

**MINUTES**  
of the  
**LEGISLATIVE CONSUMER COMMITTEE**

January 8, 2009

State Capitol, Room 335, Helena, MT

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT**

Representative Walter McNutt, Vice Chairman

Senator Joe Tropila

Senator Terry Murphy

**STAFF PRESENT**

Robert A. Nelson, Consumer Counsel

Mary Wright, Attorney

Mandi Shulund Hinman, Secretary

**VISITORS PRESENT**

Mike Pichette, NorthWestern Energy

Dave Gibson, Qwest

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Representative McNutt.

**COUNSEL STAFF/POSITION VACANCIES**

Bob thanked the committee for their time and reminded them that the office currently had two vacant positions: Rate Analyst and Economist, the latter of which Larry Nordell is filling half time. After reviewing three rounds of applications to fill the Rate

Analyst position there is an individual that Bob would like to offer the position to. He has been interviewed and his references have been checked. The applicant has a strong educational background with a Bachelors Degree in Economics and a Masters Degree in Accounting, but has no experience directly in Utility Regulation so a period of training would be necessary. The position was advertised at \$55,000-\$75,000.

Bob requested authorization to offer the Rate Analyst position to Paul Schulz at a starting salary of \$56,000 increasing to \$61,000 after a 12 month probationary period. Representative McNutt clarified that this position has been advertised three times with limited response and Bob added that the applications that have been received either had no experience or fell outside the salary range offered so this has been a difficult position to fill. Senator Murphy commented that it appeared this applicant was established in Helena and was looking for something permanent.

MOTION: Representative McNutt moved approval to offer the Rate Analyst position to Paul Schulz at a starting salary of \$56,000 for a 12 month probationary period, increasing to \$61,000 thereafter and training will be provided.

VOTE: The motion passed unanimously.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

\_\_\_\_\_, Robert Nelson, Consumer Counsel

Accepted by the Committee this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2009

\_\_\_\_\_, Chairman