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Procurement, collections top DAS legislative agenda

By Donna Micklus

You would never guess that this is Janis Nome's 14th legislative session.

While DAS' Legislative Liaison is armed with the experience of a seasoned pro, she nevertheless seems to approach each new session with the animation and excitement of a first-timer.

"One of the first orders of legislative business which is really critical to all of us is the confirmation of the appointments of the commissioners. Each has to testify before

the Executive and Nominations Committee and then be confirmed by a vote of the House or Senate," Nome said. She added that confirmation hearings had already begun.

New proposals will increase revenue

Nome spoke enthusiastically about DAS' 1999 legislative package, explaining that major initiatives this year involve procurement and collections reform.

Please see Legislation on Page 7

ERP members pass the torch



New ERP members are: (seated) Cathy Bysiewicz-Cluen, Nancy Jones, Mike Mansfield, (standing) Julie Bernosky, Steve Soklow, Larry Gore, Eric Bengtson and Karen Rakowski. Not shown are Shirley Crowley, Eva Merriman, Jay Tulin

Outgoing members of the Employee Recognition Committee have proudly turned the program over to this year's volunteers. In the first year, awards were given to more than 75 recipients, as ceremonies and luncheons were held with the Commissioner to celebrate the special efforts of DAS employees.

"I am confident that the program will be more successful with every new year," said former Chairman Devin Marquez. "The response was overwhelming."

The new committee chair is Steve Soklow of SLC.

DAS Annual Report breaks new ground

By Heather Cavanaugh

Make way, Madison Avenue. Public sector public relations has never been so polished.

“This year’s *Annual Report to Employees* is testimony to the tremendous strides of the agency and our commitment to customer service, innovation, and as the report says, being ‘positioned for the future,’” said Commissioner Barbara Waters.

After two years of publishing the annual report, this is the first year that it was written, designed, and constructed entirely in-house. The DAS Communications Office staff wanted to develop and make



The DAS 1998 Annual Report to Employees

a cutting-edge piece to illustrate the vision and direction of the agency.

“The report compares to material from private sector heavyweights,” Waters commented.

“We loved using our collective energies and creativity to make DAS really shine,” said Director of Communications Donna Micklus.

The recently released publication has already received rave reviews from the employees at large.

Dulcie Hodgkin of Fiscal and Administrative Resources said that the report “says loudly and clearly that we are the *new* DAS.”

Kerry DiMatteo of Procurement Services called the report “professional, cutting-edge, and very informative about each business center’s activities. Very impressive.”

The report was sent across the state to highlight the many accomplishments of DAS. From municipalities to legislators to local libraries, the message that DAS is positioned for the future was heard throughout Connecticut.

“I am proud that we were able to produce such a quality piece in-house. It’s not only an impressive

account of our achievements, but an artistic expression that makes DAS stand out among state agencies,” Waters said.

DAS Communications staff offer their consulting service to a number of state agencies. They have designed everything from billboards to newsletters to annual reports.

“Other agencies have seen the quality of what we can do at DAS and want the same,” said Waters.

Petty \$\$, or not ?

By Heather Cavanaugh

For some, petty cash may not be so petty. It’s sometimes confusing to remember all that can, or cannot, be reimbursed.

“Reimbursement is generally used for travel,” said Accounting Supervisor Jerry Lynn. “We can give an advance for hotel, car rental, and miscellaneous expenses.” Upon return, the money spent will be compared to the advance and that remaining amount will be reconciled, either going into the individual’s paycheck or coming out of it.

“The process has changed a bit. The money now goes directly into paychecks for reimbursements, cutting down on paperwork,” Lynn said.

Lynn said petty cash is commonly used for emergencies - anything deemed necessary for the agency to continue doing business. This ranges from last-minute labels to ink cartridges. Although office supplies are purchased on contract, there may be a situation where an item runs out.

“Just email Jean Michael and copy me with a request for how much you need and why you need it,” explained Lynn. “We will get back to you as soon as we can.”



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Contributions are welcome but may be edited for space and clarity.

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Silvana M. Flattery from the Department of Social Services extended her thanks to **Nick Visone** for “displaying a true investment” in his work with the Human Resources Unit of the Northwest Region. “We are grateful for the exchange that takes place between DAS and DSS.”

Commissioner Barbara Waters thanked **Desi Harris** and **Marilyn LaFontaine** for making it possible to have a statewide human resources personnel list. “I’m sure this will make communicating with HR people much easier.”

William Donnelly appreciated the efforts of **Bob Cosgrove** and his HRIS staff, **Nancy Mocarsky**, **Lynn Coda-Klein**, **Bill Katzer**, **Vern Debabian**, and **Rich Nucci** for their hard work and contributions on the recent AWCS enhancement project. “They are all top shelf professionals.”

Kudos to Webmaster **Bill Skyrme** from Ellen Vigilante of Custom Promotions for the new and improved website for DAS. “Your site certainly has improved. It used to take forever to download a bid!”

Congratulations to **Cheryl Welton** from Commissioner Barbara Waters for her outstanding job presenting the HRBC meeting on Workers’ Compensation. “Communication is the cornerstone to developing a real DAS community.”

Many thanks to **Ed Urbansky** and staff from Commissioner Barbara Waters for the holiday calendars and cards that they so creatively produced. “What a great customer presentation.”

Bill Skyrme was praised by Robert E. Hamer, director of sales for Manray Express Freight Systems, Inc. for implementing the Internet Vendor Registration System, “making it the easiest registration I have ever had the pleasure of doing.”

Kudos to **Fleet Operations** from Anthony Parker for the quick routine service performed on his vehicle. “Great job!”

Joanita McCarthy wishes to extend her thanks to **Jay Tulin** for helping her with the examination process and securing a position at SCSU. “Your patience, compassion, and counseling were beyond the job.”

Ruthie Hatten received praise from the owner of Battison’s Cleaners for the superior job she did for him in providing all pertinent information needed to submit a bid. “I didn’t realize it would be this friendly and easy.”

Congratulations to **John McKay** from Commissioner Barbara Waters for his HRBC articles published in the newsletter of the National Association of State Personnel Executives. “Nice job!”

Kerry DiMatteo thanked **Mike Mansfield** for “creating the perfect design cover for the P-Card Manual. It is nice to know that we have such talented people in the building willing to help out the rest of us.”

Special thanks to **Jeanne Cormier** from Commissioner Barbara Waters for donating the Furby for the DAS Christmas Party auction that generated \$512!

Commissioner Barbara Waters gave special recognition to the patrons of the Parma Restaurant and Carbone’s Ristorante for their generous combined contributions to the DAS Toy Drive, collecting \$1,646.

Gale A. Mattison from the Department of Correction (DOC) applauded **Cindy Milardo** and **Sue Thomas** for their assistance with the standardization transaction for the DOC CPR training. “This achievement exemplifies the

Hats Off

By Cindy Duberek

importance of interagency cooperation.”

Doris Vieira extended her thanks to **Roy Wynne** for assisting with the Food Distribution Program’s physical inventory on January 9. “This is a positive example of teamwork within the agency.”

Donna Micklus and the **Communications Office Staff** received numerous kudos praising the publication of *The 1998 Annual Report to Employees*, with comments ranging from “interesting,” “imaginative,” “fabulous,” “high-tech,” “professional,” “beautiful,” “impressive,” “incredible,” “superb,” and “cutting-edge.” Thanks to Kerry DiMatteo, Cheryl Welton, Merrily Moynihan, Dulcie Hodgkin, Anna Tara, Kathy Valone, Kenn Stephenson, Diane Mazar-Roberts, Mike Barletta, Brian Halloran, Sue Miller, Mike Felix, Roy Dion and Carlos Velez for all of the positive feedback.

Score one for FAR's Grants Unit . . . And one for Business CONNections

Granted, it's a beginning. The Grants Management Group of FAR received a grant of \$5,000 from the Mortensen Foundation in West Hartford to support the Employee Wellness initiative.

According to David Swenson of the Grants Management Office, this first grant awarded to DAS is just the beginning of what can be a profitable new business. "We're happy because this represents a start, and it will help us market to other foundations because they see that we already have people on board," Swenson said.



"Our goal was to receive funding to help develop the program with training, curriculum, and any other needs," explained Swenson. Because there are thousands of grants available, proposals and needs have to be very specific, he added.

"Incidentally, unlike federal and state formula and entitlement grants which can run into the hundreds of thousands, even millions of dollars, discretionary grants from private foundations typically run from a few hundred dollars to the low thousands. So this isn't bad for starters," Swenson commented.

This first grant is the fruit of the tremendous effort expended by the Grants Management staff. "Quite a bit goes into researching, developing, and writing a grant proposal," Swenson said. The research began with numerous trips to the State Library and Internet searching, which can be trying, because out of 43,000 private foundations, a mere one percent have websites.

"I expect this is just the first of many future successes which will help fund efforts which might otherwise be impossible," said FAR Director Wayne Seabury.

"I'm optimistic that we will see more money," Swenson added. The Grants Management Office is currently developing an application for a federal grant.

Sometimes it all comes down to being in the right place at the right time.

George Scott of Scott's Jamaican Bakery in Hartford recently paid a visit to DAS' Business CONNections program to be re-registered as a minority-owned business.

Scott had let his Set-Aside certification lapse, not having seen the value in it, but decided to give the program another try.

As it turned out, reapplying proved fruitful the minute he signed up. Literally. The state's current subcontractor for Jamaican patties - the popular curry vegetable, chicken, or beef confection - was getting out of the business.

"When I met Mr. Scott, he explained his past history with the state," remembered Jay Churchill, a contract specialist in Procurement Services. Years ago, Scott supplied his products to the Department of Correction.

"I remembered his company and working with them to approve his product. I asked Mr. Scott if we could tour his facility, and he agreed."

"This is a good example of a vendor who was looking for work from the state and found it. Now, through the efforts of the Business CONNections and Procurement staff, the vendor has been recertified and is connected with a state contract."

Commissioner Barbara Waters

Churchill said he was impressed with Scott's establishment and with the quality of his product. He invited Scott to the next Food Advisory Council meeting and arranged a product tasting. The Food Advisory Council samples products and decides who can contract with the state.

The council loved the products, and as a result, Scott became the new subcontractor to US Foods on the state's contract, with an estimated annual value of \$225,000!

Krayeski can kayak, canoe?

By John McKay

Do you ever wonder what your co-workers do after they leave work?

“Name it,” says David Krayeski, with a big grin. “I love mountain biking, backpacking, skiing, kayaking-whatever.”

Krayeski subscribes to the theory that you need to have balance in your work life.

“Work is really busy and there’s always a lot going on, and it can get hectic and very stressful. I need something to offset that,” he



David Krayeski

He has backpacked the Appalachian Trail, skied the mountains of France and Switzerland, and has been fly fishing and sea kayaking in Belize.

said.

Krayeski has been mountain biking for several years and shares this interest with his wife, Trish.

“We both really enjoy it, and it takes your mind off whatever has been bothering you. When you are done after a long ride you are too physically

and mentally drained to worry about anything. I find I’m able to approach issues at work with a

different viewpoint after a few days of biking or backpacking.”

He’s no weekend warrior, either.

Krayeski has backpacked the Appalachian Trail, skied the moun-

tains of France, Switzerland, and Utah, and has been fly fishing and sea kayaking in Belize.

“That trip to Belize was awesome,” he said. Krayeski and his wife traveled to Belize for some fun in the sun where they went sea kayaking, snorkeling, fly fishing, and canoeing through the rain forest.

To balance that vacation with a winter excursion, Krayeski and his wife went snow cat skiing outside Crested Butte, Colorado. They rode snow cats up into the canyons, several hours away from civilization, and skied mountains that had rarely seen any human traffic.

“We had professional guides with us, who ensure everyone’s avalanche transceivers were

working correctly, and only skied slopes that were stable, given the snow pack and weather conditions. It was amazing, we had three days of snow and never crossed another skiers’ tracks,” he said.

Krayeski came to DAS in July as a Principle Personnel Officer in HRBC. He said after eight and a half years of working at the Department of Corrections (DOC), he felt he needed a change.

“I had been with DOC for so long I was beginning to wonder ‘What else is out there’? The opportunity to come here and



really have an effect on HRBC was very enticing.”

Right now, he and his wife are building a house in Barkhamsted. “I think I might have too much of a good thing with our new house,” said Krayeski.

He explained that their new home is adjacent to a state forest that has a cross country ski area in the winter and mountain biking path in the summer. The Farmington River is nearby for easy access to fly fishing and canoeing.

“I can’t see myself being stressed out about anything after we move in there,” he joked.

When it comes to the environment, Fleet is a natural

By Donna Micklus and John McKay

Take a deep breath. Thanks to Fleet Operations the air is cleaner. For the past 10 years, the state has been working with vehicle manufacturers and technical schools statewide in exploring cutting-edge technologies such as electric cars, dual-fuel (gasoline and natural gas burning vehicles) and conversions of vehicles from gasoline to natural gas.

“This is a real learning curve for us,” said Steve Dygus, Director of State Fleet Operations. “But it is a great opportunity to learn and to help the environment.”

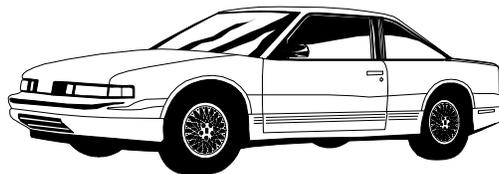
The state purchased four natural gas-powered Crown Victorias, two are being used by the Capitol Police and two by the Department of Motor Vehicles.

The purchase of these clean-burning vehicles puts the state within federal guidelines that mandate by the year 2001, 75 percent of all state Fleet purchases must be alternatively powered.

Fleet is also purchasing 73 Chevy Cavaliers already outfitted with the necessary components to run on natural gas.

These “dual-fuel” Cavaliers will have the capability to run on natural gas or regular gasoline.

Fleet employees Dave Marsh and Tim Clark, both qualified crafts workers, have performed the gas-to-natural-gas conversions in the past.



They have been trained by Ford and Connecticut Natural Gas on the maintenance and repair of

these vehicles. Fleet is also part of the Connecticut Clean State Coalition Group, who is helping them learn the new technology.

“They’re great for the environment in many aspects,” said Clark. “The cleaner running engine will prolong the life of the vehicle, and the emissions levels will come down due to less impurities from gasoline,” he added.

As technology grows, Fleet will follow.

MOVE IT!

By John McKay



The move is on! At long last the physical relocation of offices is about to begin.

The Property Management staff of FAR will move from Room 543 to Room 545 as a temporary location. The Master Insurance Program office and half of the Business Office will move to the second floor. Between January 30 and February 4, Property Management, Purchasing, Grants Management, and the rest of the Business Office will be moved to the second floor.

Communications, now on the fifth floor, will move to Room 405 on February 11, and all HR personnel presently on the fifth floor will go to the newly renovated swing space on the second floor.

The Department of Public Works units on the fifth floor will also end up on the second floor. After the complete vacancy of the fifth floor, demolition will begin.

Legislation, *cont. from Page 1*

“Both represent new ways to conduct business and bring more revenue to the state,” she explained.

DAS is proposing purchasing legislation designed to increase flexibility and responsiveness while maintaining accountability and openness to the supplier community and the public. “These changes allow DAS to shift our focus to the most important aspects of the procurement function and ensure that we get the most competitive price,” she added.

Nome said the main thrust is aimed at:

- allowing for both competitive bidding and competitive negotiation to procure goods and services,
- increasing from \$10,000 to \$50,000 the threshold for publication of notice of bid or proposal in the newspaper, and
- permitting the Commissioner to waive the requirement of competitive bidding or competitive negotiation in the case of non-recurring and emergency purchases of \$10,000 or less (existing limit is \$1,000).

Jim Passier and Joann McAllister of Procurement Services and Jim Neil of BAG reviewed all procurement statutes to make sure they were consistent, eliminated old provisions, and updated verbiage in terms of references to the Internet.

“Not only was that a great collaborative effort, but it was also extremely useful from BAG’s perspective, since they deal with the statutes every day and are the ones with the expertise to know what needed to be changed,”

Nome said.

Proposed legislation on collections reform also targets increased revenue.

Under existing law, DAS must attempt to collect a debt for six months before referring it to an outside collection agency. In some cases, earlier referral may increase the likelihood that the debt will be recovered.

This proposal would eliminate the six-month waiting period, and allow DAS to evaluate, on a case-by-case basis, when a debt should be referred to an outside agency.

“Better utilization of outside agencies will enable Collection Services to focus their activities on those areas where there is a potential for the greatest return of revenue,” Nome explained.

A third key initiative involves the permanent transfer of the Set-Aside Program from the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) to the Business CONNections Office at DAS.

“Currently, we are working under an MOU with DECD, but we’re going to make a permanent change since the program has been so successful here under Carlos Velez,” Nome said.

Changes in membership, leadership make this budget year all the more interesting

Nome said that another key element of this session is the change in House and Senate legislators following the November elections.

“That change is also reflected in committee membership, particularly in the Government Administration and Elections Committee which is the one we deal with the most.”

Nome is currently setting up meetings with new committee heads,

not only to discuss DAS’ proposed legislation, but also to talk about what DAS does.

“We can be helpful to them if they or their constituents have questions on such things as state jobs, contracts, etc.”

“It’s also a budget year for us. We prepare the budget this year for the next two years, so we really have to advocate for the value of all our programs, not just for our legislative initiatives,” Nome said.

New BAG employee

Joining Nome to deal with legislative

matters this year is Joseph Prevuznak, a former Deputy Assistant Treasurer and onetime Policy and Program Director for Governor O’Neill. Prevuznak joined DAS on January 1 and will work with Nome on legislation, particularly in the areas of labor and employment law.

All in all, there’s nothing like an action-packed session to help prepare Nome for her 15th go around in the year 2000!

THANK YOU!



The tremendous effort his past holiday season of employees from across the agency made the DAS Toy Drive an absolute success! Contributions by employees, along with the patrons of the Parma and Carbone’s Restaurants, helped to make the holidays brighter for thousands of Greater Hartford children. Your support and generosity are greatly appreciated.

All the news that fits, we print

By John McKay

State seal of approval

Steve Dygus should be feeling pretty good about himself lately. Recently elected president of the National Conference of State Fleet Administrators (NCSFA), Dygus is receiving compliments and congratulations from around the country. NCSFA concentrates on improving the communications between state governments in regard to fleet management.

Short takes

Governor John G. Rowland sent a personal, handwritten note congratulating Dygus on his accomplishment. Don Underwood, NCSFA's past president from Oregon, wrote in a letter to Governor Rowland, "Steve represents his state well and is highly respected by his peers. You and your state must be proud of dedicated employees like Steve. Please extend our appreciation to Steve for his outstanding leadership and congratulations on this impressive accomplishment."

Let your fingers do the talking

SLC's Martin Anderson is getting fan mail from around the globe. Anderson received an email from Ken Shelston, manager of corporate development of

the Sutherland Shire council in Australia, a community of 200,000 citizens. Shelston had recently picked up on a number of list serve communications that referenced Anderson and the DAS performance measures.

"Technology brings so many contacts and so much information right to my desktop," said Anderson. "Here I am at my keyboard giving advice to someone where it's already the next day. I'm helping tomorrow," he joked. He's also been contacted by people from such diverse places as Saudi Arabia and Vancouver, British Columbia about DAS performance measures and the Performance Profile.

A helping hand

The DAS Communications Office welcomes Dana Citarella, a part-time intern, who will do writing, designing, and public relations assignments. "This definitely sounds like the place to get some good experience," she said. "I've worked in the private sector so it should prove interesting to see how the state works." Citarella, a senior at the University of Connecticut, is an English and Journalism major, has repeatedly made the Dean's List, and is a writer for the college newspaper.

You don't need an abacus anymore

The Salary Compensation Manual is now available. This manual provides professionals with a step-by-step guide for computing salary adjustments. The manual addresses such topics as promotions, voluntary demotions, reassignments, and how to calculate the correlating change in salary. For more information, please contact Lori Kolakowski at (860) 713-5176 or email: lori.kolakowski@po.state.ct.us to arrange a pickup time.