

MINUTES OF THE STATUTE LAW COMMITTEE MEETING
2023-2025 Biennium
June 20, 2024

The Statute Law Committee held its second meeting of the 2023-2025 biennium as a hybrid conference with some attendees in person and others via Zoom.

Members present: Chair Roger Goodman (RG), Vice Chair Sam Thompson (ST), Bernard Dean (BD) (Zoom), Jamie Pedersen (JP) (Zoom), Sarah Bannister (SB), Kim Johnson (KJ), Jill Reinmuth (JR), Kyle Sciuchetti (KDS), and Kathryn Leathers (KT).

Members absent: Greg Cheney (GC).

Also in attendance: Kathleen Buchli (KB), Code Reviser and Secretary to the committee; Mark Lally (ML), Deputy Code Reviser; Alice Im (AI), Senior Assistant Code Reviser; Jennifer Meas (JM) (Zoom), Washington State Register Editor; and Shayne O'Grady (SO), Administrative Assistant.

Agenda Item I. Chair Roger Goodman (RG) called the meeting to order at 12:04 PM. Members and others in attendance introduced themselves.

Agenda Item II. RG moved to approve the minutes of the November 27, 2023, meeting, seconded by ST. All in attendance voted to approve. The minutes were adopted.

Agenda Item III. ML provided background on the Code Reviser's Office (CRO) use of the Legislative Support Services (LSS) fiscal and accounting staff and their request for the Code Reviser's step increase to be approved by the Statute Law Committee. RG moved that the committee approve the Code Reviser's standard COLA and step increase that will take effect on July 1, 2024. Seconded by JP. All in attendance voted to approve and the motion carried.

Agenda Item IV. AI updated the committee on publications. The 2024 Session Laws (SL) became available online on April 29, 2024, and 150 sets were ordered to be printed. The online release was in record time, thanks to Barbara Perdue. Currently, the CRO is codifying session laws and anticipates the online version of the 2024 Revised Code of Washington (RCW) will be available at the end of August. This will be the official version. Books will be ordered at that time

and will be available in September.

Agenda Item V. ML provided an overview of the multiple amendment review process. ST made a motion to approve the CRO's recommendation for the 2024 multiple amendment table, seconded by JP. All in attendance voted to approve and the motion carried.

Agenda Item VI. KB shared an overview of the CRO financial budget. The office is on track to send back \$525,000 to the general fund at the end of the fiscal year. The publications account has a balance of over \$833,000.00 and reflects sales of publications as well as moneys received from publishers for access to the code. The CRO has an allocation of approximately \$200,000 per year related to printing but has not utilized this full amount. A new printer was purchased to replace the wide body printer.

Agenda Item VII. KB updated the members on a request from the public to initiate rulemaking in a Washington Administrative Code (WAC) chapter. The request was to remove gender-based pronouns from that WAC chapter and to replace them with non-gender-based pronouns. The CRO responded to the requestor that the office does not plan to take action on the request and to leave the relevant rules as they currently read and to continue drafting using the direction previously provided by the legislature. Beginning in 2007 and through a series of six bills, the legislature established that "gender neutral" would be achieved through using "he or she." The CRO will continue to follow the legislature's direction on this issue until the legislature provides a different standard to follow.

JM provided further information as the requestor sent the request to multiple agencies. Most agencies are moving forward with the request, with only a few concerns from some agencies.

KB clarified that this request is regarding the WAC, but if a request is made regarding the RCW for a change, we will work with the requestor and will avoid pronouns by restating the noun, which will provide another level of clarity. When the legislature changes its standard, the CRO will respond in kind.

Agenda Item VIII. KB provided an update on the CRO's office move and current locations. The office is hoping to move into the Modular building in November. The CRO will be in the Modular for 2 years, then will move into the new Pritchard building when construction is completed.

KB presented a statistical summary of the number of bill drafts passing through the CRO.

Chair RG thanked members for participation. JP moved, seconded by ST to adjourn the meeting at 12:32 PM, the next meeting to be held at the call of the Chair.

ROGER GOODMAN, Chair Date

KATHLEEN BUCHLI, Secretary