

Chairman Wm. Weston J. Newton

*First Vice-Chair:
Laurie Slade Funderburk*

Legislative Oversight Committee



*Nathan Ballentine
Gary E. Clary
Kirkman Finlay III
Joseph H. Jefferson Jr.
Walton J. McLeod
Joshua Putnam
Samuel Rivers Jr.
Tommy M. Stringer
Bill Taylor*

*William K. (Bill) Bowers
Raye Felder
Phyllis J. Henderson
Mia S. McLeod
Ralph W. Norman
Robert L. Ridgeway III
James E. Smith, Jr.
Edward R. Tallon Sr.
Robert Q. Williams*

South Carolina House of Representatives

*Jennifer L. Dobson
Research Director*

*Cathy A. Greer
Administration Coordinator*

**Post Office Box 11867
Columbia, South Carolina 29211
Telephone: (803) 212-6810 • Fax: (803) 212-6811
Room 228 Blatt Building**

*Charles L. Appleby IV
Legal Counsel*

*Carmen McCutcheon
Research Analyst*

**Healthcare Subcommittee Meeting
March 17, 2016
1:00 p.m.
Room 409 - Blatt Building**

Archived Video Available

- I. You may access archived video of this meeting by visiting the South Carolina General Assembly's website (<http://www.scstatehouse.gov>) and click on "Citizens' Interests," then click on "House Legislative Oversight Committee Postings and Reports." Lastly, click on "Video Archives" for a listing of archived videos for the Legislative Oversight Committee.

Minutes

- I. House Rule 4.5 requires the standing committees of the House to prepare and make available for public inspection, in compliance with Section 30-4-90, the minutes of full committee meetings. House Rule 4.5 further provides that such minutes need not be verbatim accounts of such meetings. It is the practice of the House Legislative Oversight Committee to provide minutes, which are not verbatim accounts of such meetings, for its Subcommittee meetings.
- II. The Healthcare Subcommittee (Subcommittee) meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. by Subcommittee Chairman Nathan Ballentine on Thursday, March 17, 2016, in Room 409 of the Blatt Building, Columbia, South Carolina. The following Subcommittee Members were present when the meeting was called to order: Chairman Ballentine, Representative Mia McLeod, Representative Bill Taylor, and Representative Walton J. McLeod.
- III. Representative Walt McLeod moved to approve the Subcommittee minutes from its meeting on February 11, 2016. A roll call vote was held, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

Rep. Walt McLeod’s motion to approve the Subcommittee minutes from February 11, 2016:	Yea	Nay	Not Voting
Rep. Ballentine	✓		
Rep. Mia McLeod	✓		
Rep. Walton McLeod	✓		
Rep. Taylor	✓		

Discussion of the Commission for the Blind

- I. Chairman Ballentine swore in both of those present from the Commission for the Blind (Commission) who were present to testify on behalf of the agency. The representatives were: Elaine Robertson (Special Projects Coordinator) and Kyle Walker (Consumer Services Director).

Committee staff provided a brief summary of the Commission’s progress through the oversight process.

Chairman Ballentine explained that the format of the meetings had been revised due to the insight gained by the Subcommittee from its first year of existence, and that the format had already been explained to the agency by Committee staff.

Chairman Ballentine also said that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the history, mission, and strategic plan of the Commission, and he gave some specific topics that the Subcommittee could focus on.

- II. Committee staff provided a brief summary of the Commission’s history and mission.

Chairman Ballentine asked for suggestions of ways in which the General Assembly could assist the Commission in filling the vacancies on its Board of Commissioners (Board) that have been unfilled for years. Mr. Walker testified that the Commission had nominated people to fill the positions, but that he was unaware of the status of those nominations. He testified that the Commission was eager to fill the positions.

Representative Taylor asked for a summary of the nomination process for Board members. Mr. Walker testified that he was not certain of the specifics of the nomination process for Board members, but that he would provide more information on the process to the Subcommittee in writing.

Representative Walt McLeod if there was a statutory requirement that the Chairman of the Board be visually impaired. Mr. Walker answered in the negative.

- III. Ms. Robertson and Mr. Walker provided an overview of the agency’s strategic plan and the considerations that went into the development of the plan.

Representative Taylor asked if the Commission had consulted with its consumers for their advice during the development of the new strategic plan. Ms. Robertson testified that the Commission did not consult its clients in the development of the new plan.

Representative Taylor asked for more information on the needs assessment that was mentioned in the presentation of the strategic plan. Mr. Walker testified that the Federal Rehabilitation Act required state agencies to perform needs assessments and provide more details about the needs assessment process the Commission performs.

Representative Taylor asked for an estimate of the number of people employed at the Commission. Ms. Robertson testified that about 129 people worked at the agency, and that the employees are spread across eight regional campuses and a central state office.

Representative Taylor asked for an estimate of the number of consumers the Commission had on a typical day. Ms. Robertson testified that the Commission had about 1,400 consumers on any typical day.

Representative Taylor asked for an estimate of the number of consumers with which the Commission had direct contact with on a typical day. Mr. Walker testified that he would provide that information to the Subcommittee in written form due to the difficulty in estimating the figure.

Representative Walt McLeod asked if the Commission had any sort of mutually supportive relationship with the School for the Deaf and Blind (School). Mr. Walker answered that the Commission had an officer stationed at the School and that one of its senior managers was seated on the School's Board of Commissioners.

Representative Walt McLeod asked if a graduate of the School would become a consumer of the Commission. Mr. Walker testified that the Commission frequently tried to establish relationships with students at the School before they graduated so as to maintain the connection into adulthood.

Representative Mia McLeod asked if consumers who were sheltered in childhood due to visual impairment but developed more independency due to Commission services receive some sort of transition service. Ms. Robertson testified that the Commission employed counselors to identify the points at which consumers reached the appropriate level of independency, after which points they would be given vocational training and other services. Mr. Walker testified that the Commission tested independency skills among its consumers by having them perform tests in a simulated apartment.

Representative Taylor asked for the amount of federal money the Commission receives. Mr. Kyle testified that the Commission receives about 80% of its funding from the federal government and 20% from the state.

Chairman Ballentine thanked Mr. Kyle and Ms. Robertson for attending the meeting, and expressed his wish for Commissioner Kirby to attend the next meeting. He also asked for the Commission to submit more information to the Subcommittee related to the vacant positions on the Board.

VI. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.