
ASPA BUZZ

A Publication of the American Society for Public Administration, Utah Chapter

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FEBRUARY ASPA LUNCHEON

Thursday, February 5, 2009

12:00 noon

State Capitol Building Multipurpose Room, Suite 130

NOTE NEW LOCATION!!!

(Suite 130 is located by the north stairway of the State Capitol Building)

Utah's Short- and Mid-term Economic Development Outlook

JASON PERRY, Executive Director, Governor's Office of
Economic Development

MICHAEL FLYNN, Vice President-Public Development, Economic
Development Corporation of Utah

. . . and other panel members to be announced!

How is Utah's economic development outlook faring in these volatile economic times? Come find out from the experts who work every day trying to attract and encourage business growth and expansion throughout the state. A panel discussion will focus on what's hot, what's not, and what we can expect to see in terms of business growth and expansion in the next few years. Our vibrant, well-educated work force and a superb quality of life are factors other states envy, but is that going to be enough for Utah to win the day in such a competitive environment? Are incentives needed and, if so, what are the tools these experts use to attract businesses and keep businesses.

Please make your reservations early. The luncheon will be catered. **Reservations or cancellations must be received no later than Monday, February 2nd. No shows will be billed. Limited parking is available—please carpool or ride public transportation where possible.**

The cost of the luncheon is \$13.00 for ASPA members, \$15.00 for nonmembers, and \$8.00 for students. Cash or checks are accepted.

Please call the Center for Public Policy & Administration, University of Utah, at 581-6493 or e-mail jrandall@cpga.utah.edu for reservations.

ASPA LEGISLATIVE PREVIEW

By Tricia Jack
Center for Public Policy & Administration, University of Utah

This month's ASPA luncheon was a very interesting and informative preview of the upcoming 2009 General Legislative Session. We had a balanced panel including Senator Gregory Bell (R), Senator Gene Davis (D), Representative Steve Mascaro (R) and Representative Phil Riesen (D).

Each of the panelists was asked in advance to answer three questions:

- What areas do you see as prevalent issues in the upcoming session? Why?
- What specific issues do you plan to recommend?
- How do you think the anticipated budget shortfalls will be addressed by the Legislature?

SENATOR GENE DAVIS began by stating that this session will not be an easy one. He has been in state government since 1987 and believes this will be the single most difficult session he has ever faced in his 23 years of service. Senator Davis said that his answers to the three questions asked are: budget, budget and budget cuts. He talked about making sure that we do what is good and right for Utah. He hoped to avoid layoffs in state government because we have a great base of employees but the balancing act will be very difficult since there will be many different ideas.

SENATOR GREG BELL said the budget is what everyone is focusing on and, as a result, all legislators are being inundated with emails about what not to cut. These are hard choices because they are looking at picking from among good, effective programs but the reality is that vertical program eliminations and prioritizing between programs is essential. He noted that the Legislature is expecting a big PR fall-out and lots of advocates marching on the Capitol. This session is going to be intense.

Senator Bell explained the process that the legislature will follow: they will adopt and vote on a base budget in the first week of the session but it won't be until February that they will really know what the projections are. The leadership wants to cut 15% but is hoping that the actual figure will be 11-12%. Senator Bell stated that it is doubtful that they will have to make the full 15% cuts because this year they are more amenable to bonding and deferring some transportation projects, or to increase taxes to pay for the shortfall. The appropriations subcommittees will work hard this year to seek out the efficiencies. He urged the group not to judge legislators by what they do in the first week but to wait and see what they do in the last week of session.

REPRESENTATIVE STEVE MASCARO talked about the effects of budget cuts on the state. Issues such as less state troopers on the roads are in the balance. He stated that draconian cuts are not good for the economy and we are trying to get Utah's economy back on track as soon as possible, so the legislature will look at many ways to try and mitigate cuts.

Representative Mascaro told the group that he supports bonding because Utah's AAA rating is good. He is also supportive of using some rainy day funds because "if this is not a rainy day, what is?" He mentioned that the Governor's proposal is not as dramatic as the legislature's but there will be a battle.

REPRESENTATIVE PHIL RIESEN talked briefly about the budget and said that the legislature will struggle with this for the full 45 days of session. He then went on to talk about some other issues he thinks will be important. These are:

- Ethics reform
- Health insurance reform
- Gay and lesbian rights
- Abortion
- Alcohol control
- Property taxes
- Transportation funding and how this relates to budget problems
- School equalization
- Public education appropriations options
- Protecting township boundaries
- Use of cell phones while driving

There were several questions afterward including issues over healthcare reforms, flat taxes and transportation bonding.

Thank you to Senators Davis and Bell, and Representatives Mascaro and Riesen for taking time to update ASPA members on the current issues. It's going to be a very interesting and difficult session.

COUNCIL CORNER

Pauline Zvonkovic
ASPA Council Member

Hang On to Your Hats!

ASPA's Council Corner allows board members to provide information on particular programs, projects, or policies impacting our communities. Given that this article will be read after one of our country's most significant events in recent history, I am going to focus my comments more broadly by looking at change occurring at the national level.

It has taken me weeks to actually sit and write this article. I considered writing on some of the current issues facing our state, our social service program, housing and homelessness. Yet, I wanted to look at our current economic crisis in a different light and point out what some have said about this crisis, that it is an opportunity to make bold and aggressive changes to a number of government programs and systems. If viewed as an opportunity, will there be time for more "rational comprehensive" decision making or will we see the country "muddle through" the next four years? My money is on more of the former, with a moderate dose of the latter.

President Obama has laid the groundwork for a pragmatic approach to solving the current crisis. He has created teams of experts on the economy, foreign affairs, energy and security that will provide him with information that is balanced, thoughtful and thorough. He has said repeatedly that he wants all ideas on the table where their merits will be analyzed. If they will bring about

the economic relief we desperately need, he will push forward solutions regardless of their origin. His willingness to move swiftly is a sign that tweaking the edges of programs will not be the standard decision making model for the next four years. He has approached our situation in a rather rational and comprehensive way.

Domestic programs dealing with the justice system, housing, financial regulations and energy will all be subject to sweeping proposals pushing for increased regulatory oversight, more public scrutiny, greater accountability and sustainability. The nation's entire financial structure will be placed under pressure to reform and possibly reinvent itself to ensure the problems we are facing today will not be repeated in the future. Foreign policy will reflect a new era of diplomacy for a host of reasons—first, the new faces that will be working on the world scene and second, our inability to economically sustain a war with no firm end date.

However, not every government program will be significantly revised or upended. Some will see only minor modifications reflecting changes in the new President's ideology. Domestic agencies will see some programs completely revamped and others will continue virtually unchanged, barely tweaked, allowing their administrators to muddle through as always.

How will this be accomplished given the constraints we know exist on political decision making? I contend that it will happen due to the very unusual nature of what President Obama has been able to do thus far. He has been able to excite and engage a majority of Americans. He has enlisted their support using technology in a unique way, and his dynamic rhetoric makes one believe that the status quo can be overcome if we push hard enough. I supported his candidacy early on for a fundamental reason that change will only happen when the American public places pressure on Congress to accept proposals that are counter to the special interests that are so pervasive in our current decision making system. We will only experience change when it is forced upon elected leaders by the very people that placed them in office. The new administration has come into power with a mandate to correct a number of serious problems and will be successful because the public will demand that their representatives work with the administration to right our ship, which is currently taking on water.

Our country is very young and has been incredibly lucky. During times of crisis we have looked within our borders and have had the insight to choose leaders who have pulled us through serious and challenging times. I believe we have done this again with the election of President Obama. I hope everyone involved in government programs is ready for a dramatic ride, much like a merry-go-round being replaced with the wild-mouse. Hang on to your hats!

Schedule of ASPA Luncheon Topics for 2008-2009
(Please note that luncheons have been moved to Thursdays)

March 5, 2009
April 2, 2009
May 7, 2009

State Four-day Workweek
Health Care
Awards Program

Spotlight – New Council Member

CLAYTON FULTON recently graduated with a Master's Degree in Public Administration from the Romney Institute at BYU's Marriott School of Management. Clayton has a broad range of interests; he has a Bachelor's Degree in Sociology and an Associate's Degree in Business. He currently works for the Utah Division of Housing and Community Development where he can use many of the skills he has acquired throughout his education and work experience. Prior to employment with the State of Utah, Clayton worked his way through college as a brick mason.

Clayton enjoys working with his hands and playing sports. He has actually been building his own home (which he hopes to move into next weekend). Clayton did the brick work, tile work, roofing, and some of the finish work, but contracted out all the rest—after all he did need to keep his day job. Clayton also played arena football (though not for the Utah Blaze), but after two torn ligaments he thought a life of public service would be much safer and more rewarding.

Clayton also enjoys spending time with his family; he is married and has one child, a little girl who is about to turn one year old.

2009 ASPA Conference is Two Months Away!



ASPA's 2009 Annual Conference will be held March 20-24 in Miami, Florida at the Hyatt Regency Miami. The conference theme - *Governance in the Midst of Diversity: Bridging Opportunity and Challenge* - will explore and develop innovative practices for public administration to address the growing diversity of communities around the country. It emphasizes the importance of context and culture on the sustainability of innovations, and ASPA's role in supporting public administration globally from a U.S. perspective. We are happy to report that we received more than 400 submissions! For more information on the conference, [click here](#)

JOIN ASPA TODAY!

We invite you to enter into the dynamic world of information, challenges and people that make ASPA what it is today. When you join the American Society for Public Administration, you become part of the time-tested heart of the world of public service. Since 1939, ASPA has been the nation's most respected society representing all forums in the public service. Go to www.aspanet.org to join online or to download a membership application.

2008-2009 ASPA COUNCIL – UTAH CHAPTER

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Public Service Recognition Week, May 4-10, 2009

Public Service Recognition Week is a time set aside to better inform Americans about the broad variety of services provided by government. The week is also an opportunity to show appreciation to public employees at the federal, state, county, and local levels who ensure that our government is the best in the world.

Each year the Utah chapter of ASPA requests nominations for several service awards. These awards will be presented at the luncheon on May 7th. The ASPA Council would appreciate your taking a few moments and considering whom you might nominate. A nomination form is included below.

ANNOUNCING THE ASPA ANNUAL SERVICE AWARDS

ASPA SERVICE AWARD NOMINATION FORM

I would like to nominate the following individual, board, or commission for an ASPA service award.

Name: _____ Title: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____
City State Zip Code

Name of Nominator: _____ Phone Number: _____

The award I think the individual, board, or commission would be eligible for is the:

- Senator Arthur V. Watkins Distinguished Service Award for an Elected Official, which honors elected officials who, through exceptional commitment, skill and integrity, served the public with special distinction.
- Dr. G. Homer Durham Distinguished Service Award for an Appointed Official, which honors appointed officials who have served the public with honor and integrity.
- Dr. F. Ted Hebert Distinguished Service Award for Outstanding Contributions to Public Administration, which honors individuals that have made significant contributions to public administration through academia or as a public citizen.
- Boards and Commissions Award of Excellence, for a board or commission whose members have exhibited community service, work to support the common good, are proactive in decision-making, and facilitate public participation in governmental processes.

Reason for nominating this person or organization:

Nominations should be sent to:

Utah Chapter ASPA
University of Utah
260 S Central Campus Dr Rm 214
Salt Lake City, UT 84112-9154

Fax: 801-585-5489