

Assembly

MINUTES OF MEETING - COMMITTEE ON STATE, COUNTY AND CITY AFFAIRS
54th Session, February 3, 1967

Meeting was called to order.

Present: Hilbrecht, Garfinkle, Dini, Tyson, Bryan Hafen, Smith, Roy Young, Wooster.

Absent: McKissick

Chairman Hilbrecht announced the agenda for Monday, February 6 as follows: AB 58 and 60; AB 83; AB 28; and AB 54.

He requested that the large number of guests present sign their respective names and affiliations on the circulating sheet for the benefit of the clerk.

The agenda for this meeting was declared to be consideration of AB 48 and AB 49. Introduced to be heard was Mr. Curtis H. Blyth, Executive Director of the Nevada Municipal Association.

Mr. Blyth: AB 43 of the 1965 Legislature is the Local Government Budget Act. After passage of this act we found that it required the publication of detailed lists of claims. Through amendment and administrative action the requirement has been confused. Some cities have published this lists and some have not. Various attorneys have had differing attitudes and resulting opinions have been highly variable. The Nevada Municipal Association feels that publication of lists of claims is meaningless. Mr. Blyth produced examples of lists of claims that have been published throughout the state. The lists from Lovelock, Fallon, Las Vegas, contained one from North Las Vegas that consisted of an entire full newspaper page. The lists have little meaning and accomplish nothing but providing revenues for publishers.

It is recommended that Section 1, lines 1 through 21, be deleted from AB 48; that Section 2 be renumbered as Section 1, and that the bill then be given Do Pass.

Mr. Wooster inquired whether or not Mr. Blyth knew the costs of any of the lists he had produced as examples. Mr. Blyth indicated the cost of the one from Fallon was \$66.80; the one from Lovelock as \$41.25.

The Local Government Act still requires to be published quarterly list of receipts and disbursements which it is felt are significant and mean something to the man who reads them.

Mr. H. J. Stephens was introduced from the City of Reno and stated that he appeared to voice his concurrence and support of the position stated by Mr. Blyth.

Mr. John Chism, Reno Councilman, was introduced and voiced the same concurrence.

Mr. Joe H. Latimore, City Manager of Reno, was introduced, and stated that in his position the City was opposed to publications of the type that do not give the taxpayer any additional infor-

mation. The lists that presently are being published only offer confusion to the taxpayer.

Mr. J. B. Cunningham, Washoe County Commissioner, was introduced and he in turn introduced the County Manager, Mr. C. B. Kinnison. Mr. Kinnison stated that he subscribed to the viewpoint outlined by Mr. Blyth. He stated that his office had attempted to project the cost of the publishing requirement in his area. He said that taking the month of January as an average one the county purchased from 557 vendors an average of 9 items each. This would amount to 5,013 lines of items which in one year would require his office to publish over 60,000 lines in the newspapers which would be a \$15,000 cost. As time progresses this number will, of course, multiply. These figures do not include the school districts.

Mr. Kinnison continued by stating that they do not feel these costs incurred by this required publications are justified. He stated that because of the variable legal opinions on the requirements of the Local Government Budget Act on this matter the in some instances the lists were published and in other instances they were not published. He stated that all of the material is in the Auditor's office and is fully described therein.

Mr. Garfinkle inquired whether the records in the Auditor's office are readily available. Mr. Kinnison said they were and could actually be obtained by a telephone call. He stated that he felt the required publication of financial statements is necessary and should be retained.

Mr. Jim Heald, Local Budget Division Director, stated that his office had received such a large number of conflicting opinions requiring clarification on publishing requirements of the act that his position was to support any move to clarify the specific requirements.

Mr. Cleland, introduced as a North Las Vegas City Councilman, expressed his concurrence with Mr. Blyth's presentation.

Walter Cox, representing the Nevada Newspapers, directed several questions through the Chairman. He asked whether any taxpayer has requested that the publication of the lists be dispensed with. Mr. Latimore indicated that a regular list of people have asked to be supplied with and are supplied with detailed lists. He stated that no requests that lists be dispensed with were known to him. He stated that the Reno City Attorney held that the lists were not required to be published and that therefore the lists had not been published. However, any taxpayer's request is honored.

Mr. Cox stated that no merchant expected the lists of bills allowed to be detailed item listings, per item, and asked whether this were the interpretation being given the requirement.

Mr. Kinnison and Mr. Cox indulged an exchange over the conflict in the wording that could be subject to varying interpretations. Lists of bills allowed could mean a statement. A statement may be an itemized one, etc.

Mr. Bud Franklin, representing the City of Henderson, voiced his concurrence with Mr. Blyth's presentation.

Mr. E. L. Newton of the Nevada Taxpayers Association was introduced but offered no additional comment.

Mr. Bob Hampton, also of Henderson, was introduced and stated his concurrence with Mr. Blyth.

Mr. Jack McCloskey, representing the Nevada Publishers, was introduced. He stated that he would support Mr. Kinnison if he felt that line item breakdowns were required within the lists of bills. However, he stated an example of publication of bills he felt complied with the requirement; i.e. A. Carlisle and Co., supplies, amount; Morrill and Machabee, calculator, amount. He indicated that the itemized calculator in the latter publication indicated a single item but that the general term "supplies" indicated various stationery in the former instance. He stated he knew for a fact that many business firms watch the lists of claims for comparative information and find them very meaningful. He stated that in some areas of the State the auditor's office or in some cases the offices of the county commissioner's could well be flooded with persons seeking the information if they were not published.

It was developed in discussion that other pending legislative matters involved this same overall question of required publications and it was suggested that all of the interested parties get together in an endeavor to correlate them all and evolve mutual understanding and presentation.

Mr. Wooster moved AB 48 and 49 deferred until a later time for consideration when the state, county, cities and publishing interests had had time to prepare the total desired presentation. Mr. Dini seconded. Motion unanimously passed.

Chairman Hilbrecht asked that members Smith and Garfinkle meet with the people present who were interested in AB 83.

Wooster moved adjournment. Garfinkle seconded. Motion unanimously passed.