

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
March 4, 2021

NOTE: Due to the State's declaration of a public health emergency, out of an abundance of caution and in compliance with the State's social distancing measures and consistent with Executive Order 7B, the August Finance Advisory Committee meeting was conducted via teleconference. Executive Order 7B provides for procedures for public meetings in lieu of the provisions of chapter 14 of the general statutes for the duration of the declared public health emergency.

The executive order provides for public meetings to be held by conference call, video conference or other technology as long as:

1. the public has the ability to view or listen to each meeting or proceeding in real time, by telephone, video, or other technology;
2. any such meeting or proceeding is recorded or transcribed, and such recording or transcript shall be posted on the agency's website within seven (7) days of the meeting or proceeding, and made available within a reasonable time in the agency's office;
3. the required notice and agenda for each meeting or proceeding is posted on the agency's website and shall include information about how the meeting will be conducted and how the public can access it;
4. any materials relevant to matters on the agenda, including but not limited to materials related to specific applications, if applicable, shall be submitted to the agency a minimum of twenty four (24) hours prior and posted to the agency's website for public inspection prior to, during, and after the meeting, and any exhibits to be submitted by members of the public shall, to the extent feasible, also be submitted to the agency a minimum of twenty-four (24) hours prior to the meeting and posted to the agency's website for public inspection prior to, during, and after the meeting; and
5. all speakers taking part in any such meeting or proceeding shall clearly state their name and title, if applicable, before speaking on each occasion that they speak." (Ex. Order 7B, March 14, 2020).

The Lieutenant Governor and the Deputy Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management convened via Microsoft Teams. The viewing link was provided for the members of the public and the recording was posted on the Office of Policy and Management's Finance Advisory Committee Meeting website. The remaining Finance Advisory Committee members and state agency representatives participated remotely by telephone and Microsoft Teams.

PRESENT: Lieutenant Governor Susan Bysiewicz
Deputy Comptroller Martha Carlson
Deputy Treasurer Darrell Hill
Senator Catherine Osten
Senator Craig Miner
Representative Toni Walker
Representative Mike France
Representative Lucy Dathan
Deputy Secretary Konstantinos Diamantis
Office of Policy and Management, Finance Advisory Committee Clerk

Lieutenant Governor Bysiewicz called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

Senator Osten, Representative Walker, and Senator Miner requested that future meetings be held via Zoom or some other platform, or perhaps in person in one of the chambers of the General Assembly, in order to provide video as well as audio coverage of the proceedings. The Lieutenant Governor agreed with this suggestion and a format change will be explored.

The minutes of the January 7, 2021 meeting were adopted.

The following new transactions were considered by the committee:

2021-05 for the Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity, and Opportunity. Transfer of \$25,000.00 from the Personal Services to the Other Expenses account to provide for continued contractual administration of the Parent Leadership Training Institute.

Senator Osten asked about the reasons for the Personal Services lapse and which positions may have been vacant. Executive Director Steven Hernandez discussed the vacancies and noted that one would have been devoted to the training, resulting in the need for continued consultant coverage until the position is filled.

Representative Walker asked how many positions the agency had in total. Executive Director Hernandez confirmed that there are eight authorized positions, with four filled: African American Policy Advisor, Latin and Puerto Rican Affairs Policy Advisor, Women's Policy Advisor, and the Executive Director. Rep. Walker noted the desire to have the four positions filled as soon as possible.

The item was unanimously approved.

2021-06 for the Department of Administrative Services. Transfer of \$3,209,559.00 from Personal Services and from Rents and Moving to the Other Expenses and IT Services accounts to support information technology license costs and costs related to human resources administration.

After significant discussion about the reasons for the transfer and requests by members of the committee for further information, the item was tabled for a future meeting of the Finance Advisory Committee.

2021-07 for the Office of Consumer Counsel. Transfer of \$14,985.00 from Personal Services to the Indirect Overhead account to pay costs that carried over from fiscal year 2020 to fiscal year 2021.

The item was unanimously approved without discussion.

2021-08 for the Department of Transportation. Transfer of \$4,870,700.00 from Personal Services to Other Expenses to support contracted winter snow removal and general maintenance, repair, and other operating costs.

Senator Osten asked the agency to address the status of refilling vacancies and why this level of funding was available to transfer. Commissioner Giulietti responded that the Department of Transportation has a large number of vacancies since those who are eligible for DOT positions tend to take municipal jobs which tend to pay more than comparable state jobs. He also mentioned there is quick turnover in the agency, that DOT is working with OPM and DAS to fill the needed vacancies, and that some impact is felt as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Representative Dathan asked which appropriations are impacted by the proposed transfer. OPM Deputy Secretary Diamantis clarified the transfer is from Personal Services to Other Expenses. Representative Dathan asked if the agency has been able to hire temporary or contractual employees to help with these shortfalls. Robert Card, Bureau Chief of Finance and Administration, responded that DOT engages plowing contractors to assist in snow and ice removal. Representative Dathan asked if there was any overtime element in the transfer amount. Mr. Card responded that the savings come from the positions that can't be filled. Deputy Secretary Diamantis added that the agency currently has a \$14.3 million projected lapse in Personal Services, and that should the transfer go through, the agency would be left with a remaining lapse of \$9.5 million. He remarked that OPM is working with DOT to fill the positions that have been requested. Commissioner Giulietti added that the number of vacancies requested demonstrates how quick the agency's turnover is.

The item was unanimously approved.

2021-09 for the Public Defender Services Commission. Transfer of \$540,310.00 from the Expert Witnesses and Assigned Counsel accounts to Other Expenses to cover software licensing costs.

Representative Dathan asked if this was the same case management system referenced in recent budget adjustments. Steve Hunt, Financial Director of the Public Defender Services Commission, responded that these costs are different than the case management system, and are part of Microsoft Office 365 licenses currently being implemented by the Judicial Department for the commission. Representative Dathan asked whether all Office 365 costs are being handled by the Department of Administrative Services. Mr. Hunt clarified that the commission is not an Executive Branch agency and therefore is not included in the DAS contract arrangement for M365 licenses.

The item was unanimously approved.

2021-10 for the Department of Insurance. Transfer of \$355,238.00 from Fringe Benefits to the Other Expenses and Indirect Overhead accounts to provide temporary actuarial support and to fund indirect costs at the level determined by the Comptroller.

The item was unanimously approved without discussion.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Konstantinos Diamantis, Clerk