

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
April 14, 2022

**NOTE:** *Out of an abundance of caution, the April Finance Advisory Committee meeting was conducted via Zoom. The viewing link was provided for the members of the public and CT-N live broadcasted the meeting.*

PRESENT: Lieutenant Governor Susan Bysiewicz  
Deputy Comptroller Martha Carlson  
Deputy Treasurer Darrell Hill  
Senator Catherine Osten  
Representative Toni Walker  
Representative Jeff Currey  
Representative Mike France  
Representative Lucy Dathan (alternate – non-voting capacity)  
Deputy Secretary Paul Potamianos  
Office of Policy and Management, Finance Advisory Committee Clerk

Lieutenant Governor Bysiewicz called the meeting to order at 1:33 p.m.

The minutes of the June 24<sup>th</sup>, 2021, meeting were adopted.

The following new transactions were considered by the committee:

2022-01 for the Auditors of Public Accounts. Transfer of \$125,000 from the Personal Services account to the Other Expenses account to cover software costs associated with a recent computer equipment refresh.

Representative Walker about the importance of the technology system for the agency's operations. State Auditor Geragosian noted that the agency handles large datasets and files, and had not purchased new computers in five years, which are important for productivity. Representative Walker asked if the Microsoft Office 365 software purchase was for new software or an update, and State Auditor Geragosian noted that they acquired the software at the beginning of the pandemic to support remote operations and communication with the Executive Branch. The license cost is biennial, and the new version of Adobe is not compatible with the auditing software.

The item was unanimously approved.

2022-02 for the Department of Administrative Services. Transfer of \$5,096,105 from various Workers' Compensation Claims accounts to align resources with projected requirements through the end of the year.

Senator Osten noted many of the FAC agenda items reference Personal Services being available due to unfilled vacancies and asked if DAS can provide a listing of positions in process at DAS. Commissioner Gilman noted that there are 425 positions currently posted on JobAps and that recruitment has been aggressive, and while there have been many retirements the statewide position count has remained fairly stable. She noted that the agency will send information on position data by agency, and summarize positions that have been posted, recruited, and are still under recruitment.

Representative France asked if the increase in work related injuries was an increase over what was expected or an increase in year over year work related injuries. Bob Giuditta, Statewide Workers' Compensation Program Director, responded that the increase is a combination of both, and is related to the departments of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) and Correction (DOC). He noted that several older claims have resulted in increased costs as they have required surgical reintervention.

Rep. France asked whether an analysis has been done of injury trends. Mr. Giuditta responded that DOC and DMHAS have health and safety committees that review injuries, look for trends, and conduct analyses. He also noted that DAS has a team in the statewide workers' compensation claims unit that links up with these committees to identify trends and work on preventative measures.

Representative Currey asked if DAS can share any reporting on these trends. Mr. Giuditta noted that the health and safety committees at the agencies would have that data.

The item was unanimously approved.

2022-03 for the Department of Criminal Justice. Transfer of \$663,033 from the Personal Services account to various accounts to cover anticipated requirements through the end of the year.

Senator Osten asked about the status of filling vacant positions. Acting Chief State's Attorney John Russotto responded that there are 72 vacant positions out of 501 authorized. Of the 72, he shared that 48 have been posted and are actively in the process of being filled., and the remaining 24 have yet to be posted. He noted that because of retirements and as the fiscal year nears an end, hiring is taking place on a rolling basis. Hiring for State's Attorneys has to go through the Criminal Justice Commission. Attorney Russotto estimates that by the end of the calendar year, DCJ will be back to a more typical level of vacancies. Senator Osten asked whether the level of vacancies requires the agency to cover position duties. Mr. Russotto responded affirmatively, noting growing activity in the courts and in post-conviction activity, with overall case activity almost back to pre-pandemic levels. Senator Osten asked if DCJ human resources staff are within DCJ or at DAS. Mr. Russotto responded that the staff are at DCJ and that the agency is not part of the HR consolidation efforts.

Representative Walker asked about the software costs as a component of the Other Expenses portion of the FAC item. Mr. Russotto responded that they are an ongoing cost and are included in the Governor's proposed budget adjustments for FY 2023. He noted that the FAC transaction is a matter of timing of project completion and wasn't included as part of the adopted budget for the biennium. Representative Walker also asked if DCJ has an agreement with DAS yet related to information technology (IT) work. Mr. Russotto responded that DCJ has a small group of IT professionals. While the agency has people onsite to deal with current operations, there is some work requiring the experience and capabilities of DAS, such as body worn cameras.

The item was unanimously approved.

2022-04 for the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection. Transfer of \$650,000 from the Personal Services account to the Other Expenses account to support upgrades to agency software to accommodate recent legislation requiring automatic records erasure for certain crimes; funds provided in the budget were inadvertently budgeted in the wrong account.

Senator Osten asked whether the transfer of funds from Personal Services to Other Expenses was because it is more appropriate to pay consultants out of Other Expenses. Dane Silcox, Manager of the State Police Bureau of Identification, responded that this reflects the appropriate source for funding contractual consultant services. OPM Deputy Secretary Paul Potamianos added that funds were carried forward from FY 2021 into FY 2022 in the Personal Services account to support this effort, and because the work is being performed by specialized consultants, a transfer to the appropriate account is required.

Sen. Osten then asked whether the agency was going to lapse funds in Personal Services due to vacancies. Mr. Silcox said the agency would provide an answer.

Representative Walker asked whether the software DESPP was purchasing was for body cameras. Mr. Silcox explained that this was for a computerized criminal history repository used for employment background checks, job licensing background checks, and similar purposes. The "Clean Slate" legislation requires modification of the system to perform specific record erasures. Representative Walker commented on the specialized nature of that activity, and Mr. Silcox concurred.

Rep. Walker asked about the impact of the consolidation of management of IT services under DAS. Mr. Silcox responded that this is a mission-critical criminal justice system for sharing of both state and federal information and that DESPP certainly expects to be supported by DAS.

The item was approved unanimously.

2022-05 for the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services. Transfer of \$16,700,000 among various accounts to cover operational needs through the end of the fiscal year.

Senator Osten asked how many positions were waiting to be filled in DMHAS. Commissioner Navarretta responded that there were currently 390 positions state-wide in the process of being refilled and most were to support activities at Connecticut Valley Hospital. She noted that the agency had filled 450 positions through February. Sen. Osten asked how many positions the agency had, and the Commissioner responded 3,300. Sen. Osten noted that 390 vacancies represents more than 10% of the agency's position count.

The item was approved unanimously.

2022-06 for the Department of Transportation. Transfer of \$9,213,739 from the Personal Services account to the Other Expenses and Equipment accounts to support anticipated requirements through the end of the year.

Senator Osten asked where the agency stands in the hiring process. Commissioner Giulietti responded that 511 positions are filled but that there were 117 recent retirees. He also noted that retirements are outpacing the agency's ability to fill positions, and that April was a significant month for retirements. Senator Osten asked if the shortage attributed to motor vehicle fuel was in diesel or gas. Finance Administrator Gary Pescosolido responded that it's a mix of both.

Representative France asked if the increase in fleet and equipment repair is about a fleet that's beyond it repair or incidents on the road, whether they would be ongoing costs or an isolated incident. Commissioner Giulietti responded that DOT has been moving to replace the fleet at a point where the vehicles can still be sold. Keeping up with that change-out of vehicles allows DOT to maximize

opportunities. The Commissioner shared impressions from a recent visit to a garage, where he observed how maintenance improves efficiency.

Representative France asked whether hiring has begun for the 206 positions related to the Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act (IIJA). Deputy Commissioner Mark Rolfe responded that the agency has been hiring for those positions, with 72 of the 206 currently filled and another 90 in process. All the positions are being handled in tranches. He clarified that the equipment need in the FAC is for when those new positions are brought in.

The item was unanimously approved.

2022-07 for the Department of Education. Transfer of \$3,500,000 from the Regional Vocational Technical School System account to the Technical High School Other Expenses account to address increased utility and other contractual costs and to support after-school activities and other operational needs.

Senator Osten asked for information about what hiring delays. Kathy Demsey, Chief Financial Officer, responded that the Career and Technical Education Consortium of States (CTECS) was experiencing recruiting difficulties similar to those experienced by districts statewide, particularly in the areas of special education teachers and normal shortage areas such as math and science.

Sen. Osten asked about the increase in utility costs. Ms. Demsey responded that the increases are spread across all 20 buildings and are driven by a combination of increased utility costs and an increase school usage as the system returns to in-person, rather than hybrid, education, and increased after school activities relative to the previous school year.

Representative Walker asked how many vacancies are in the CTECS system. Dr. Ellen Solek, Interim Superintendent of CTECS, said that the vacancy rate is down from 230 at the beginning of the school year to 50 currently. She offered the example of Special Education, with paraprofessional vacancies declining from 50 to two.

The item was unanimously approved.

2022-08 for the Judicial Branch. Transfer of \$500,000.00 from the Personal Services account to the Other Expenses account to support upgrades to agency software to accommodate recent legislation requiring automatic records erasure for certain crimes; funds provided in the budget were inadvertently budgeted in the wrong account.

Representative Walker asked about the IT costs. Elizabeth Graham, Executive Director of the Administrative Services Division, cited section 208 of Public Act 21-2 as the source of the requirement and that the department is actively engaged in the work required. Representative Walker asked if this funding represents the only expense for that work. Ms. Graham responded that this funding represents all of the funds carried forward, but there are more expenses tied to IT for which the department has reached out to OPM. Representative Walker asked if the current transfer funding is for consultants. Ms. Graham responded affirmatively and that the department knows the due date for the work is coming up quickly. She noted there's also been a challenge in recruiting IT professionals. Representative Walker asked how many IT employees Judicial has, to which Ms. Graham responded approximately 100.

Senator Osten asked whether the funding could be used to fill positions. OPM Deputy Secretary Potamianos noted that this transfer to Other Expenses mirrors the same transaction as the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, where funding was carried forward from FY 2021 to FY 2022 in the Personal Services account, but was needed to cover costs supported in the Other Expenses account.

The item was unanimously approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Paul E. Potamianos", with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Paul E. Potamianos, Deputy Secretary, OPM  
Finance Advisory Committee Clerk