

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

General Affairs Committee
May 26, 2009

[CONFIRMATION]

The Committee on General Affairs met at 1:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 26, 2009, in Room 1510 of the State Capitol, Lincoln, Nebraska, for the purpose of conducting a public hearing on gubernatorial appointments. Senators present: Russ Karpisek, Chairperson; Kent Rogert, Vice Chairperson; Colby Coash; Tanya Cook; Merton "Cap" Dierks; Annette Dubas; Mike Friend; and Scott Price. Senators absent: None. []

SENATOR KARPISEK: Okay. We will open the hearing for Janice Wiebusch for the Liquor Control Commission. Quickly, we'll go through. We have Senator Friend here from Omaha; Senator Dierks from Eustis... [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR DIERKS: Ewing. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR KARPISEK: Oh, Ewing. I'm sorry. I'm usually right on that stuff (laugh). Josh Eickmeier is our legal counsel from Seward. I'm Russ Karpisek from Wilber. We have Senator Dubas from Fullerton and Senator Price from Bellevue. Is that correct? We haven't done this for awhile. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR DIERKS: You did it real well. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR KARPISEK: Not bad for...it's been awhile. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR DIERKS: You got the first syllable right on mine. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR KARPISEK: There you go. We will be having the Liquor Control Commission...Ms. Wiebusch, if you would take the chair, please. And just tell us a little bit about yourself and what you see in this position, and... [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR PRICE: Name. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR KARPISEK: Oh, yes, thank you, Senator Price. And your name and spell it for the record, please. [CONFIRMATION]

JANICE WIEBUSCH: Okay. I'm Janice Wiebusch, J-a-n-i-c-e W-i-e-b-u-s-c-h, from Kearney. And I am a real estate broker there. I don't know if any of you saw the background or the info that I sent in. I've been in the real estate business since 1976, so I'm one of the old-timers as I tell people, presently the broker for Century 21 Midlands in Kearney. Prior to that, well, I grew up in Broken Bow, went to UNL, got a bachelor's and a master's degree; master's in music at UNL. Taught school for three years and then got into the real estate business, and have been...as my husband says, there is not a foundation or a group that I have not been a part of in the Kearney area. I think that's extremely important for all of us to give of ourselves to our community and

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community-at-large, not necessarily just the town we're in, so. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR KARPISEK: And what do you see with the Liquor Commission? I mean, why do you want to be on the Liquor Commission? [CONFIRMATION]

JANICE WIEBUSCH: Well, it's not something that I was seeking. I was kind of caught off-guard when I was asked if I would please submit my name to be part of that, and, quite frankly, I had to be educated as to how many commissioners there were. Now, I was...I'm a past real estate commissioner, so I knew something from that standpoint, but I did not realize that there was one senator representing each congressional district. And so I had to be a little educated on what I was getting myself into and the responsibilities. And, again, as I said prior, I feel that I was being asked by numerous people if I would please consider and please put my name forward, and the more I thought about it and the more I looked into it, I thought I could be a contributing member, and so that's what led me to do so. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR KARPISEK: Very good. Do we have any questions? Senator Price. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR PRICE: I have a comment and a question. The comment is and a question also is first off, is I see that you have a music background. Is it in a particular instrument, instruction, a combination thereof? [CONFIRMATION]

JANICE WIEBUSCH: Actually, well, my main instrument was piano, but growing up, our house was like a music conservatory. There was every instrument played by all of us. It was wonderful. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR PRICE: Great, and then in...a little bit more germaneness. What are your thoughts on the...we've heard a lot about liquor licenses this year and a propensity for them to be saturated in certain areas, and the idea floated out, at one point in time it was something about maybe having a density limiting...making it so that you can only have so many liquor licenses in a given area, so we don't have every corner for five blocks is a liquor license. And I didn't know...this is a reappointment, I take it, so my...is this a reappointment or initial appointment? [CONFIRMATION]

JANICE WIEBUSCH: No, initial. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR PRICE: Right. Well, okay, we just had a reappointed here, so that's why I asked that question. [CONFIRMATION]

JANICE WIEBUSCH: Oh. No, I'm the new kid. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR PRICE: Right. I kind of figured from what it was saying, but it says, being

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reappointed to the Liquor Commission, so I just...but inasmuch then, it's even better then to hear your thoughts perhaps on the idea of not having quite as many liquor licenses in a given area. I don't know what the right number is. I don't know the constitutionality of it, but just your thoughts on how many liquor licenses are we going to give out, and there are many thousands of them. And if you had a moment to share on that. [CONFIRMATION]

JANICE WIEBUSCH: And I'm not sure at this point that I would agree that there needs to be a limited number. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR PRICE: Okay. [CONFIRMATION]

JANICE WIEBUSCH: Now, I mean, I need to do some studying and... [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR PRICE: And that's great that you say so, because, again, right here in the very first letter, I don't know if anybody else has it. The one from the Governor's Office. It says right at the...the lead-in page, it says a reappointment. That's why I thought the question was a little bit more...you'd have the ability to answer more, but thank you. [CONFIRMATION]

JANICE WIEBUSCH: Yes. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR KARPISEK: And thank you for pointing out that that was from the Governor's Office. (Laughter) Not committee. Any other questions? I would like to point out that Senator Coash has joined us from Lincoln; Senator Rogert from Tekamah, Vice Chair of the committee; and Senator Cook from Omaha. Seeing no further questions, we will...is there anyone here in support of the nomination? Okay. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR HADLEY: Am I allowed to say? [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR KARPISEK: If you'd take the seat, Senator. [CONFIRMATION]

JANICE WIEBUSCH: Oh, do I? Oh... [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR FRIEND: You're off the hot seat. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR HADLEY: My name is Galen Hadley, G-a-l-e-n H-a-d-l-e-y, Senator from the 37th District, and I've known Janice ever since she...I moved to Kearney 19 years ago, and my wife has known her longer than that. They were sorority sisters together many years ago at UNL. Janice was the first female president of the Kearney Chamber of Commerce which is I think quite an honor in that. She and I have served together on the hospital board. She's the treasurer of the hospital board, and, as she said, she's been

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very, very active. And I think you will find that Janice will do an outstanding job on the Liquor Commission, because she comes with an idea of service. She's a good thinker, and I think she will tackle the problems as Senator Price was talking about in dealing with liquor, the number of licenses, and such as that. And I would just say, we need that kind of expertise, because serving on a city council, as Senator Karpisek has done, and as the mayor, you know, there is some concerns, at times, between local jurisdiction and statewide jurisdiction. And I think she will...and she also served on the Kearney City Council so she brings that perspective also, so I would recommend her highly for this position. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR KARPISEK: Very good. Thank you, Senator Hadley. Any questions for the senator? Seeing none, is there anyone in opposition to Ms. Wiebusch? Anyone in a neutral capacity? Seeing none, that will close the hearing for the appointment. [CONFIRMATION]

Chairperson

Committee Clerk