

WATOA Teleconference 2/8/12

1. Call to order 2:08 PM
 - a. Mike, Linda, Victoria Lincoln from AWC, Jeff, Megan, Jim, Dal, Chris
2. Approval of minutes from 1/11/12, Jim moved, Jeff seconded
3. Treasurer Report—Dea Drake
 - a. None, Dea not in attendance
4. State Legislative Update—Victoria Lincoln
 - a. 60-day short session
 - b. Passed important deadline on Friday Feb. 3rd. After major deadline on Tues. 14th, many bills will be dead. Session ends March 8.
 - c. Communications bill (HB 1711) (bill from last year and came back this year), it got narrowed down this year, more rural ports than PUDs, took the cities out. Still got push back from cable, sent around new drafts but didn't make it out of committee by Friday's deadline Feb. 3, 2012. Considered dead this year.
 - d. Short session, 2nd round of biennium, no money, telecommunications issues as far as Victoria can tell, are dead. Let her know if there are other bills you want her to keep an eye on.
 - e. www.leg.wa.gov to look up bills and legislators.
 - f. Issue of the budget: severe. WA lags behind nation. WA budget relies 50% on sales tax. So if people don't spend money, but folks are working, the states coughers can still dry up. States that rely on income tax are in a better condition. Will see interesting things happening soon. Will affect local government budgets. Expect more job layoffs. Next revenue forecast on Feb. 14 at noon. They hope it is flat. Flat is the new up. If it goes up, will be great news. Haven't seen that since 2008/09. Budget shortfall now at \$1.5 billion. Was \$2 billion before special session in December 2011.
 - i. Ways and means cmte finished last night. Senate and House now go to the floor. Have until Feb. 14 to finish floor action and pass out of original house. Will start the ball rolling for discussions on budgets.
 - ii. Don't wait until after forecast to talk with legislators about budget/bill issues.
 - iii. Cities and Counties...news is grim. Expect huge hits, state shared revenues will be hit much harder than recent years. Could be nearly \$100 M for cities. Major concerns about pulling the plug on whole programs. Could hit pensions.
 1. AWC wants to encourage legislators not to use backs of local govt to balance budget. Remind legislators how important shared revenues are for cities. Don't eliminate whole programs. AWC wants to get people fired up. Raising taxes/revenues unlikely in this environment. Anticipate cuts, but hoping for thoughtful cuts.
 2. Some bills that could fill budget hole or cut costs may not have made legislative deadlines, but they can still be alive.
 3. AWC reports that 2500 positions have been eliminated in WA cities.
 - g. Website bill that could affect cities is in Rules now. AWC will be working to stop that bill. Info put on city websites considered public record. Questions arise about info on social media sites. Want Public Records Act to be easy to implement. (didn't get bill #)
 - h. (Mike Q) SB 6351 is an AWC bill, still alive. Giving tools to help cities with record request harassers. Create tools to deal with a "requester." Good for bigger agencies that have legal dollars. Amendment says that smaller agencies can spend no more than 1% on these issues. Another bill about commercial requests is also still alive.

- i. (Jeff Q) Heard anything from bill on UW? Nothing since they had a workshop on where they're at. Anticipates it won't move in the rest of this session. Last half of session will focus on budget/money issues.
 - j. FYI from previous minutes: you can use mobile devices to sign in & testify at hearings
- 5. Quarterly newsletter assignments
 - a. Discuss content at the retreat, Linda has some ideas
 - b. Articles due March 23
 - c. Praises for content and look, Dal designing it, Linda editing
 - d. Jeff suggests newsletter be entered in 3CMA...or contest like that. Dal got kudo from Playbox during E-NATOA, our newsletter was put on the screen.
- 6. Retreat Agenda
 - a. Recruit more production staff in WATOA, role of production cmte?
 - b. Revisit committee assignments, and how to make them more productive
 - c. Create a legislative agenda
 - d. Expand presidency term to 2 years
 - e. National NATOA update via conference call
 - f. Determine WATOA conf. date, location, focus (NATOA Sept. 26-29 New Orleans)
 - g. Boost WATOA membership
 - h. Review mission statement, scholarship to NATOA
 - i. Newsletter assignments
 - j. Treasurer report: update on who has renewed, status of budget
- 7. Miscellaneous Notes
 - a. Tri-cities in the middle of franchise renewal
 - b. Jim, stuck in the middle of Comcast franchise, has stalled on Comcast side
 - c. See everyone March 2 at WATOA board meeting at Yakima City Hall 10 AM-3 PM
- 8. Adjournment 2:56 PM