

Grand Forks Legislative Committee

Friday, March 29 2019

City Hall A102

Attendees:

Al Grasser, Tangee Bouvette, Paul Houdek, Chief Mark Nelson, Chief Gary Lorenz, Todd Feland, Becky Ault, Candi Stjern, John Bernstrom, Pete Haga

The Grand Forks Legislative Committee participated in the weekly conference call with the North Dakota League of Cities.

It is the 56th of the allotted 80 days and it is anticipated conference committees will begin next week.

Council Member Vein was in Bismarck this week to attend hearings on water infrastructure and meet with legislators on related priority issues.

There are no committee hearings the City is attending and therefore no testimony to be prepared.

The Grand Forks Legislative Committee discussed HB1435 related to SIRM funding and expressed support for the Senate amended version in HB1435 that came out of committee with a unanimous Do Pass recommendation and restores \$40M of the allocated funding as a grant. The bill is expected to go to the floor next week.

The League reported SB2275 failed this week but there are conversations ongoing about finding a path forward with a funding tool for long-term essential infrastructure. Continued discussions with legislators on possible options are encouraged.

The committee noted the passage of HB1053 related to military retiree pension income tax relief and the impact, along with SB2306, on ND's quality of life and support of the military, its installations and military members in the state.

The committee continues to support efforts to fully fund the DHS Budget (SB2012) as it currently stands due to impact on the 1915i Medicaid home and community-based services amendment to include peer support, housing, employment and child services, an OAR for LaGrave on First, expanded SUD vouchers, and Emergency Services redesign that supports mobile mental health response teams.

The committee also discussed the three NDPERS-related bills, SB2046, SB2047, SB2048, and will continue to communicate opposition on SB2046 and SB2047 which both relate to formula changes and support for SB2048 which includes increases in contributions.

The committee noted support for the amended version of HB1268 related to forfeiture of property.

Discussed bills include:

SB2275: (Infrastructure Bonding)

This was the companion bill to HB1066 that failed but conversations on long-term infrastructure funding continue.

HB1435: (Statewide Interoperable Radio Network)

This bill provides authorization and appropriation for the Statewide Interoperable Radio Network (SIRN). The City supports this bill with the Senate amendment to return \$40M from loan to grant.

HB1053: (Income Tax Relief for Military Retirement)

This bill relates to income tax relief for military retirees. This passed the Senate by a vote of 38-6 and is one more measure of “military-friendliness” for the State.

SB2306: (Occupational Licensure of Military Members and Spouses)

This bill facilitates military members and their spouses to become licensed for specific occupations in the State. The bill passed the House with amendments and will return to the Senate.

SB2012: (Department of Human Services budget)

This provides appropriation for DHS and includes several key provisions that directly impact City entities to include Grand Forks Public Health and Grand Forks Police Department, as well as partners LaGrave on First. It includes expansion of SUD vouchers, 1915i eligible reimbursements, childhood behavioral health, mental health crisis team support, peer support and recovery support. The current allocations signals a positive shift in funding best practices related to behavioral health in several areas and is supported by the City.

HB1268: (Forfeiture of Property)

The City supports the currently proposed amendment and will support the bill if the amended version is passed.

SB2046, SB2047, SB2048: (NDPERS)

These bills relate to NDPERS and are all still in committee. The City is opposed to SB2046 and SB2047 and supports SB2048.