

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

**WESTERN CONFERENCE OF PUBLIC SERVICE
COMMISSIONERS**

June 2009

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
OF THE
WESTERN CONFERENCE OF PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSIONERS

The Western Conference of Public Service Commissioners (Conference) is a regional association within the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC). The objectives of the Conference are to promote the best interests of the National Association; to contribute to the betterment of commission regulation through study and discussion; to promote uniformity in the structure, terminology and coordination of regulation while honoring the public interests within the charge of each state commission, and to promote cooperation of the member commissions with each other, with the National Association and its members and with the other regulatory agencies.

The Conference has a Constitution, of which the latest version is Attachment No. 1.

The Conference meets semiannually – in Summer (traditionally June) in one of the 14 Western states and in November at the annual NARUC meeting. Additional meetings of the conference may be held at the request of the President with concurrence from the Executive Committee. At the Summer meeting annual reports are given by the President and the Secretary/Treasurer; reports are given by each committee chair stating the purpose of the committee (mission statement), its membership's desire to continue the committee and its budget request for the new fiscal year. The Conference budget for the new fiscal year is voted upon and new officers are elected. At the November meeting reports are given by the Secretary/Treasurer; committee chairs on their activities; other reports as requested; the services of the Conference Coordinator are renewed; and other matters are considered. (Coordinators Duties adopted by the Conference 11/15/2005 are Attachment No. 2)

POLICIES

The **Fiscal Year** for the Conference begins October 1 and ends September 30, (Conference Minutes 6/16/93.) The reason for changing the fiscal year from June 30 to September 30 was to allow the annual conferences to close their accounts in the fiscal year in which they were held. The Coordinator shall collect and deposit all Annual Conference receipts Annual Conference reports shall be sent by the host state to the Coordinator by September 1 of each year so the results of the conference can be contained in the year-end report. (Conference Minutes 6/20/2006)

Responsibilities of the Conference Officers: The Secretary/Treasurer presents a financial report at the Summer and November meetings. Said financial report is prepared by the Conference Accountant. The Vice President assists the President by preparing the annual meeting agenda and obtaining speakers with the assistance of all conference commissioners; and the President makes arrangements for and manages the annual meeting in conjunction with the Coordinator, which takes approximately fifteen months preparation. (Conference Minutes 6/20/2006)

Policy Governing Committees: Conference Resolution adopted on 6/27/84 resolved that the Conference increase its role in ongoing utility regulatory matters by forming standing committees on electricity, gas, telecommunications and others as needed. (See Attachment No. 3)

Budget:

The Conference budget shall include the following categories: Executive Committee, Electricity, Telecommunications, Gas and Water Committees, NARUC Breakfast Meetings, Coordinator fee, travel & expenses, Accounting System, Reserve Fund for Annual Conference and Miscellaneous. The Executive Committee and Conference Membership may approve additional budget categories as needed. The reserve fund for the Annual Conference shall be maintained at \$25,000. (Conference minutes 7/20/06)

To use excess funds for a broader expenditure (than a committee's budget), approval of the Executive Committee is required. (Conference Minutes 11/11/97)

Between conferences the Executive Committee is authorized to approve up to \$15,000 of unbudgeted money upon request. (Conference Minutes 6/10/98)

Travel/Scholarship: Funding in case of need: Members can request funds from the Conference Executive Committee. Each Conference Committee has total discretion for expenditures under its authorized budget and the amount of travel funding assistance should be determined by each state's standards. (Conference Minutes 11/12/91)

Annual Conference: Each Commission hosting the Conference shall be afforded latitude regarding industry participation and sponsorship which shall be exercised with care and circumspection. Specifically, sponsorships from regulated companies shall not be used to defray the expenses or benefits of attending commissioners or others prohibited from receiving things of value from regulated companies. It shall be the goal of each conference to cover the subsequent annual budget of the Conference. (Conference Minutes, 7/20/06 and 11/14/06)

Two debit cards drawn from the Conference checking account will be established for use by the current conference hosting state and the following year conference hosting state with amounts of up to \$10,000.00. Depending on circumstances, the two states will be able to access the accounts with a debit card for pre-payment of Conference expenses, thereby eliminating the need for these expenses to be covered by state funds, etc. (Conference Minutes 7/20/2006 and 11/14/06)

Treasurer's Report: The Conference does not "approve" the Treasurer's report in the minutes because it is unaudited. The minutes should reflect that the report was given. An audit of the Conference financial records shall be done every three years beginning in 2009. (Conference Minutes 6/12/96 and amended 6/20/2006)

Bonding: The consensus was to not have the Secretary/Treasurer and Coordinator bonded. A Motion was approved that the membership continues to require two signatures on the checks of the Conference accounts and that any change to that policy will require a vote of the membership. (Conference Minutes 11/11/97)

Certified Public Accountant: A Certified Public Accountant shall be hired by the Conference to process and maintain all Conference accounting functions. Included shall be accounts payable, quarterly and year-end financial statements and all tax filings.

Accounts and Disbursements: Conference accounts shall be in federally insured financial institutions. All checks drawn on Conference accounts shall be signed by an officer or the Conference Coordinator. All expenditures shall be approved in advance by the President in writing, by facsimile or e-mail. The Conference Coordinator shall send copies of all invoices, checks and authorizations to the Certified Public Accountant. Bank statements shall be sent by the bank directly to the Certified Public Accountant.

Associate Membership: At the 6/18/95 Conference the California Energy Commission was granted associate membership. A member cautioned that this action should not be considered a precedent for the Conference, but that the Conference continue to consider any future motions for association membership on a case by case basis.

Record Retention: It was unanimously approved that the Executive Committee would examine all past records of the Conference and, after such examination, would proceed to dispose of all such records that, in their opinion, were no longer necessary or useful; and that in consideration of the aforesaid, the Coordinator of the Conference is instructed to only keep and maintain current records of said Conference. (Executive Committee Meeting Minutes 7/1/68 to 6/30/69 amended 6/20/2006)

PROCEDURES

Minutes: The practice in the past has been to send a copy of the minutes to all commissioner members so that they may offer amendments. The minutes are finally approved at the next Conference Business Meeting.

Selecting NARUC Second Vice President: See Attachment No. 4 which was Agenda Item No. 10 of the Conference Meeting 6/17/97.

Conferences: The Coordinator will send to the host state commissions a standard check list outlining what should be submitted to the Coordinator when closing out conference accounts. (Conference Minutes 6/17/97)

Scholarship Request Procedure from Conference Committee Chairpersons:
(Conference Minutes 06/17/08)

Contact by telephone the appropriate Committee Chair who is responsible for his/her approved budget. Once verbal approval is granted by the Committee Chair, follow up the request via hard copy (i.e., letter, fax, or e-mail) addressed to the Committee Chair,

information copies to the Conference President, Vice President, Secretary/Treasurer and Conference Coordinator. Include the following:

- a. dollar amount requested
- b. purpose of travel
- c. dates of travel
- d. benefit to the Conference
- e. whether the scholarship will supplement any state funding.

Upon completion of travel, send copies of the receipts for all expenses to the Conference Coordinator. Include copies of all expenses, such as:

- a. state travel voucher
- b. airline ticket receipt
- c. hotel room receipt
- d. meals, at authorized State rate
- e. State rate approved mileage
- f. Transportation expenses (taxi, shuttle, etc.) If more than \$15.00 include receipt.

(This list is not all-inclusive)

Upon receiving travel expenses the Committee Chair shall initial the request and send it to the President to approve and initial. The President shall then forward all receipts and vouchers to the Coordinator for payment. (Conference Minutes 6/17/2008.

Scholarship Request Procedure from the Executive Committee

(Conference Minutes 11/10/98)

If a Conference Commissioner or Staff member needs financial support to attend a function which will benefit Conference membership, but which is outside the Committee Scholarship procedure described above, the Executive Committee will have approval.

Verbal approval will be provided by the Conference President after the scholarship request has been reviewed and discussed with other Executive Committee members expedite approval, a letter, fax or e-mail request should be sent to the Executive Committee members and the Conference Coordinator. The request should include the following minimum information:

- a. dollar amount of scholarship requested
- b. purpose of travel and dates
- c. are other funds used for this travel, i.e., State funds, NARUC funds, grants of any type
- d. benefit to Conference membership

After approval of the Executive Committee is granted and travel is completed, forward all receipt documentation to the Conference Coordinator for processing of member reimbursement.