

SENATE COMMITTEE ON FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS  
ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

JOINT HEARING

Minutes of Meeting -- January 31, 1973

A joint hearing of the Senate Committee on Federal, State and Local Governments and the Assembly Committee on Government Affairs was held on January 31, 1973. Chairman James Gibson called the meeting to order at 2:30 P.M.

Those in attendance were:

James I. Gibson, Chairman)	)	
Stan Drakulich	)	
Lee Walker	)	
Coe Swobe	)	Senate Committee on Federal, State
Carl F. Dodge	)	and Local Governments
John Foley	)	
Chic Hecht	)	
Joseph Dini, Chairman	)	
James Ullom	)	
Roy Young	)	
Paul May	)	Assembly Committee on Government
R. Hal Smith	)	Affairs
Virgil Getto	)	

Also present were:

Warren Lewis, Lyon County  
John Poli, Lyon County  
E. Warren Hursh, Churchill County  
Don Seevers, Mineral County  
Bob Griffin, Lyon County  
Helen Foley, Intern  
Bob Hartman, Esmeralda County  
Bob Craddock, Assemblyman  
David Finne, L.V.V.W.D.  
Bob Warren, Nevada Municipal Association  
Eyer Boies, Elko County  
Martin Milano, Eureka County  
Henry Bland, Storey  
John Meder, Carson City  
Bob Rusk, Washoe County  
Dave Henry, City of Las Vegas  
Richard Bunker, Clark County  
Senator Monroe  
Alan Glover, Assemblyman  
Press

Chairman Gibson stated that the purpose of this hearing was to hear from the Nevada Association of County Commissioners concerning their legislative program. Mr. John Meder, Carson City Supervisor, was acting as spokesman for the group. He introduced those present, stating their names and the counties they represented.

Mr. Meder then proceeded to go over each of the items on the NACC 1973 Legislative Program, noting that this had been adopted by the Association at their annual conference in 1972:

1. Increase tax exempt status of volunteer fire departments - presently \$5,000. (NACC feels something more realistic than this should be allowed.)
2. Increase the membership of county planning commissions from 6 to 7 members. Make the ex-officio members non-voting. (Keep in mind this is county rather than regional commissions. The statute allows for ex-officio members - some counties have them as voting members and some as non-voting members. This should be clarified to say that "Ex-officio members are non-voting.")
3. Amend county travel expense statute to allow county officials and employees to receive the maximum allowed state employees and officials. The intent is to eliminate the necessity of amending both statutes every time an adjustment is made. (This will tie in the amount of travel expense allowed the county commissioners with that of the state. There are now two bills that have to be amended. At the last session the mileage allowed was increased from 10 to 12 cents and the county commissioners were not included.)
4. Amend State Constitution to allow county governing boards to set compensation for county officials. (This has been introduced as AJR-5.)
5. Support property tax relief for the elderly. No firm position at this time. (There are already numerous bills for tax relief that have been introduced, further analysis is needed to decide the best approach, but some program will be strongly supported.)
6. Support continuation of the State Public Defender Program. Also, ask that the availability of Federal Funds to supplement local funds be explored. (The 14 counties participating in this program will be asked to carry more of the load, so federal funds should be utilized if possible.)

7. Support a thorough analysis of the unincorporated town laws for revision. Some temporary suggestions will be proposed for consideration, including repealing of some of the Titlow Amendments. (Mr. Russ McDonald is presently drafting some stop-gap measures in this matter.)
8. Clarification of the insurance bidding notice requirements. NRS 332.140. (This is presently being done in AB-75.)
9. Support creation of a state fund to assist local governments with waste water treatment and water system projects to supplement Federal Funds. (The reason for this is because the measure passed in 1972 is still a little vague as to whether or not with the water pollution act passed in 1972 there are additional bonuses allowed if the states participate -- this is now being researched by the Legislative Counsel Bureau.)
10. Request the creation of a Legislative Subcommittee to study county problems. (The city subcommittee report has already recommended this.)
11. Support revision of subdivision laws. Senator Cliff Young's subcommittee's report and recommendations have not been analyzed at this time so no specific position is taken at this time.
12. Oppose the creation of state level minimum standards for building, electrical, or mechanical codes. (Most of the counties already have these codes and to require another level of government to do the same thing that is already being done, is a little redundant.)
13. Request the repeal of the Uniform Plumbing Code. The State level requirements is an unnecessary duplication since most local governments have already adopted and are enforcing the Uniform Plumbing Code.
14. Request that any conflict of interest legislation apply to all levels of government, elected and appointed officials and employees.
15. Amend statutes to make the office of county surveyor an appointive office rather than an elective. (This is now being researched.)

16. Request an updating of the County Uniform Salary Act. (A hearing will be held on this matter on February 21, 1973, at 2:30 P.M.)
17. Establish a fund to dispose of abandoned motor vehicles. (Senator Dodge noted that he had introduced this bill\* on this date.)
18. Amend NRS to make all County offices non-partisian. Add a provision that if more than two candidates have filed for a single office a Primary is necessary and any candidate receiving 51% or more of the votes in the Primary is automatically elected and only that candidate's name will appear on the General Election ballot. (They have also asked for a similar provision in the Carson City Charter which allows non-partisian races if there are three running in the primary and one candidate gets 51% of the votes.)
19. Allow County officials and other County elected Boards and Commissions to run from a district and be elected at large. (This matter is included in Assembly Bill 10).
20. Support the death penalty for major crimes and memorialize the Nevada State Legislature to take appropriate action to reinstate the death penalty in the State of Nevada. (Numerous bills have already been introduced on this matter.)
21. AJR 23, Open Space Legislation (1971) Constitutional amendment. (The county organization is supporting AJR-23. A hearing is scheduled on this legislation on February 6, at 8:00 A.M., Room 222).
22. Amend NRS to make the Office of County Surveyor appointive rather than elective. (This item is a repeat of Item 15.)
23. Amend local motor vehicle fuel tax to add an additional optional 1¢ which may be used wholly or partly for maintenance and repair. (The only thing the 1¢ fuel tax may be used for presently is for purchase of right-of-way or traffic control, so something is needed for maintenance and repair.)
24. Request a re-evaluation of the Uniform County Salary Act. (This is a repeat of Item 16.)

25. Request NIC to prohibit any rate increases until the beginning of the next fiscal year without notice of increase being given in advance. (There should be an addition to this wording which was inadvertently left out -- "for local governments").
26. Request the mandatory County levy for Title XIX be repealed effective July, 1973.
27. Request the State to assume the cost of County medical indigents, administered and funded from the State level. (There is currently some confusion as to who is responsible for these bills.)
28. Request the Legislature to determine the need for a state-wide Food Stamp program and if such program is needed that it be both administered and funded by the State of Nevada.
29. The surcharge placed on food commodities used by Counties through the "State Food Commodity Program" be eliminated and the "Food Commodity Program" funded and operated by the State of Nevada. (In the smaller counties particularly, of the two, the Food Commodity Program is the more preferable. From an administrative point-of-view, all of the county commissioners would prefer the "Food Commodity Program.")
30. The requirement of County Commissioners' certification of the aurally and visually handicapped persons be deleted from the law and that it be referred to the State Board of Education. (This currently seems to be an unnecessary step that people have to go through in order to certify that someone has a hearing or visual handicap and be given treatment.)
31. Legislation be passed to authorize Counties to also make cash grants for direct assistance services to welfare recipients. (In some instances the counties are actually having to give a cash grant, and this should be put in the law.)
32. The law regarding mental health patients be clarified as they affect County responsibilities for indigent cases.

Items proposed by other local governments and supported by NACC:

1. Support clarification of local governments right to exercise power of eminent domain over railroad property.
2. Support amendment of special assessments when assessed property is divided and sold.

3. Amend Good Samaritan Law to include volunteer ambulance operators and attendants, search and rescue members, etc. (A bill\* has already been introduced to take care of the ambulance operators, but doesn't cover search and rescue people. Volunteer people are a valuable asset and should be included under this Law.)
4. Amend sub-division law to declare two or more lots as a sub-division in any 12 month period, intent is also a factor. (specifics to be outlined).
5. Amend local option motor vehicle fuel tax to include "special fuels", diesel butane, and propane.
6. Strongly oppose any legislation that organizes a State Building Department duplicating the functions of County Building Departments.
7. Support legislation defining the differentiating between or among mobile homes, modular homes, factory built homes, etc., for the purpose of building and mechanical inspections, zoning allowances and taxation purposes.
8. Support legislation to authorize the employment of "third party inspectors" to certify compliance with building standards for mobile homes, factory built housing and modular homes when constructed outside the State.
9. Support expanding the definition of "incendiary devices" to cover all combinations of materials now in use - presently only covers Molotov Cocktails.
10. Take a strong position that any conflict of interest legislation apply to all levels of government elected and appointed officials and employees.
11. Support expected legislation requiring sub-dividers to contribute land or money, at local option, for park and recreation sites.
12. Support an amendment or clarification of statute providing for underground wiring to make possible the issuance of bonds and the levy of special assessments.
13. NRS 244.675 Fair and Recreation Board audit conflict with Local Government Budget Act.

14. NRS 318.140, NRS 318.144, NRS 354.596, NRS 354.602: Public Service Commission filing dates and fiscal years.
15. NRS 354.460 - School District Fund Remainder Balance.
16. Amend the Public Employees Retirement System to allow the same benefits for all members, or
17. Amend the Public Employees Retirement Act so that each special interest group be organized within the Public Employees Retirement System to be actuarially sound from their own members' contribution, together with no greater percentage contribution from the governmental entity than is contributed to any other employee group.

Mr. Meder noted at this point that many of the above items are already being drafted by the Legislative Counsel Bureau.

Mr. Meder then read a resolution to the committee as follows:  
"NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Nevada Association of County Commissioners endorse those proposed legislative additions and changes presented by the County Fiscal Association where it is evidenced that there will be increased efficiency within County government as well as budgetary savings." (However, the NACC has not had an opportunity to analyze this program.)

A question and answer period followed at this point. With reference to Item 18, and in response to questions from Mr. Dini, Mr. Meder explained that they feel county offices are not tied in that closely with party politics, but should be more of a business-type approach to the community. Mr. Getto stated that he felt this non-partisian approach would destroy the competitiveness of the two party system, and particularly in smaller communities where it may be necessary for political parties to get out and encourage people to run for office.

With reference to Item 23, Mr. Meder further explained that at the present time some of the counties are doing rather extensive road work and their only means of financial help is by going to the General Fund. The maximum they would be looking for is an additional 1¢ or one-third cent, and that either part of it or all of it be allowed for maintenance -- just so the option would be given.

There being no further business, the joint hearing was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

*Mary Jean Fondi*  
Mary Jean Fondi  
Committee Secretary

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