

INTERIM JOINT COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS AND REVENUE

Budget Review Subcommittee on General Government, Finance, Personnel, and Public Retirement

Minutes of the 4th Meeting of the 2020 Interim

October 21, 2020

Call to Order and Roll Call

The fourth meeting of the Budget Review Subcommittee on General Government, Finance, Personnel, and Public Retirement of the Interim Joint Committee on Appropriations and Revenue was held on Wednesday, October 21, 2020, at 8:30 AM, in Room 169 of the Capitol Annex. Senator Robby Mills, Chair, called the meeting to order, and the secretary called the roll.

Present were:

Members: Senator Robby Mills, Co-Chair and Representative Jim Stewart III, Co-Chair; Senators Dennis Parrett, Reginald Thomas, and Phillip Wheeler; Representatives Kevin D. Bratcher, Jim Gooch Jr., Joe Graviss, Adam Koenig, Michael Meredith, Suzanne Miles, Jerry T. Miller, Phillip Pratt, Wilson Stone, and Nancy Tate.

Guests: Larry Potter, Executive Director, Kentucky Fire Commission (KFC); Howdy Kurtsinger, Legislative Director, KFC; Brenda Goddard, Finance Director, KFC; Rick Rand, Commissioner, Department of Housing, Buildings, and Construction (HBC), Public Protection Cabinet (PPC); Mike Haney, State Fire Marshal, and Director, Division of Fire Prevention, HBC, PPC; Tammy Branham, Budget Director, PPC; and, Scott Foreman, Fire Chief, City of Henderson, KY.

LRC Staff: Chuck Truesdell, Emma Mills, Nick Peak, and Spring Emerson.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Representative Meredith to approve the minutes of the September 16, 2020 meeting. The motion was seconded by Senator Parrett, and the minutes were approved without objection.

Kentucky Fire Commission (KFC)

Director Potter provided an overview of the KFC and the services it provides, as well as issues related to the COVID-19 pandemic and agency budget information.

In response to a question from Representative Koenig regarding software issues, Director Potter said there had been some glitches and delays in getting so many departments trained on the new system. He said the new system also allows for tracking and monitoring the trainings.

In response to a question from Chair Mills regarding oversight authority, Director Potter said all fire departments receive statutory training. Mr. Kurtsinger said that in addition to free training for all fire departments throughout the state, the municipal fire departments have their own training facilities, and the KFC is able to utilize those facilities.

Chair Mills commented that the volunteers should receive some rewards or incentives, because more volunteers are needed.

State Fire Marshal

Commissioner Rand spoke briefly about the Division of Fire Prevention (DFP) within the HBC, adding that the responsibility of the Public Protection Cabinet is public safety, which includes fire prevention. Mr. Haney provided an overview of the DFP and the activities performed there.

In response to a question from Representative Miller regarding the lost contract with State Risk Management, Mr. Haney said Johnson Controls was awarded the contract.

In response to a question from Representative Graviss regarding Johnson Controls using Kentucky-based employees, Mr. Haney said some of them are former employees of the DFP. Ms. Branham said the contract was lost due to a decreasing number of staff in Hazardous Materials and General Inspection units, and the department is studying several options to address those issues.

In response to a question from Representative Graviss regarding the statutory obligation of the agency, Commissioner Rand said the decrease in revenue has jeopardized those obligations, and it will continue if the issue is not addressed. Representative Graviss thanked them for their efforts.

Local Fire Department – Henderson, KY

Fire Chief Scott Foreman provided an overview of the Henderson fire department and its activities.

In response to questions from Senator Thomas, Chief Foreman said Corydon has their own volunteer fire department, but the Henderson fire department provides mutual aid when requested, and rely on partners in Evansville if necessary. In the case of a large fire, the biggest issue would be a lack of personnel. The mutual agreements held with other departments help with those incidences.

In response to a question from Representative Miles regarding the new software system, Chief Foreman said anytime a new system is implemented, there will be issues. He added that the pandemic has caused initial hurdles with the training program, and spoke about the benefits of the system from his previous employment in Indiana.

In response to a question from Representative Miles regarding 911 dispatch calls, Chief Foreman said 911 calls can go to different places, depending on which cell tower is in use. He added that local emergency dispatch could better address her question.

Adjournment

There being no further business before the subcommittee, the meeting was adjourned at 9:39 AM.