

Transcript Prepared By the Clerk of the Legislature
Transcriber's Office

General Affairs Committee
February 22, 2016

[CONFIRMATION]

The Committee on General Affairs met at 1:30 p.m. on Monday, February 22, 2016, in Room 1510 of the State Capitol, Lincoln, Nebraska, for the purpose of conducting a public hearing on gubernatorial appointments. Senators present: Tyson Larson, Chairperson; Matt Hansen; Dan Hughes; Mark Kolterman; John McCollister; and Merv Riepe. Senators absent: Colby Coash, Vice Chairperson, and Ken Schilz.

SENATOR LARSON: Welcome to the General Affairs Committee. I am Senator Tyson Larson of O'Neill, the Chairman of the committee. Committee members that will be joining us throughout the process, I have Jeff Fryman, my committee clerk. Senator Riepe of Omaha will be here. Senator McCollister of Omaha is just walking in. Senator Hughes of Venango; Senator Schilz of Ogallala is sick today and won't be able to make it. To my far right will be Senator Kolterman of Seward; Senator Hansen of Lincoln; Senator Coash of Lincoln; and Josh Eickmeier is my legal counsel. There are three different sign-in sheets located on the tables in the back of the room. One sign-in sheet is for those not publicly testifying but want their presence and position noted as an exhibit for the official committee record. A second sign-in sheet for those who are present at the committee hearing and who offered written testimony in lieu of testifying, which will be noted on the committee statement. And the third sign-in sheet is for anyone planning on testifying before the committee. When it is your turn to testify, give your sign-in sheet to one of the pages so that they can give it to the committee clerk. This will help us make a more accurate public record. After each introduction, the Chair will ask for testimony from the public. When it is your turn to come up and testify, please speak clearly into the microphone. Please tell us your name and please spell your first and last name. Also, please tell us whom you're representing, if anyone. For those...I know this is a confirmation day, those that are looking to be confirmed will be able to talk as much as they wish. We will be using the light system for our hearings. Testifiers following those will have three minutes which will be represented by a green light when you begin; an amber light when you have one minute remaining; and a red light when your time is up. Please turn off your cell phones or any electronic devices that might make noise on silent. Please keep your conversations to a minimum or take them into the hallway. The General Affairs Committee is participating in a pilot program to go paperless, therefore we are only accepting handouts in written testimony electronically. Due to this new policy, if you would like to submit something, but only have paper copies, then we will accommodate you. We also do not allow visual aids or other display items. Because the committee is going paperless, senators are allowed and even encouraged to use electronic devices during the hearing. Thank you for your cooperation. And we will begin today's hearings with Harvey Varenhorst and his appointment to the Nebraska Art Council. [CONFIRMATION]

HARVEY VARENHORST: Just give me a second, (inaudible). [CONFIRMATION]

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SENATOR LARSON: That's not a problem. [CONFIRMATION]

HARVEY VARENHORST: Bear with me. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: Welcome to the General Affairs Committee. Did I pronounce your name correctly? Varenhorst? [CONFIRMATION]

HARVEY VARENHORST: Yes. Do you want me to sit here? [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: Yes, sir. [CONFIRMATION]

HARVEY VARENHORST: Yes, it's Harvey Varenhorst; first name is H-a-r-v-e-y, last name is Varenhorst, V-a-r-e-n-h-o-r-s-t. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: You don't have to sit down if you'd rather...if it's easier. [CONFIRMATION]

HARVEY VARENHORST: No, I'd rather sit down. (Inaudible) to get back up again. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: Okay. I didn't know. [CONFIRMATION]

HARVEY VARENHORST: Did you want me to stand (inaudible)? [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: It doesn't matter. I didn't know if it was going to be uncomfortable for you. [CONFIRMATION]

HARVEY VARENHORST: (Inaudible). [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: Tell us a little bit about yourself. [CONFIRMATION]

HARVEY VARENHORST: I think I submitted my life history to you on several pages. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: Yeah, we got that. [CONFIRMATION]

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HARVEY VARENHORST: (Exhibits 1, 2) All right, good. And as far as any of the arts and everything go, I think the biggest thing I have from the arts is my two children who are both into the music and very accomplished. Both of them received scholarships. My son even received a full scholarship from the Lionel Hampton School of Music at the University of Idaho. And my daughter received a partial here at UNL. Like I said, I've been, as far as the arts go, I think I've been in every opera house in the world. I think I've been in every music hall in the world. And I've always sort of done...even in the Marines, when I was in Asia, I got to Tokyo and the first place I went to was the Tokyo Opera and of all the plays that they were playing in Japan was Madam Butterfly. I've always appreciated the arts. I mostly appreciate the work that goes on behind the scenes, you know, especially like actors and the performers. I did have some hands-on experience in four Broadway plays, the Island Players in St. Simons Island, in Georgia, 400-seat theater. So I think I have some...more than an idea on both sides. And I have volunteered, like, unofficial for several of them. And I would just have to open it up, do you have any questions of me? [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: Any questions of the committee? Well, I'll ask...oh, sorry, Senator Hansen. [CONFIRMATION]

HARVEY VARENHORST: Yes, sir. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR HANSEN: Thank you, Chairman Larson. I'm just going to ask what's your favorite music hall in all of the world? [CONFIRMATION]

HARVEY VARENHORST: Probably depends upon what time of the year and what's playing, but Vienna Opera House. I don't think there's anything like it. And I got to see several...because I was with the Embassy...I was actually in Munich and I'd get sent to Vienna. And whenever I was in the Embassy in Vienna, they used to come around with the Ambassador's tickets, and I'd always go like...(raised his hand) me. But with the drug enforcement administration, we were usually last to be called saying we have a seat at the opera house. But I also think the one in Sidney, Australia, is very interesting. I remember what I saw there, but I did go there a couple of times. But with my travels, people always ask me where would you really like to go back to? And I've always said...I have to ask a question of what time of the year are we talking about? I think of all the places spent a lot of time in. That's the other thing, I have to also say is about the staff at the National Arts Council. I think they're very professional; I was very impressed with them. I know Suzanne Wise here is...is here and the other members. They made me feel very welcome at the meeting I was at. And I look forward to serving that. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR HANSEN: Great. Thank you. [CONFIRMATION]

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HARVEY VARENHORST: Yes, sir. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: Senator McCollister. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR McCOLLISTER: Yeah, thank you, Mr. Chairman; and welcome, Mr. Varenhorst. Are you a reappointee? Is this a... [CONFIRMATION]

HARVEY VARENHORST: No. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR McCOLLISTER: So you would be a new appointment. [CONFIRMATION]

HARVEY VARENHORST: This is a new appointment for me. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR McCOLLISTER: Okay, well, I was going to ask you about a brief job description about the Arts Council, but I'll ask some other applicant. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: I think everyone else is a reappointee after this, Senator. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR McCOLLISTER: Okay. Thank you. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: Senator Riepe. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR RIEPE: Thank you, Senator Larson. And thank you for your service with the Marines. [CONFIRMATION]

HARVEY VARENHORST: Thank you. Are you a Semper Fi? [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR RIEPE: As a Navy Corpsman, I have a real respect for the Marines. [CONFIRMATION]

HARVEY VARENHORST: Yes. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR RIEPE: What are some of the things...you've had an opportunity to consider, as you look at this role, you have a lot of experience in this regard, are there things that you want to specifically bring to the organization, the council, if you will, one or two? [CONFIRMATION]

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HARVEY VARENHORST: Well, I'm still relatively new, but I think the detail that they go through in the council for the grants is amazing. And the one meeting I was at, they did go back and ask an established...organization was asking for a grant for some more information...or grant request when they submit...people submit them to the council, they're in depth. And they cover just about everything. Of course, one thing I like seeing in there is that everybody was handicapped qualified, so that was one of the things I looked at. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR RIEPE: Were there any glaring things that jumped out at you that seemed to come up short? [CONFIRMATION]

HARVEY VARENHORST: No. And one or two things that may have been a small thing, let's say short, if I remember right, one of the organizations did not specify where they had gotten a donation from...from what entity or business or whatever it was, and they went back to ask them for more information. And that impressed me. They wanted to know who else was sponsoring them. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR RIEPE: Sound pretty thorough. [CONFIRMATION]

HARVEY VARENHORST: Yes, very. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR RIEPE: Okay, thank you. Thanks for being here. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: Thank you, Senator Riepe. Any further questions? Seeing none, thank you for... [CONFIRMATION]

HARVEY VARENHORST: May I ask Senator Hughes one? [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: We don't...we actually don't allow questions coming this way. [CONFIRMATION]

HARVEY VARENHORST: I'll call him and ask him. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: I'm sorry. [CONFIRMATION]

HARVEY VARENHORST: That's all right. [CONFIRMATION]

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SENATOR LARSON: I usually would, but the...because this is more informal, but etiquette says that... [CONFIRMATION]

HARVEY VARENHORST: I'll ask him... [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: I don't let it happen in other hearings. [CONFIRMATION]

HARVEY VARENHORST: All right. Thank you for having me. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR RIEPE: We'll speculate what the question is. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: I don't mean to be rude, it's just that we don't allow... [CONFIRMATION]

HARVEY VARENHORST: (Inaudible). [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: I've had testifiers try to do it more controversial hearings and that never ends well. Any proponents? Opponents? Neutral testimony? Seeing none, that will close the hearing on Mr. Varenhorst. Next, Sherry McClymont with the Nebraska Arts Council as well. Welcome to the General Affairs Committee. [CONFIRMATION]

SHERRY McCLYMONT: (Exhibit 1) Thank you. S-h-e-r-r-y M-c-C-l-y-m-o-n-t, I'm from Holdrege. And I'm reupping. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: I could have guessed. [CONFIRMATION]

SHERRY McCLYMONT: You could? [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: You were from Holdrege, I'm sorry I interrupted you. Please, go ahead. [CONFIRMATION]

SHERRY McCLYMONT: I am so excited to be on this council because I have learned so much about what is available in Nebraska for arts and how they impact both everyday life and economic impact that happens in communities. And when they do something in the arts, people come together, and it's just exciting to see. But to see it all across the state, it's really amazing. [CONFIRMATION]

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SENATOR LARSON: Excellent. [CONFIRMATION]

SHERRY McCLYMONT: That's why I like it, and I'd like to keep doing it. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: Thank you, Ms. McClymont. Any questions from the committee? Senator McCollister. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR McCOLLISTER: I'll try my question with you. [CONFIRMATION]

SHERRY McCLYMONT: Okay. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR McCOLLISTER: And thank you for your appearance and your willingness to serve in the past. What are the job description or the responsibilities? [CONFIRMATION]

SHERRY McCLYMONT: Of me as a member? [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR McCOLLISTER: Yeah, of someone serving on the Arts Council.
[CONFIRMATION]

SHERRY McCLYMONT: You can choose to be on as many panels as you want to be on. And it's really amazing to see because all the applications that come in you usually judge them by a rubric. So, but you have a really...you judge just the application. And so you have...it's a really unbiased safe way of doing it. Everybody scores it and get together. Then people can come who are presenting this application. They can come to the hearing and they can learn if they have a good one or a bad one and how it can get better. And the staff is amazing because if someone wants to send in an application, they can call them right up to the day they send it in and get all the help they need. Plus they also do workshops throughout the state on occasion to help people know exactly how to present an application. And so then it's scored like that among all of us. And usually there are guests...people on the panel that come from other states or other areas so they have no vested interest. And then they help...they put all the scores together. And that's how we do it. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR McCOLLISTER: How many applications does the Arts Council receive per year? And how many do you fund? [CONFIRMATION]

SHERRY McCLYMONT: I honestly don't know the answer. (To the audience) How many?
[CONFIRMATION]

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AUDIENCE MEMBER: Six hundred. [CONFIRMATION]

SHERRY McClymont: Six hundred. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR McCOLLISTER: Applications? [CONFIRMATION]

SHERRY McClymont: Applications. I have been on them where you have 20...20-some. And so you have to go through all of those. I've been on them when there's 10. It just depends on the types of applications that are sent in. But when people get the stamp of approval of the Nebraska Arts Council, even though the grant may not be real huge, it definitely says it's a good thing to everyone else that wants to...with the money. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR McCOLLISTER: That's great. Well, thank you, Ms. McClymont. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: Senator Riepe. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR RIEPE: Thank you, Senator Larson. I have one question. [CONFIRMATION]

SHERRY McClymont: I'm sorry. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR RIEPE: This is a question that has to do with judgment. It says here that it's February in Nebraska, right? And it says you have a vacation residence in Fountain Hills, Arizona. Pray tell, what are you doing here? [CONFIRMATION]

SHERRY McClymont: We sold it. (Laugh) We actually sold it this fall because my parents are needing me and I have grandchildren and...but, yes, we were there, and that would be a nice place to be. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR RIEPE: Questioning your judgment or something, I guess. Thank you for that. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: Thank you, Senator Riepe. Ms. McClymont, how are you related to Phil? [CONFIRMATION]

SHERRY McClymont: Phil would be my husband's uncle. [CONFIRMATION]

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SENATOR LARSON: Not...Phil is my age. [CONFIRMATION]

SHERRY McCLYMONT: Oh, you mean "young Phil." [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: "Young Phil." [CONFIRMATION]

SHERRY McCLYMONT: Okay, well, he would be...let's see...his grandfather is a cousin to my husband. Reed is Richard's cousin, and Phil is his grandson. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: Okay. Phil went to the university with me. [CONFIRMATION]

SHERRY McCLYMONT: Okay, yeah. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: (Inaudible.) And I know (inaudible). [CONFIRMATION]

SHERRY McCLYMONT: You are so young. Wow. (Laughter) [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: Thank you. (Laughter) [CONFIRMATION]

SHERRY McCLYMONT: Well, I'm sorry. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: Phil was in my class at Georgetown. [CONFIRMATION]

SHERRY McCLYMONT: Okay, yes. Awesome young man, I just adore him. When he was little, he was kind of ornery, but he grew up nicely. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: I can imagine. Like I said, I knew Phil in college. So, thank you. [CONFIRMATION]

SHERRY McCLYMONT: Um-hum. Done? [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: Yes. [CONFIRMATION]

SHERRY McCLYMONT: Okay, thank you. [CONFIRMATION]

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SENATOR LARSON: Any proponents? Opponents? Neutral? And that will close the hearing on Ms. McClymont. Kathryn LeBaron. Welcome to the General Affairs Committee.
[CONFIRMATION]

KATHRYN LeBARON: (Exhibit 1) Thank you. Do we give these to somebody?
[CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: Right here, the committee...thank you. [CONFIRMATION]

KATHRYN LeBARON: Kathryn, K-a-t-h-r-y-n, LeBaron, L-e-B-a-r-o-n. Been a resident of Lincoln all my life; went to school here, went to Lincoln High, went to University of Nebraska. Have two daughters. Business here in Lincoln as Lincoln Industries. Have a keen interest in the arts. I've been on the Sheldon Board, various capacities. Together with another couple, we have a private art gallery space on 19th and N street called Assemblage that we opened to university students, special tours, or other art groups. Nebraska Arts Council has had meetings there; Lincoln Arts Council's, various...it's made for people who have an interest in art. In addition, we also have a artist studio in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, that we have with another couple. We invite artists in and stay for a month, work on art, work on something that they normally wouldn't work on, such as if they are a ceramic artist it's difficult to get all their ceramic things there so they might draw or they might write poetry or they might write a book. We recently had two artists there that one did paper pieces and one finished up a book as well. I'm on the American Craft Council which is a national organization based in Minneapolis which is more art made from hand, which everything is almost made from hand, but baskets, ceramics, paper-type objects. I've been involved with the International Sculpture Center. My husband has been on that board and so we've gone to many of those types of functions. We travel frequently for art shows nationally, internationally. So it just...it's just a part of our life. And I've been pleased to be on the Arts Council. I'm a reappointed individual. And as a board member we look at financials, the financials for this Arts Council. We serve on committees, as you heard from Sherry. We are asked to serve on a panel which is where you vet all the applications and that's what gives the money back to the state. And it's amazing the breadth of the Nebraska Arts Council and the help that they give to all these organizations from small to large. I'm very pleased to be a member of the Arts Council. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: Thank you, Ms. LeBaron. Any questions from the committee? Senator Hughes. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR HUGHES: Thank you, Chairman Larson. Kathryn, nice to see you again.
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KATHRYN LeBARON: Thank you. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR HUGHES: And was fortunate enough to read your husband's blogs of your round-the-world trip last year. What was your favorite city that you traveled to? [CONFIRMATION]

KATHRYN LeBARON: We...well, there were many favorite cities, I was...we purposely picked cities that we hadn't been to before. I loved Stockholm, Warsaw, Budapest. Warsaw was particularly beautiful, but very affected from the war. I loved Seoul, Korea; many wonderful artists there. There were just many...it's like--which is your favorite child? (Laughter)
[CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: Good answer. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR HUGHES: Have you received all the art that you purchased on that trip?
[CONFIRMATION]

KATHRYN LeBARON: We did. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR HUGHES: You got everything that...? [CONFIRMATION]

KATHRYN LeBARON: We did. And at the moment, it's...part of it is on display at Assemblage, which is our...but that show is about to come down soon. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR HUGHES: Okay. Thank you for coming; thank you for serving.
[CONFIRMATION]

KATHRYN LeBARON: You're welcome. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: Senator McCollister. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR McCOLLISTER: Yeah, thank you, Mr. Chairman. And would like to thank you for your past service. And I can't think of anybody more qualified to serve in that capacity than you. So thank you very much for reapplication. [CONFIRMATION]

KATHRYN LeBARON: Thank you. [CONFIRMATION]

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SENATOR LARSON: Thank you, Senator McCollister. I appreciate your dedication to specifically the art world. I worked at Sotheby's. [CONFIRMATION]

KATHRYN LeBARON: Oh. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: So I'm very familiar with the world and how that is. So I hope you continue in that fashion. [CONFIRMATION]

KATHRYN LeBARON: We will. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: Thank you. Any further questions? Seeing none, thank you. [CONFIRMATION]

KATHRYN LeBARON: Okay, thank you very much. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: Do we have any proponents? Opponents? Neutral? That will close the hearing on Ms. LeBaron. Next, Patrick Drickey. Welcome to the General Affairs Committee. [CONFIRMATION]

PATRICK DRICKEY: (Exhibit 1) Glad to be here. Patrick, P-a-t-r-i-c-k, Drickey, D-r-i-c-k-e-y. I spent my career...I joined the Navy when I was 17 and I did that so I wouldn't get drafted and go to Vietnam. The Navy sent me to Saigon. It was there that I met the API and UPI photographers and they were the first people I was ever introduced to that didn't complain about their next assignments. That was interesting to me, so when I got out of the Navy I chased photography. Thought I would become a photojournalist. Instead I became an architectural photographer. I spent two years with HDR in Omaha and five years with Leo Daly. And then subsequently, became a commercial photographer that led me to an assignment with Cushman here in Lincoln, Nebraska. And they asked me to submit a new proposal for a calendar project they were involved with. And I was shooting with a panoramic format and that led me to a career as an international golf course photographer. Got in with the Royal and Ancient in Scotland; the USGA here; the PGA of America, and that was just a remarkable career path. But I always had a relationship with local artists in Omaha. One of my best friends growing up was Kent Bellows, and I wound up photographing his portfolios. Worked with Ree Kaneko, then Ree Schonlau, who founded the Bemis in Omaha, which is a resident program, and did portfolios of art work for those artists. And currently, I just founded a new gallery in Omaha in conjunction with MONA in Kearney to bring MONA to Omaha, created a platform in our inaugural show in the newly expanded space will be a landscape show in March. By the assignment...the...I should say, the...how did they approach me? Someone called me out of the blue and said the Governor would like you to be on

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the Arts Council and I had a lot of friends who would do that just to get a laugh out of me. So my first response was--who is this really? (Laughter) And she said--no, no, I'm serious. But it's been a wonderful experience. I have to give kudos to the...Suzanne Wise and the staff there. They're incredible. They prepare us...when we go to a meeting, it is literally...you know that what you're dealing with has been vetted. And I can't say enough about that staff. Tomorrow I will be part of a committee that's selecting art work for the Governor's residence program. And this year we included a scholastic program from the high schools so that students will have their art work on display there for a two-month period. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: Senator McCollister. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR McCOLLISTER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you, Mr. Drickey. I think you probably know there is three branches of government. Correct? [CONFIRMATION]

PATRICK DRICKEY: Well, I... [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR McCOLLISTER: Well, there's more than just the Governor. [CONFIRMATION]

PATRICK DRICKEY: (Inaudible). [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR McCOLLISTER: So if he wanted to distribute art work to the various senator offices, I'm sure we'd be grateful for it. (Laughter) [CONFIRMATION]

PATRICK DRICKEY: Oh. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR McCOLLISTER: As a matter of fact, I think I got some just recently, but I encourage you to do more, because it's pretty good artwork. [CONFIRMATION]

PATRICK DRICKEY: Thank you. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR McCOLLISTER: Thank you for your service. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: Senator Riepe. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR RIEPE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman...Senator Chairman. And thank you for your service in the Navy. The question I have is...relates to being in photography you bring a little different perspective, some diversification, if you will. I think...or are there other aspiring photo

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journalists or other people with a real strong background in photography on the council?
[CONFIRMATION]

PATRICK DRICKEY: You know, I don't know. I don't think currently there is.
[CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR RIEPE: Okay, so you bring a...kind of a unique perspective. [CONFIRMATION]

PATRICK DRICKEY: Yes. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR RIEPE: How do you think that that will...you're not serving on it currently?
[CONFIRMATION]

PATRICK DRICKEY: No, I am... [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR RIEPE: Oh, you are. [CONFIRMATION]

PATRICK DRICKEY: ..on the council. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR RIEPE: How then has it...has it brought a different perspective? Do you look at things differently or others...is that just personality? [CONFIRMATION]

PATRICK DRICKEY: Well, what we've reviewed so far, and I've been on a couple of those grant applications, nothing specific. There have been programs with the 1 percent where it requires, you know, an interest in photography. And I do bring a perspective to that. The big change in photography, of course, has been a...from what I call an analog world to a digital world. And that you have to be careful because the computer has a talent of it's own. So it's a matter of perception and some of the photographers are careful so that they identify things as a raw file which would go back to the negative days where they actually shot it rather than counting on the computer to take over and do work. But there is some effort as far as that regard goes too that is to be admired. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR RIEPE: Um-hum, okay. Well, thank you, thank you for your interest.
[CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: Senator Hughes. [CONFIRMATION]

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SENATOR HUGHES: Thank you, Chairman Larson. Thank you for serving, Mr. Drickey. How many members are on the Nebraska Arts Council? [CONFIRMATION]

PATRICK DRICKEY: On the board there are 15. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR HUGHES: Okay. And how often do you meet? [CONFIRMATION]

PATRICK DRICKEY: Quarterly. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR HUGHES: So every three months. [CONFIRMATION]

PATRICK DRICKEY: Yes. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR HUGHES: Usually in Lincoln or do you meet outstate once in awhile?
[CONFIRMATION]

PATRICK DRICKEY: Lincoln, Omaha, our next meeting will be in York. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR HUGHES: Okay, thank you. Thank you for your service. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: Thank you, Senator Hughes. Seeing no other questions, I think we're good. Thank you. Are there any proponents? Opponents? Neutral testimony? That will close the hearing on Mr. Drickey. Next Cory Mueller with the State Electrical Board. Welcome to the General Affairs Committee. [CONFIRMATION]

CORY MUELLER: (Exhibit 1) Thank you. Cory Mueller, C-o-r-y M-u-e-l-l-e-r.
[CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: Just a little bit about yourself. Doesn't have to be long, just a little bit.
[CONFIRMATION]

CORY MUELLER: I live in Seward with Senator Kolterman. And been a license holder for approximately 16 years, and been on the State Electrical Board for the last ten years. Went to the University of Nebraska; got a degree in business, which led to an MBA degree. While I got my bachelor's, I loaded all my electives with philosophy classes and got a degree in that as well. I refer to it as my degree in confusion, but I try not to use that too much. (Laughter) It's been a

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pleasure and an honor to be on the board and I look forward to serving further if you would allow me to. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: Thank you, Mr. Mueller. Any questions from the committee? Senator McCollister. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR McCOLLISTER: Yeah, just a quick question, since you've already served, is there a term...a number of terms that you're limited to serve? [CONFIRMATION]

CORY MUELLER: No, sir, no. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR McCOLLISTER: So you've been there ten years. [CONFIRMATION]

CORY MUELLER: Yes, sir. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR McCOLLISTER: It's going along as you're willing to serve. [CONFIRMATION]

CORY MUELLER: Yes, sir. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR McCOLLISTER: Okay. Well, thank you very much. [CONFIRMATION]

CORY MUELLER: Sure. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR McCOLLISTER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: Senator Riepe. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR RIEPE: Thank you, Senator. I want to drill down a little bit here. On your report you list a property as 1134 Kolterman in Seward. Is that any relation or any connection?
[CONFIRMATION]

CORY MUELLER: I believe that's a development from your father, maybe.
[CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR RIEPE: I see. So there's no conflict of interest going on here, I assume. (Laughter)
Okay, I just...when I saw that, it jumped out at me, so. [CONFIRMATION]

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CORY MUELLER: Well, yes. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR KOLTERMAN: I hire him once in a while. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR RIEPE: We'll give everyone the benefit of the doubt. [CONFIRMATION]

CORY MUELLER: He can verify my quality of work, I guess. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: Thank you, Senator Riepe. Senator McCollister took my question, so. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR McCOLLISTER: Sorry. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: No, it's all right. That's why we let you guys go first. Seeing no other questions, thank you, Mr. Mueller. [CONFIRMATION]

CORY MUELLER: Okay, thank you. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: Are there any proponents? Opponents? Neutral testimony? Seeing none, that will close the hearing on Mr. Mueller and we move to Edwin Bergstraesser. Welcome to the General Affairs Committee. [CONFIRMATION]

EDWIN BERGSTRAESSER: (Exhibit 1) I'm Edwin Bergstraesser, E-d-w-i-n B-e-r-g-s-t-r-a-e-s-s-e-r. I'll go ahead and start I guess. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: Yeah. [CONFIRMATION]

EDWIN BERGSTRAESSER: My dad got me started in electrical when I was very, very young. When I was tall enough and big enough to actually start carrying tools he had me drug around the job sites. I started officially as an electrician right out of high school in 1982. I worked in the industry in various different roles from apprentice electrician to journeyman electrician to licensed electrical contractor until 1993 when I was hired as an inspector for the city of Lincoln. In 2003, I was hired as the chief electrical inspector for Lincoln. And I believe that was the same year I was first appointed to the State Electrical Board. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: Any questions from the committee? I'll ask one. Are you the only inspector on the board currently? [CONFIRMATION]

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EDWIN BERGSTRAESSER: Yes. The board makeup is dictated by (Section) 81-2103.
[CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: Okay. [CONFIRMATION]

EDWIN BERGSTRAESSER: It spells out one specific inspector member. But there is opportunity for one at-large member. So typically that's filled by a contractor.
[CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: Okay. [CONFIRMATION]

EDWIN BERGSTRAESSER: But at this point in time, that isn't set stone because it is spelled out that you could have an at-large inspector member. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: Okay. Senator McCollister. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR McCOLLISTER: Yeah, thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you for your service.
[CONFIRMATION]

EDWIN BERGSTRAESSER: Sure. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR McCOLLISTER: Are all the electrical regulations in the state uniform? Or are some communities elect to go about it differently? [CONFIRMATION]

EDWIN BERGSTRAESSER: Right. Basically, they're uniform at the statewide level in that the State Electrical Act dictates a minimal level of enforcement. And that would deal with the adoption of the version of the National Electrical Code. Individual municipal programs may, at their election by ordinance, adopt rules and regulations that are more strict than what the state of Nebraska dictates. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR McCOLLISTER: Is that a frequent occurrence? [CONFIRMATION]

EDWIN BERGSTRAESSER: Not always. I wouldn't call it frequent. Typically the jurisdictions or municipals that I'm familiar with deal with more specific things in nature given how construction happens in their general area. For example, in Lincoln we have a requirement that exceeds the state mandates because of a condition of soil makeup that we have here in Lincoln.
[CONFIRMATION]

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SENATOR McCOLLISTER: I see. [CONFIRMATION]

EDWIN BERGSTRAESSER: And so it deals more of a...we have a detrimental effect to electrical installations if we just apply the minimum of the NEC for a certain type of installation. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR McCOLLISTER: Have all communities in the state adopted the minimum and you gave the initials, the national standard? [CONFIRMATION]

EDWIN BERGSTRAESSER: The National Electrical Code is the NEC. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR McCOLLISTER: And have all communities adopted this standard? [CONFIRMATION]

EDWIN BERGSTRAESSER: Yes. Yeah, to my knowledge all are on the same page. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR McCOLLISTER: Okay. Thank you very much. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: Thank you, Senator McCollister. Seeing no other questions, thank you for coming to the General Affairs Committee. [CONFIRMATION]

EDWIN BERGSTRAESSER: Thank you. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LARSON: Any proponents? Opponents? Neutral testimony? Seeing none, that will close the hearing on Mr. Bergstraesser, and the end of our hearing for the day. I will ask for a quick Exec Session. [CONFIRMATION]