



WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

AIRPORT AUTHORITIES

Room 225 Northwest, State Capitol
Madison, Wisconsin

January 16, 2007
10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

[The following is a summary of the January 16, 2007 meeting of the Special Committee on Airport Authorities. The file copy of this summary has appended to it a copy of each document prepared for or submitted to the committee during the meeting. A digital recording of the meeting is available on our Web site at <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/lc>.]

Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Stone called the meeting to order. The roll was called and it was determined that a quorum was present.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Rep. Jeff Stone, Chair; Sen. Jeff Plale; Reps. Mark Honadel, Fred Kessler, and John Townsend; and Public Members Rich Abelson, George Torres, James White, Terry Witkowski, and Dan Wruck.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS EXCUSED: Public Members Jason Bittner, Terrance Kurtenbach, and Dick Richards.

COUNCIL STAFF PRESENT: Ronald Sklansky, Senior Staff Attorney; and Scott Grosz, Staff Attorney.

Approval of the Minutes from the December 4, 2006 Meeting

Senator Plale moved, seconded by Representative Honadel, to approve the minutes of the December 4, 2006 meeting. The motion carried on a voice vote.

Description of Material Distributed

Mr. Sklansky summarized and reviewed WLC: 0032/1, generally relating to authorizing the creation of local airport districts. After noting a few technical errors in the draft, Mr. Sklansky described some of the basic provisions in the draft including the following:

1. The draft authorizes a city, village, or county, or a combination of them, to create a local airport district as a separate local unit of government. The creation of an airport authority is not mandated.
2. The draft provides that a district board will consist of nine members serving staggered four-year terms. Board members will represent a district's local and surrounding communities.
3. The draft authorizes a local airport district to issue revenue bonds and exercise the power of eminent domain. However, a district may not levy taxes.

Mr. Sklansky also noted that he received a contact from the Department of Employee Trust Funds indicating that, while the draft appears to authorize employees of a district to participate in the Wisconsin Retirement System, the draft could be clarified specifically to so provide.

Discussion of Committee Assignment

Following a discussion of WLC: 0032/1, the committee came to the following conclusions:

1. If Milwaukee County creates a local airport district, Milwaukee County employees who become district employees may continue to participate in the county retirement system or may elect to participate in the Wisconsin Retirement System. If a district employee remains in the Milwaukee County Retirement System, the district will make the appropriate payments to that system. Representative Kessler asked that language be drafted to provide that a district employee in the Wisconsin Retirement System may not collect a pension from the Milwaukee County Retirement System until the person retires from district employment.
2. A local airport district must recognize, and bargain in good faith with, current bargaining units, both during the existence of a contract and when a contract terminates.
3. When a local airport district sells or otherwise disposes of unneeded or unwanted property, it must do so consistent with its obligations under federal law, regulations, and assurances associated with accepting grants from the Federal Aviation Administration or any other agency of the United States or of Wisconsin.
4. A transfer agreement between a local governmental unit and a local airport district may include financial consideration to the local governmental unit.
5. The surrounding community which will be represented on a local airport district board must include noise abatement areas.
6. A local airport district will be able to exercise the power of eminent domain only if a motion to do so receives at least six votes.

7. An amendment to the bill draft will be prepared to authorize a local airport district to impose a property tax in order to meet its financial obligations.

Other Business

There was no other business considered at this time.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

RS:jal