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Finance

MINUTES

WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

NEVADA STATE LEGISLATURE - 60th SESSION

JOINT MEETING

May 24, 1979

Chairman Mello called the meeting to order at 10:20 a.m.

WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Mello, Vice-Chairman Bremner, Mr. Barengo, Mrs. Cavnar, Mr. Mann, Mr. Glover, Mr. Hickey, Mr. Rhoads, Mr. Vergiels, Mrs. Wagner and Mr. Webb.

ALSO PRESENT: Bill Bible, Fiscal Analyst; Judy Matteucci, Deputy Fiscal Analyst; Mike Alastuey, Budget Office.

SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Lamb, Vice-Chairman Gibson, Mr. Glaser, Mr. McCorkle, Mr. Jacobsen, Mr. Echols, and Mr. Wilson.

ALSO PRESENT: Ron Sparks, Fiscal Analyst; Gene Pieretti, Deputy Fiscal Analyst.

Ms. Carol Lee Chavez, Secretary for Senate Finance, stated that she had received 35 telephone calls the previous evening in opposition to the prison site at Ely from citizens of the local area.

Mr. Rhoads asked if the opposition was to the new site or to the old one. Ms. Chavez responded that the callers were in opposition to any placement of the prison at Ely.

Mrs. Wagner commented that she had also receive a number of calls in opposition.

Senator Wilson stated that he has obtained information that indicates there is not enough water in the Ely area to support a prison site there.

Senator Lamb stated that he and Mr. Wilson had discussed the availability of water and sewer facilities at the proposed Indian Springs prison site with Mr. Hancock and that Mr. Hancock stated that both could be supplied.

Senator Wilson commented that he believed it would be more helpful to separate who is for and who is against the site.

Chairman Mello asked if the Senate Finance had a proposal for their choice of location. Senator Lamb responded that their choice would be the Indian Springs site.

Chairman Mello asked if the Senate Finance was also considering a proposal to let the Public Works Board decide on the location. Senator Lamb stated that he would be willing to let the Public Works Board choose a site in Clark County and authorize them \$30 million for construction costs.

Mrs. Cavnar stated that she had contacted Bob Balance at Indian Springs and that he stated that currently there is enough water in the area, but that they are in need of a second well especially in the dry summer months. She continued that it would also be necessary for the State to handle the sewer facilities.

Senator Lamb stated that he had just confirmed with Mr. Hancock that a prison could be built for \$30,169,000 at Indian Springs including a new well and sewer facilities.

Mr. Mann stated that he has been personally reviewing the alternatives for the prison site and has reached the conclusion that Indian Springs would be a suitable location.

Mrs. Cavnar stated that the people in Ely have had a great deal more time to publicly voice their opinions about the prison being located in their community. She said that in a matter of twelve hours, 159 registered voters in Indian Springs have signed a petition objecting to having the prison in their area. She added that in addition to the lack of community support, Indian Springs is 45 miles from Las Vegas and that would be a long commute for employees at the prison and that necessary medical facilities would also be distant.

Senator Gibson commented that he believes that the prison should be located adjacent to the area that contributes the bulk of the prison population. He added that he does not feel that Indian Springs is the best site but that it is highly preferable to locating the prison at Ely.

Mrs. Wagner asked for specific information about the land availability and utilities. Senator Lamb stated that Federal land is available; the water is there; and the power is there.

Senator Gibson stated that the Senate Finance is also concerned about the economic condition of Ely and that the Committee is willing to provide alternatives other than the prison which would provide long-term benefits for them.

Senator Glaser commented that he, too, is interested in alleviating the economically depressed situation at Ely. He said that they do have a live stream that flows year round and that there is a possibility of building a \$2.1 million reservoir on Steptol Creek. However, he stated that by raising the dam at Cummings Lake five feet the expenditure would be around \$500,000 and would provide a greater surface area than with the proposed Steptol Creek dam site. He added that if the prison is not located in Ely then he would like to see action on the proposed Steptol Creek dam or the Cummings Lake dam modification.

Senator Lamb commented that with the Sunnyside Road from Las Vegas proposed for surfacing and the new dam or improvements to the existing one, tourists would be brought into the area and the Ely region would economically benefit.

Mr. Glover commented that one of the main problems he sees with the Indian Springs location is the fact that it is 40 miles distant from Las Vegas.

Senator Gibson replied that approximately 2,000 employees commute from Las Vegas daily to the test site, and that there is already an existing bus transportation system in operation.

Mr. Glover stated that he does not believe White Pine County will be substantially assisted by having their local economy rely on tourism with the energy crisis situation. He added that a solid payroll situation would be far more desirable.

Mr. Mann stated that perhaps it would be prudent to have Interim Finance provide a \$3 million fund for development of and initiation of an economic study of the Ely area. He continued that placing the prison at Ely would probably only provide 40 jobs for local residents.

Senator Lamb stated that Senate Finance is on record as willing to help the people of Ely and that they will provide assistance.

Motion made by Mr. Mann to concur with the Senate Finance on the Indian Springs location for the new prison site; seconded by Mrs. Wagner. Motion defeated.

Motion made by Mr. Bremner to permit the Public Works Board to make the site selection for the prison, but not to limit the location for it to Clark County; seconded by Mr. Hickey. Motion failed for lack of a vote.

Mr. Webb pointed out that the second choice for the location of the prison was at Dodge Flat in Washoe County and that that site looks as equally as suitable as the Apex or any other site being proposed in Southern Nevada. He asked if Senate Finance would object to limit the selection area to Clark County or Washoe County. Senator Wilson responded that it is the Senate Finance's contention that the prison should be sited in the same locale as their population will be derived from and about 60% of the inmates come from Clark County.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:45 a.m.