Public Safety. Chair Jay Dixon reported that the Public Safety Steering Committee met Friday, January 8th and received reports from the Oregon District Attorneys Association, the Oregon State Sheriffs Association, the Oregon Association of Community Corrections Directors and the Oregon Judicial Department. The committee is awaiting further developments on the Multnomah County proposal for authority to supervise inmates released from jail on emergency release in terms of issues raised by the Sheriffs Association before bringing the issue further. The next meeting of the committee is scheduled for January 29 at which time it will review specific bills expected to be introduced in the February Special Session.

Community Development. The Community Development Steering Committee met with Harry DeWolf, Regional Director with the Small Business Administration, to discuss the HUBZone program. AOC's Ann Hanus highlighted the new bond programs that are part of the ARRA federal legislation that can be used for public facilities and private development. She said the bond program is available only through the end of December 2010 and the state is proposing to reallocate unused cap allocations.

Regarding the upcoming February Legislative Session, AOC's Doris Penwell gave an update on proposed BETC legislation and changes to administrative rules. AOC's Art Schlack reviewed land use legislation dealing with destination resorts and wineries. The next meeting of the Community Development Steering Committee will be held on Monday, February 1, 2010 and will be devoted to proposed legislation for the February 2010 session.

Human Services. Chair Bill Hall reported on the meeting, last Friday, of the Human Services Steering Committee. At that meeting the committee received a presentation on the Healthy Kids expansion and AOC's Morgan Cowling will be sending out a letter from the program about resources available in your county. Also, the committee will be bringing forward a resolution to the Legislative Committee meeting on February 1 about the importance of investing in the community mental health system as a higher priority than building the second state hospital.

After all the excitement and drama of the Legislative Committee, AOC's Board of Directors met.... And what happened at that AOC board meeting?

Well I'm glad you asked. Here's a quick rundown...

AOC's Constitution and By-laws will be thoroughly reviewed by a task force chair by AOC 1st VP Janet Carlson and revisions drafted for AOC members' consideration. Task force members, appointed at the AOC board meeting, are Commissioners Bob Austin, Kathy George, Bill Hansell, Deborah Kafoury, Don Lindly, Linda Modrell and Al Switzer. Two AOC alums were also appointed to the task force – Bobby Green, a past AOC President, and Gina Nikkel, a former AOC vice president. AOC staff members Mike McArthur and Paul Snider will support the work of the task force. Chair Carlson's goal is to have revisions considered by the membership at the AOC spring conference, June 14-16 at the Riverhouse in Bend. The last revision of the AOC Constitution and By-laws was led by Multnomah County Commissioner Mel Gordon back in 1974. (That was before most current County Commissioners were born. ☺)

Commissioner Earl Fisher was appointed co-chair of the AOC Governance Steering Committee. He'll join Commissioner Janet Carlson in leading the committee for 2010. The board also accepted the nomination of Marion County D.A. Walt Beglau to serve as the Oregon District Attorneys Association's liaison to the AOC Legislative Committee. D.A. Beglau replaces Columbia County D.A. Steve Atchison, who served with distinction as the ODAA liaison for the last year.

A planned fund transfer from the AOC Business Enterprises Fund to the General Fund was made by the board in addition to a review and acceptance of the December financial documents. AOC's budget is set on a calendar year; the board will receive a full audit of 2009 this spring.

And now you know the rest of the story.... AOC News produced this report. Please blame Laura Cleland for any errors Eric Schmidt may have made.