MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE FINANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Held in Room 1E at the Legislative Office Building, on March 6, 2014.

PRESENT: Lieutenant Governor Nancy Wyman
Deputy Comptroller Martha Carlson
Deputy Treasurer Christine Shaw
Senator Beth Bye
Representative Mae Flexer
Senator Robert Kane
Representative Craig Miner
Deputy Secretary Karen Buffkin
Office of Policy and Management, Finance Advisory Committee Clerk

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

The minutes of the January 9, 2014 meeting were adopted.

The following new transactions were considered by the committee:

FAC 2014-09 – Office of Governmental Accountability. Request to transfer $105,000 from the Citizens' Election Fund Administration account to the Elections Enforcement Commission account to cover payroll related costs.

This item was approved.

FAC 2014-10 – Department of Transportation. Request to transfer $9,000,000 from the Personal Services and Pay-As-You-Go Transportation Projects accounts to the Other Expenses account to cover immediate cash flow needs related to winter storm operations.

Senator Kane asked whether this transfer would create a deficiency in Personal Services. Robert Card, Chief of Finance and Administration for DOT, responded that this transaction would shift the deficiency from Other Expenses to Personal Services but would enable the agency to pay immediate bills and get through the remainder of the winter season. He also noted that the deficiency bill should be modified to recognize the Personal Services shortfall.

Senator Kane then asked if the $6.4 million of the Other Expenses shortfall attributable to snow removal is an estimate of actual costs to-date or is an estimate through the end of the fiscal year. Mr. Card responded that the figure represents expenditures to-date, and the final amount of any shortfall would be dependent on the weather for the remainder of the winter season.

Senator Kane then asked whether the Pay-As-You-Go (PAYGO) transfer assumed the availability of increased federal funding in the future. Mr. Card responded that unanticipated federal funding had been received this year, making state funds available for transfer.

Representative Miner asked whether local bridge repairs would be impacted by the PAYGO transfer. Mr. Card responded that, as a result of the need to pay for storm costs, the agency reprioritized some local bridge projects. Representative Miner requested that DOT communicate with impacted municipalities as soon as possible. Mr. Card assured the committee that such communication would occur.

Representative Miner then asked whether the deficiencies that are the subject of this FAC agenda were included in the latest overall surplus estimate. Karen Buffkin assured Representative Miner that all deficiencies had been factored into the latest surplus estimates by OPM.

This item was approved.

FAC 2014-11 – Public Defender Services Commission. Request to transfer $5,340,000 from several accounts to the Assigned Counsel – Criminal and the Assigned Counsel – Child Protection accounts to support the costs of increased caseloads in habeas and capital cases and the implementation of an online billing system and payment of bills carried over from last fiscal year.

Senator Kane asked if the $4,420,000 needed in the Assigned Counsel – Criminal account was all related to Habeas Corpus cases. Steven Hunt, Finance Director, replied that an estimated $1.8 million of the shortfall is related to the habeas backlog.

Senator Kane then asked whether the agency needed to take on all the habeas cases at once. Susan Storey, Chief Public Defender, responded affirmatively, noting that resolution of the backlog is both process- and cost-efficient.

Senator Kane asked whether the $1,100,000 shortfall in the Assigned Counsel – Child Protection account was entirely related to guardian ad litem costs. Mr. Hunt clarified that none of the shortfall in this account was attributable to guardian ad litem.

This item was approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Buffkin
Clerk