Support Staff Committee Meeting Minutes

2019 NCSL Legislative Summit
Nashville, Tennessee
August 5, 2019

Call to Order
The meeting of the Support Staff Committee was called to order at 3:50 p.m. by Martha Jarrow (Ark.), vice chair.

Attendance
The following members of the committee were present: Martha Jarrow (Ark.), vice chair; Ann-Marie Sweeney (Pa.), vice chair; Kay Inabnet (Wis.), Alan Whittington (Tenn.), Mandi McGowan (Ore.), Felisha Brown (Miss.), Sarah Armistead (Va.), Jackie Scott (Va.), Brittany Yunker Carlson (Wash.), Sarah Bannister (Wash.), Mary Gibson (Mass.), Lourdes Litchfield (Texas), Joshua Babel (Ariz.), Tara Jenkins (Tenn.), Kim Cox (Tenn.), Patience Worrel (Texas), Michelle Wright (Va.), Jeannine Layell (Va.), Erin Gillitzer (Wis.), Ron Smith (La.), and Lisa Davis (Miss.). Also present were Portia Brown (Va.), Joanetta Kendrick (Miss.), Tammy Cowart (Miss.), Greg Glass (Tenn.), Melanie Newby (Va.), Bladen Finch (Va.), Sabrina Lewellen (Ark.).

Approval of Minutes
Upon a motion by Sarah Armstead (Va.), and seconded by Joshua Babel (Ariz.), the minutes of the last meeting held April 27, 2019, at the Spring Meeting in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, were approved.

Old Business
Vice Chair Martha Jarrow (Ark.) updated the committee on the upcoming PDS in Seattle in September and the various duties charged to Support Staff. She noted that all Staff Section Breakouts have moderator volunteers, and she thanked those who volunteered.

As far as the Expo, participating states so far are the California House, Arkansas, Wisconsin, Virginia House of Delegates, Missouri, North Carolina and Palau; the vendors that have agreed to participate are International Roll-Call and Tallan. Vice Chairs Martha Jarrow (Ark.) and Ann-Marie Sweeney (Pa.) stressed if any other states are considering having a booth at the Expo, please let them know as soon as possible. They referred committee members to the video on the NCSL website, which received a very favorable response from the committee members who viewed it.

Vice Chairs Jarrow and Sweeney then discussed the committee’s two Concurrent Sessions planned for the upcoming PDS. One entitled: “We’re a Part of History!”, which will focus on the historical aspects of our legislatures as well as ASLCS, preserving the institutional knowledge of both the Society and our legislatures, and a need to foster and develop a sense of respect for the institutions. Brian Ebbert (CA), Pat O’Donnell (NE), and Sian Wilkins (National Assembly for Wales) have volunteered to be part of the concurrent panel. They are requesting the committee provide some questions in advance that they can cultivate their stories around. Committee members were asked for suggestions. Patience Worrel (Texas) suggested they talk...
about the greater challenges during their careers and the effects on staff and/or members, and if they see any trends. Lisa Davis (Miss.) asked if they could discuss how a bill becomes a law, since not every state has the same process. Vice Chair Ann-Marie Sweeney suggested that might be an interesting topic with a panelist from Wales, as well as one from our only unicameral state. Kay Inabnet (Wis.) asked if they might discuss this question: How do we know we are doing processes such as bill history and other research items correctly for a legislature 30 years from now? The committee also suggested soliciting additional questions via the ASLCS Facebook page.

The second Concurrent Session is entitled “Coaching the Legislative Team of the Future: Get to the Point!, and will cover the aspect that working effectively and respectfully in a team means being able to communicate succinctly and listen carefully. It will be an interactive session which Dr. Tammy Wehrle (Wis.) has volunteered to lead. Sarah Bannister (Wis.) and Ron Smith (La.) volunteered to help Dr. Wehrle with role playing in the interactive session. Dr. Wehrle promised that we will learn a lot about ourselves as well as our team in our communication styles and how we can work effectively and respectfully with each other.

New Business
Joshua Babel (Ariz.) brought up a request he received from Chair Neva-Marie Parker (Calif.) regarding video-recording Concurrent Sessions. Ron Smith (La.) discussed the important historical perspective for the Society to be able to save Concurrent Sessions for future viewing and suggested recording should be done periodically, if not annually. Mr. Babel noted ASLCS has a YouTube page where they could be hosted, as well as on the NCSL page or the ASLCS Facebook page. There was a concern that knowing a session is being recorded might lead to sensitivities in either the presentations or questions asked during the session. A discussion was held about this concern and whether it could inhibit people instead of eliciting activeness during the Concurrent Session. The consensus was that careful consideration should be taken when deciding which Concurrent Session to record.

Adjournment
There being no further business before the committee, upon a motion by Patience Worrel (Texas), and seconded by Jackie Scott (Va.), the meeting was adjourned at 4:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Martha Jarrow (Ark.), vice chair
Ann-Marie Sweeney (Pa.), vice chair