

MINUTES OF THE STATUTE LAW COMMITTEE MEETING
2021-2023 Biennium
November 23, 2021

The Statute Law Committee held its first meeting of the 2021-2023 biennium as a Zoom conference.

Agenda Item I. Chair Roger Goodman (RG) called the meeting to order at 11:02 AM. Members and others in attendance introduced themselves.

Members present: Chair Roger Goodman, Vice Chair Taylor Wonhoff (TW), Bernard Dean (BD), Brad Hendrickson (BH), Acting SCS Staff Director Kim Johnson (KJ), Jim Morishima (JM) attending in proxy for Jill Reinmuth, Jamie Pedersen (JP), Kyle Sciuchetti (KS), and Sam Thompson (ST).

Members absent: Peter Abbarno, Sharon Brown, and Jill Reinmuth.

Also in attendance: Kathleen Buchli (KB), Code Reviser and Secretary to the committee; Mark Lally (ML), Deputy Code Reviser; Kevin Shotwell (KS2), Assistant Code Reviser and Staff Attorney; Jennifer Meas (JM2), Washington State Register Editor; Jessica Braatz (JB), Fiscal Officer and Administrative Assistant; Shayne O'Grady (SO), Assistant Fiscal Officer and Administrative Assistant; Marleda Jones (MJ), Office Assistant.

Agenda Item II. JP moved to approve the minutes of the June 15, 2021, meeting, seconded by TW. All in attendance voted to approve. The minutes were adopted.

Agenda Item III. KB updated the committee on publications. There are supply chain issues with the Revised Code of Washington (RCW), but the remaining RCW sets are expected to be printed in the next week or two. The online versions of the Washington Administrative Code (WAC) and Washington State Register (WSR) are official and the Code Reviser's Office (CRO) is looking into making the online version of the RCW official. JM2 gave an update on the WSR not being printed on paper except on a case-by-case basis. The online version is easy to read and there is still the option to receive the WSR on CD. KB gave an update on Session Laws; all are published and distributed.

Agenda Item IV. KB shared an overview of the CRO financial budget; all is well and accounted for.

Agenda Item V. KS2 talked about the Technical Corrections Bill. Part 1 merges sections that were amended multiple times, Part 2 cleans up old language and references, such as an out-of-date organizational name for the Department of Commerce, and Part 3 makes general corrections such as decodifying groups that are no longer in operation. This process is ongoing and may need a few more edits before it is done. The committee discussed the process of decodification.

Agenda Item VI. KB discussed HB 1230, on re-paragraphing the RCW and WAC. The idea is to make the readability of sub-sections clearer. The CRO is working with Leg-Tech on how to do this and recommends narrowing the focus to RCW for now. It is not yet clear if the CRO has the authority to change the structure of the WAC. The committee discussed a few possibilities regarding a program, human hours to edit, costs involved, and the possibility of more than one version of such official documents. Some potential negatives or extra costs: dual column printing is narrow and would make legibility harder, technology costs, longer documents, and inadvertently changing meaning. The CRO will continue to work with Leg-Tech to determine if there are other ways to make the RCW more readable.

Agenda Item VII. Public Comment: none.

Agenda Item VIII. ML informed the committee that the CRO is still focusing efforts on obtaining remote bill drafting software and estimates that it may be three to four years before this is realized.

The committee discussed current employment trends and the difficulty in recruiting staff this year as compared to previous years. KB gave an overview of the CRO's remote work, as well as new hires and current capacity.

The committee discussed the Legislative Campus Modernization project. The Pritchard Library Building will be affected, but not likely within the next five years. KB is currently monitoring progress to ensure the CRO has adequate space when the office moves to a different building.

ML discussed modernizing the CR-102 form to improve fairness and language. A previous audit revealed a need to make the form easier for agencies to use, and JM2 has been working on the update. The CRO sent inquiries to multiple agencies and received very little feedback. The form shall be finalized soon for roll-out.

JP moved to adjourn, seconded by TW. Thereupon, Chair RG thanked members for participation and adjourned the meeting at 12:04 PM, the next meeting to be held at the call of the chair.

ROGER GOODMAN, Chair Date

KATHLEEN BUCHLI, Secretary