

MINUTES

JOINT FISCAL COMMITTEE Meeting of February 2, 2007

The Joint Fiscal Committee convened at 8:00 a.m. in Room 5, State House. Chief Fiscal Officer Stephen Klein presided over the meeting until the election of a new Chair.

Also present: Senators Bartlett, Cummings, Sears and Snelling
Representatives Bostic, Heath, Smith and Obuchowski

In addition, Rebecca Buck from the Joint Fiscal Office attended the meeting.

ELECTION OF CHAIR, VICE CHAIR AND CLERK:

1. a. **Chair:** Senator Snelling nominated Senator Bartlett to be Chair of the Joint Fiscal Committee for the 2007-08 biennial session. The motion was seconded by Representative Heath, whereupon the Committee cast one ballot to unanimously elect Senator Bartlett as Chair.

At this point Senator Bartlett assumed the Chair and presided over the remainder of the meeting.

b. **Vice Chair:** On a motion from Representative Heath. Seconded by Senator Snelling, the Committee cast one ballot unanimously electing Representative Obuchowski as Vice Chair for 2007-08.

c. **Clerk:** On a motion from Senator Sears, the Committee voted unanimously to elect Senator Snelling to serve as Clerk of the Committee for the current biennium.

JOINT FISCAL COMMITTEE AND OFFICE RULES AND POLICIES:

2. Mr. Klein sought approval of proposed Committee rules and policies for the current biennium as set forth in a manual entitled "Joint Fiscal Committee and Office Policies" dated January 2007, which was distributed prior to the meeting. That document consists of updated policies pertaining to the conduct of business and staff under which the Committee has operated for many years. The Joint Fiscal Committee is required by 2 V.S.A. §501 and §502 to adopt rules of procedure as well as policies governing the operation of its personnel.

The Fiscal Officer pointed out that the policy document includes the proposed statute change on grant acceptance which the Committee approved at its November 9 meeting for inclusion in the Fiscal Year 2007 budget adjustment bill. With the understanding that that change is contingent upon action by the General Assembly, Representative Heath moved approval of the rules and

policies for the 2007-08 biennium. Representative Bostic seconded the motion, which was adopted.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

3. The minutes of the November 9, 2006 meeting were approved as submitted.

[Note: Minutes from a brief meeting which took place on November 27, 2006 on the subject of assistance to dairy farmers will be distributed for approval at the next meeting. Minutes of the November 27 and December 12 joint meetings with the Health Access Oversight Committee, prepared by a Legislative Council staff member, are available on request.]

PUBLIC SAFETY GRANT (JFO #2284):

4. Ms. Buck from the Fiscal Office brought up the subject of a grant acceptance request from the Department of Public Safety which has been held up since late fall 2006 at the request of a prior Committee member. As part of its recent deliberations on Fiscal Year 2007 budget adjustments, the House Appropriations Committee scheduled testimony on the grant and notified the member who had issues with the request, but he opted not to attend that meeting.

Representative Heath confirmed that the House Appropriations Committee endorsed the grant and that it will be included in the budget adjustment bill. In the course of brief discussion of the timing of that bill, the Chair pledged that a strong effort will be made to achieve timely legislative approval of the proposed grant to Public Safety.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 a.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Virginia F. Catone
Joint Fiscal Office