

Senate Interim Committee on Rules and Executive Appointments

May 28th, 2014

Oregon State Capitol, Hearing Room B

Members Present: Sen. Diane Rosenbaum, Chair; Sen. Ted Ferrioli, Vice-Chair; Sen. Ginny Burdick; Sen. Lee Beyer

Excused: Sen. Bruce Starr

Executive Appointments

On Monday, May 5th, Governor John Kitzhaber submitted to the Oregon State Senate for consideration and confirmation 78 new appointments and reappointments to a variety of state boards and commissions. The Governor submitted one agency director for Senate confirmation: Sean Robbins as Director of the Oregon Business Development Department.

The Senate Interim Committee on Rules and Executive Appointments held confirmation hearings for the director and new appointments on Wednesday, May 28th. Prior to consideration by the Senate, several nominees were withdrawn for appointment by the Governor: Shirley Blanchard, Teacher Standards and Practices Commission (TSPC); Bridget Carnahan, State Board of Direct Entry Midwifery; Maurice Rahming, Oregon Transportation Commission; Daniel Gates, Ocean Policy Advisory Council; and Sean Kolmer, Oregon Health Policy Board (OHPB). The individuals being considered for reappointment were not required to appear before the Committee.

The members of the Committee were provided with interest forms and/or resumes for each individual being considered by appointment or reappointment. The new appointments and director came before the Committee and provided brief testimony about their background and reasons for wanting to serve in the position. Questions were directed to Mr. Robbins; Melissa Cribbins and Robin McArthur, Land Conservation and Development Commission (LCDC); James Sager and Marty Perez, TSPC; and Mr. Kolmer, OHPB.

Sean Robbins, Director, Oregon Business Development Department

Mr. Robbins spoke to his experience in the field of regional economic and community development, how economic development provides a pathway to improving the lives of families, children; focus on retention and expansion of existing companies/business and targeted regional recruitment,

The Committee asked Mr. Robbins the following questions: how he would approach economic development in the different geographic regions of the state; whether he has specific strategies for the retention and expansion of existing businesses; whether he has a strategy for sage grouse management; how many senators there are east of the cascades; and the role of workforce preparedness as it relates to business retention and expansion.

Melissa Cribbins and Robin McArthur, LCDC

Ms. Cribbins spoke to her history in Oregon, professional experience, and how her role as a county commissioner will inform her role on LCDC. Ms. McArthur addressed her background and experience in various levels of government regarding economic development, land use, and management of urban growth boundaries.

The Committee asked the for comments on the following issues within the land use system: the shortage of large industrial land sites; overly bureaucratized land use system and particularly the cost of urban growth boundary expansion; how to make the process better, more efficient, and less expensive for local governments; and regionalization of Oregon's planning and land use system.

Marty Perez and James Sager, TSPC

Mr. Perez and Mr. Sager explained their educational and professional background, including how it would contribute to their service on TSPC.

The Committee asked Mr. Sager whether there should be a role in the teacher evaluation process for student test scores and whether there should be a role of TSPC in teacher evaluations.

Sean Kolmer, OHPB

Mr. Kolmer explained his professional experience working in the health policy field including service to the Governor and on other state health policy boards.

The Committee asked Mr. Kolmer for comments on the following the issues: whether he had read the Maximus quality assurance reports; when was he first advised about the problems with Cover Oregon and whom did he tell about the problems; had he been lied to by parties involved in Cover Oregon; the role of the Public Employees Benefit Board (PEBB) in covering mental autism services; whether PEBB denied coverage for any services related to autism; and whether PEBB made decisions not to offer autism services until the Legislature required it

The Committee took action on 75 appointees by recommending to the full Senate that they be confirmed. On Thursday, May 29, the appointment of Mr. Kolmer was withdrawn by the Governor and the Senate confirmed the remaining 74 appointees.