

Journal of the House

Thursday, February 4, 2016

At one o'clock in the afternoon the Speaker called the House to order.

Devotional Exercises

Devotional exercises were conducted by the Speaker.

Remarks Journalized

On motion of **Rep. Devereux of Mount Holly**, the following remarks by actor, Jim Cooke of Quincy, Massachusetts from yesterday's devotion were ordered printed in the Journal:

“Mr. Speaker:

The following is an excerpt from the speech by Calvin Coolidge to members of the Joint Assembly and Members of the Vermont Historical Society on January 18, 1921.

“The State House of Vermont holds an interest for me that no public building can ever exceed. This Hall of the House of Representatives has a fascination that is unapproachable. Here my father sat as a member of the Legislature and his father before him. At an age so early that my memory holds no previous recollection, I was brought here by my mother and my grandfather to visit my father, and among other experiences, seated in the chair of the Chief Executive, with a veneration which has forever marked for me the reverence due that righteous authority which is vested in a government over which the people are supreme. Compared with that visit no other journey will ever seem of equal importance. No other experience will ever touch in like manner and in like degree my imagination. Here I first saw that sacred fire which lights the altar of my country.

History is to be studied and applied not for the purpose of advocating reaction. It is not the accurately informed who continually appeal to the good old times to the disparagement of the present. That is characteristic of those who substitute fable and hazy tradition for fact and reliable record. True history which includes all the records of the past, however obtained and where ever recorded, whether made upon the surface of the earth by the ceaseless shifting of air and water, or transmitted by written signs on tablet and parchment, or through oral repetition handed down from sire to son, or that most indelible of records the accumulated experience of generation after generation moulded into the brain of man, while ever a conservative force, yet

holds the only warrant for real progress. It is ignorance of its teachings, which leads men of good intentions to advocate either reaction or revolution, and a knowledge of its forces, which aids men to promote the public welfare. In judging of the strength of a state it is necessary to know what has gone before, what point of development has been reached by the people of that state, and whether their present plan of society is justified by past experience.

We are the possessors of tremendous power both as individuals and as states. The great question of the preservation of our institutions is a moral question. Shall we use our power for self-aggrandizement or for service? It has been the lack of moral fiber that has been the downfall of the peoples of the past.”

**Committee Relieved of Consideration
and Bill Committed to Other Committee**

H. 743

Rep. Sweaney of Windsor moved that the committee on Government Operations be relieved of House bill, entitled

An act relating to fair and impartial policing

And that the bill be committed to the committee on Judiciary, which was agreed to.

Bill Amended; Third Reading Ordered

H. 575

Rep. Fiske of Enosburgh, for the committee on Human Services, to which had been referred House bill, entitled

An act relating to eliminating the role of town service officers in administering General Assistance benefits

Reported in favor of its passage when amended by striking all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. 13 V.S.A. § 3901 is amended to read:

§ 3901. VAGRANT DEFINED

A transient person, roving from place to place and living without visible means of support, who begs, or who rides or attempts to ride on a railroad freight train or engine without the consent of the person in charge thereof, or who enters or attempts to enter a dwelling house, barn, or other building without the permission of the owners or occupants thereof, shall be deemed a vagrant. The act of applying to a town service officer for general assistance or

~~to a police officer~~ for lodging or subsistence shall not be evidence that such a person is a vagrant.

Sec. 2. 24 V.S.A. § 871 is amended to read:

§ 871. ORGANIZATION OF SELECTBOARD; APPOINTMENTS

Forthwith after its election and qualification, the selectboard shall organize and elect a chair and, if so voted, a clerk from among its number, and file a certificate of such election for record in the office of the town clerk. The selectboard shall thereupon appoint from among the legally qualified voters a tree warden and may thereupon appoint from among the legally qualified voters the following officers who shall serve until their successors are appointed and qualified, and shall certify such appointments to the town clerk who shall record the same:

- (1) three fence viewers;
- (2) a poundkeeper, for each pound; voting residence in the town need not be a qualification for this office provided appointee gives his or her consent to the appointment;
- (3) one or more inspectors of lumber, shingles, and wood; ~~and~~
- (4) one or more weighers of coal; and
- (5) one town service officer.

Sec. 3. 33 V.S.A. § 2102 is amended to read:

§ 2102. ~~TOWN SERVICE OFFICER, APPOINTMENT, DUTIES,~~
~~COMPENSATION~~

~~(a) On or before April 15 of each year the selectboard shall appoint a town service officer and notify the Commissioner of their appointment. A town service officer may be appointed to serve simultaneously more than one town. A selectboard member may be a town service officer. The Commissioner shall give him or her a certificate of appointment and contract for his or her compensation. If the selectboard fails to appoint a town service officer the Commissioner may do so. In the absence of the town service officer any selectboard member may act in his or her behalf. Successors of a retired, dismissed, deceased, or removed town service officer shall be immediately appointed by the selectboard of the town under the same procedures as the original appointment.~~

~~(b) The duties of town service officers are to receive applications for assistance, to investigate, make determinations of eligibility for General Assistance, grant from funds advanced to him or her for emergency General~~

~~Assistance and to perform other duties, including such investigations, under the welfare code as the Commissioner may direct. [Repealed.]~~

Sec. 4. 33 V.S.A. § 2106 is amended to read:

§ 2106. LIMITATION ON LIABILITY FOR MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

The State shall not be liable for medical or surgical care furnished to any person eligible for General Assistance, unless the Department agrees to it. ~~However, without agreement recovery may be had from the Department for necessary emergency care until it is first reasonably possible to contact a welfare officer or town service officer.~~ This section shall not apply to hospitals.

Sec. 5. 33 V.S.A. § 2111 is amended to read:

§ 2111. DEATH

When a person, including a transient, dies in the State in other than a State institution and no one appears to make funeral arrangements, the person in charge thereof shall report the death of the person to the nearest ~~welfare officer or town service officer~~ Economic Services Division office.

Sec. 6. 33 V.S.A. § 2112 is amended to read:

§ 2112. ~~PERSONS OUTSIDE HOUSE, HOSPITAL, OR JAIL~~

~~When a person needing relief, including a transient, is found in a place other than a house, hospital, or jail, the town service officer may provide relief under regulations of the Commissioner. [Repealed.]~~

Sec. 7. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2016.

The bill, having appeared on the Calendar one day for notice, was taken up, read the second time, report of the committee on Human Services agreed to and third reading ordered.

Adjournment

At one o'clock and nine minutes in the afternoon, on motion of **Rep. Turner of Milton**, the House adjourned until tomorrow at nine o'clock and thirty minutes in the forenoon.