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4 delegates head House committees

Marshall, Fleischauer, Manchin, Longstreth

BY EVELYN RYAN The Dominion Post

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS contributed to this report. **PAY HIKES**, taxes, health care top list of issues.

LABOR, INDUSTRY lay out minesafety agenda.

TABLE GAMES could hinge on vote controversy. **Page 10-B.**

Four area legislators were named to leadership positions in the House of Delegates by incoming Speaker Rick Thompson.

Delegate Charlene Marshall will chair the Economic Development Committee, while Delegate Barbara Evans Fleischauer is returning as chair of the Constitutional Revision Committee. Both are D-Monongalia.

Delegate Tim Manchin, D-Marion, was named chair of the Political Subdivisions Committee, while Delegate Linda Longstreth, D-Marion, will co-chair the Veterans Affairs Committee.

They are heading what are considered minor committees. No local delegates head any of the four major committees — Education, Finance, Government Organization and Judiciary. Marion County Delegate Mike Caputo, by virtue of being named House Majority Whip, serves on the powerful Rules Committee.

Marshall said she was appointed as a member of the Finance Committee.

The Legislature formally convenes at noon Wednesday, with Gov. Joe Manchin's State of the State speech set for 7 p.m.

She was not expecting to be named to chair any committee, much less be appointed to the Finance Committee — a first for her, Marshall said.

Marshall said she'll also serve on the Constitutional Revision Committee, and Health and Human Resources Committee.

"This is the fourth time I'll be part of the Health and Human Resources Committee," she said. "I've always wanted to remain on Health."

Fleischauer, who is returning after a term out of office, is settling into a familiar role as chair of Constitutional Revision. She held the seat for a number of years in previous terms.

"I'm excited about it," she said. "I think it's an important committee. We have a really good Constitution. I want to make sure we are very careful about changing the Constitution because I think it is a very good document."

Fleischauer pledged to have the committee study and conduct a deliberative evaluation of legislation put before it.

Both women said they will have to wait until the bills start to arrive on their desks before they are able to determine what issues will be important this session.

"I'm hoping to work with a number of individuals throughout the state about economic development," Marshall said.

She's looking forward to working with co-chair Delegate Richard Browning, D-Wyoming, and finding out who other members of the committee are.

Fleischauer is already planning to help her committee members better understand their role. She's going to

have her husband, WVU law professor and constitutional expert Bob Bastress, talk with them about what he learned while writing a book on the West Virginia Constitution.

Marshall has a noncommittee position that she's excited to hold again.

She's the chaplain of the House. In that post, she determines who will be offering a prayer or leading the Pledge of Allegiance at House sessions.

"It's going to be a busy time," she said. "Of course, I enjoy being busy. I am excited about chairing the committee for economic development. I just hope this affords me the opportunity to get information first-hand and be involved in different aspects of business all across the state."

All delegates are assigned to serve on the various committees. A complete list of committee assignments was not available Thursday.



Charlene Marshall



Tim Manchin