

Miyagi Prefectural Assembly News

The 360th Miyagi Prefectural Assembly (June 2017 Regular Session)

1) Session: June 16, 2017 (Fri.) to July 6, 2017 (Thu.), 21 days

2) Outline

The 360th Miyagi Prefectural Assembly (June 2017 regular session) was held over a period of 21 days from June 16 to July 6, 2017. 35 bills were approved in their original forms, including the supplementary budget bill to add an additional 2.6190 billion JPY to the FY 2017 general account, and 3 executive decisions by the governor were recognized. During his response on the first day of general inquiries, Governor Yoshihiro Murai officially announced his candidacy and that he would seek a fourth term at the gubernatorial election (announced on October 5th, polls open on the 22nd) following the end of his current term. During the general inquiries where 16 people took the podium, discussions were held on the steady progress of reconstruction and new prefectural issues such as an overlook of Governor Murai's three terms of 12 years and his political stances, as well as issues that are becoming more of a concern, such as bullying & suicide and the coal-fired power plant problem.

3) Bills Voted On

1. Proposals (total): 3

- Proposal to reduce medical costs of patients with liver cirrhosis or liver cancer from hepatitis B or C
- Proposal to abolish nationally-funded cost-reduction regulatory measures of national health insurance for medical cost assistance for people with disabilities and single-parent households, etc.

2. Bills Submitted by the Governor (total): 38

- FY 2017 Miyagi Prefecture General Account Budget, etc.

3. Petitions (total): 1

- Petition to reconsider demolition of the Sant Juan Bautista, the replica ship of the Keicho Mission (approved)

4) Summary of Representative and General Inquiries Made During the Assembly

1. Efforts to Prevent Recurrence of Bullying

Miyagi Prefecture and the Miyagi Board of Education Secretariat are currently working together to revise the Miyagi Basic Policy for Bullying Prevention. The prefecture will strengthen cooperation by making the roles of schools, families, the community, and other related parties more apparent, and will continue to make efforts to eradicate bullying from society as a whole and prevent it from recurring.

2. Coal-Fired Power Plant Plan Issues

Within prefectural regulations, the prefecture aims to incorporate main points of the "Plan Assessment" into procedures for the "Project Assessment," which is used when conducting surveys and evaluations of any given project. When reaching a consensus with residents, the prefecture will cite the governor's opinion, which reflects the local residents' opinions, and advise project management so that it is reflected

appropriately in the “Environmental Assessment.”

3. Establishing New Prefectural Special Needs School

The prefecture is mainly considering the former Takuto Medical Treatment and Rehabilitation Center in Akiu Yumoto (Taihaku Ward) and the former Takuto Special Needs School as sites for the new school. Selecting a site is an urgent issue and the prefecture wants to open the school as soon as possible. When selecting candidates, factors such as having enough area within prefectural land to build a school and the commute time for younger students were considered.

4. Disaster Recovery Project Inspection (Seawall, Prefectural Road Construction)

Regarding the floodgate of the seawall, the prefecture decided not to use a flap gate, which would stand up automatically in the event of a tsunami, because there was no guarantee that it would work properly. Instead, the prefecture decided to use a horizontal sliding gate because it can be closed before a tsunami arrives.

Regarding the Kesenuma-Motoyoshi Route, which has endless construction issues such as the narrow roads and damaged guard rails, the prefecture will respond to issues based on how traffic conditions change with the opening of the road going along the Sanriku coast and the Kesenuma-Motoyoshi Road.

5. Necessity for a Support Center for Affected Children and Young People

Regarding the need to have a center to provide comprehensive, long-term support in fields such as medical care, welfare, and education for affected children and young people, the prefecture will take this idea into consideration while exchanging information with private organizations that are already conducting various initiatives.

5) Activities of the Prefectural Assembly in Relation to Restoration and Reconstruction Efforts

On April 26th, the prefecture heard from the vice-representative and other staff from TEPCO’s Fukushima Revitalization Headquarters about the progress, current state, and issues related to compensation for damages from the nuclear incident. Additionally, on June 27th, a discussion about restoration and recovery issues that came up from a survey to disaster-affected municipalities was held with State Minister for Reconstruction Tachibana, and on July 7th, a petition to Minister for Reconstruction Yoshino calling for further progress on restoration and recovery was held.