

Assembly

MINUTES OF MEETING - WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE - NEVADA STATE LEGISLATURE
1968 SPECIAL SESSION - FEBRUARY 22, 1968

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Glaser at 9 AM in the Ways and Means Room.

Present: Glaser, Mello, Bowler, Ashworth, Young, Howard, Jacobsen
Absent: Tyson, Webb

S. B. 20: Creates unclassified position of state park construction engineer, establishes annual salary and makes appropriation therefor

Mr. Elmo DeRicco, Director of the State Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, was present for the hearing and introduced Col. Tom Miller, Chairman of the Nevada State Park Advisory Commission, and Mr. Eric Cronkhite, Administrator of the State Park Division.

Col. Miller explained that S. B. 4 was the genesis of this new bill, S. B. 20. Under that bill we did not ask for an appropriation but merely the authority for the administration to appoint one engineer, with his salary paid out of the capital construction fund. Col. Miller went on to point out the necessity for qualified engineering services under the 1965 federal Land and Water Conservation Act, calling for statewide planning. He also stressed the necessity for this engineer to travel in connection with his work of inspections, etc. He said when they went to the Senate for the authority to transfer funds to hire an engineer, they did not like the idea of transferring so S. B. 20 came out. He said their main objection to this bill was the stipulation for putting this engineer in the unclassified service. Col. Miller stressed the absolute necessity of putting him in the classified service, under the retirement system and with travel authority.

Mr. Eric Cronkhite said the engineer would be working under him. By way of review he said the State Park System is engaged in three categories: state park improvement program for which \$134,000 was appropriated the first year and \$106,000 for 1969; the motor boat fuel tax program involving \$30,000 per year; and the largest program in connection with the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act with federal assistance of \$625,000 per year. It is impossible to do a quality job in these areas without a competent engineer. He reluctantly spoke of several bad projects to point out the need for quality engineering services. He said in order to qualify for the federal funds they must certify that all development projects have been engineering designs. The State Planning Board has been helping out as long as we don't give them too much. S. B. 20 provides for more money than was actually requested. He distributed charts concerning funding proposals. He stressed putting the engineer in the classified service. The \$9,000 figure is unrealistic. They would propose a net salary of \$9532 to \$11,500 with additional money of \$1608 to offset his travel and payroll costs which amount to 8½% of a salary and include retirement benefits, NIC costs, Personnel's standard fee of \$50, etc. He also stressed the absolute necessity for travel authority, as much of his work will be in the field.

Mr. Jerry Purdy, Vice President of the local branch of National Society of Professional Engineers, stressed a high salary in order to attract a top man. He spoke of the trend for specialists in all areas of construction and the greater demands of the public, so you must have a competent engineer to be aware of all these various codes and regulation. A registered professional engineer can make changes in the eyes of the law in the construction specifications. This man will be off by himself on field work and will not have the advantage of calling in various specialists for consultation when the need arises. He must make his own decisions. Mr. Purdy said in government service (federal) the top salary, about 6 positions, call for \$25,000. With 3 years of experience a graduate engineer can become registered and command a salary of around \$11,000 - \$12,000. This is a bare minimum.

Mr. DeRicco commented on the problem of paying a high salary to the engineer who would be getting more, then, than the administrator.

Mr. Cronkhite, in answer to question regarding the \$808 payroll costs, said to effect the salary of \$9532 you must have this additional which is taken out of the salary. The present hospitalization program is paid for the employee by the state and is included in the 8½%. If you do not add this \$808 in, then the salary would actually be lower than the \$9500 and under the unclassified service could not pay less. The \$3170 figure in the bill is to be used by June 30, 1968, or revert back.

Mr. DeRicco said that no hardship would be created by delaying employment of this man; in fact it would probably take that long to find one, so this amount can be disregarded as it will revert back.

Mr. Cronkhite added to the argument against putting this position in unclassified on the grounds that it would be unprecedented and there would be no advantage to anyone.

Mr. Mello asked questions about the Pyramid Lake boat landing project. Mr. Cronkhite said that \$15,000 was spent there. It was handled by a private construction firm on contract. It was a very unsatisfactory job and if we had an engineer to inspect everyday construction, we would have averted this. We do have requirements that specify planning by a registered engineer and before any money is distributed, construction standards have to be developed and approved.

Mr. Young asked if the State Park Division did get the engineer, would they then be separate from the State Planning Board as to the drawing of plans, etc.? ... Mr. DeRicco said he does not believe in staffing up to meet all projects. They should just cover key projects and utilize the private consultants when necessary. Hopefully, they could also still call on the State Planning Board. Col. Miller said that a stipulation of the Land and Water Conservation Act calls for all master plans to go through the State Planning Board.

Mr. Bill Hancock, Nevada State Planning Board, said they are required to provide architectural services to all state agencies. Their problem lies in the programming of their workload and would be aided considerably by advance notice of jobs needing attention. He also stressed that the position should not come under unclassified. He felt the \$9500 was an

adequate salary and said the Legislature should not adopt any plan for use of technicians rather than the engineer. He stressed the construction type engineer for efficiency. He said that A and E work should be centralized in one place or the other; there are too many disadvantages to splitting it up into several divisions.

Mr. Young asked questions regarding the Planning Board sending their men out in the field for inspections, etc. Mr. Hancock said they have adequate engineering complement for the needs of the state at the present time. There are 9 men with multiple qualifications such as both an architect and planner. Our problem lies with programing and could be relieved by advance notice so we could work similar projects together with one bid, one set of documents, etc. in a single package.

Mr. DeRicco clarified a point as to the necessity, according to the conservation and recreation program, for an engineer on both the construction and the planning side. He gave as an example Beaver Dam in Lincoln County. A competent engineer would have known the problems before the planning even developed such as the need for a water shed before the dam was built.

Discussion on the meaning of the term; "construction engineer". Mr. Cronkhite said they did not coin that term. They called him a park engineer. They meant someone with civil engineering background..... Mr. Hancock said a graduate engineer can go two ways: design or civil with design capabilities. He felt the main requirement was for a graduate engineer with practical experience. Mr. Purdy said the term "registered professional engineer" takes all the ambiguity out of it.

Mr. Glaser asked if it would be more practical, in view of the limited nature of the programs involved, to hire by contractual means for specific jobs, rather than have a full time position. Mr. Cronkhite said they could justify a full time position. The motor boat fuel tax program is small in dollars but large in number of projects which is time consuming. We cannot now work adequately with the cities in connection with the Land and Water Conservation program. Any contact with an engineer at the state level is through the State Planning Board which does review the final plans.

Mr. Bowler asked Mr. Hancock questions relating to the ability of his staff to inspect projects. Mr. Hancock said his staff does inspect projects around the state. It is adequate supervision. If the requirement comes about for more intense inspection, we perhaps could utilize the services of inspectors hired from the highway fund. However, for supervision, we do have an adequate staff.

Mr. Glaser commented on the pressure coming from the federal government for registered professional engineers. ... Mr. Hancock said only if the planning board actually does the designing do they stamp it as developed by a design engineer. So, the plans they review do not receive their stamp.

Mr. DeRicco said the program is larger than most people realize. The \$625,000 is matched, so in this portion of the program alone we are dealing with over a million dollars. We would not be moving away from

the planning board but would be working in conjunction with it. In answer to questions, he said the Pyramid Lake project was designed by the Division of Parks. The project in Lincoln County was a joint effort with the Fish and Game but the Division of Parks is responsible for maintaining it. The point is we just need this engineer to make sure the project is good enough to justify putting state money into it.

Mr. Ashworth asked if the State Planning Board could design dams such as these with advance notice. ... Mr. Hancock said they can design minor dams but the one such as Eagle Valley is a major project and should be done by a private practice engineer who could devote more time to it and have it checked and stamped by our stamp engineer.

Col. Miller spoke of the \$132,000 already appropriated for areas, Red Rock Canyon, but for lack of help with the master plan cannot go forward with it.

Mrs. Nicholson of the League of Women Voters said the League has been a strong supporter of the park program and the essential needs of carrying it through. Her concern was with the stipulation of S. B. 20 for the engineer to be put in the unclassified service. She said she had learned from various Senators that their thought was to keep from loading up the classified service. However, Mrs. Nicholson stressed that if the State of Nevada is going to have a classified service, it should not chip away at it but use it fully or not at all. So, she would strongly suggest putting this engineer position in the classified service.

Meeting adjourned at 10 AM.

2/21/68

FUNDING PROPOSALS FOR STATE PARK

CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER

	SB-20	Funds needed to carry out intent of SB-20	SB-4
March 1, 1968 - June 30, 1968			
Salary	\$ 3,170.	\$3,170.	
Payroll costs		269.	
Instate travel		265.	
July 1, 1968 - June 30, 1969			
Salary	\$9,500.	\$9,500.	\$9,532. *
Payroll costs		808.	810.
Instate travel		800.	800.
Totals	\$12,670.	\$14,812.	\$11,142.

* Recommended in Classified Service Grade 34 - Salary Range 9532-11,500

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