



OHIO CONSTITUTIONAL MODERNIZATION COMMISSION

REVISED MINUTES OF THE COORDINATING COMMITTEE

FOR THE MEETING HELD
THURSDAY, JULY 11, 2013

Call to Order:

Chair Kathleen Trafford called the meeting of the Coordinating Committee to order at 1:02 p.m.

Members Present:

A quorum was present with Chair Trafford, Vice-chair Davidson, and committee members Abaray, Fischer, Obhof, and Sykes in attendance.

Approval of Minutes:

The minutes of the June 13, 2013 committee meeting were reviewed and approved.

Discussion:

Chair Trafford began the meeting by noting that no audio or visual recordings would take place in any of the committee meetings occurring on Thursday, July 11, 2013. Representative Vernon Sykes indicated that if it was the committee's consensus that all meetings be recorded, he would make further inquiries. Committee member Janet Abaray said that other committees have expressed concerns. Vice-chair Davidson said the Commission needs to seek authorization to have committee meetings recorded and that a formal request must be made. Each committee member expressed support for recording committee meetings.

Senior Policy Advisor Steven H. Steinglass suggested that a paragraph or two be submitted to the Coordinating Committee from each of the subject matter committees in order to track and organize their progress. Mr. Steinglass recommended that the Coordinating Committee create a uniform procedure for each committee to follow. Committee member Patrick Fischer agreed and added that committees should also report their deadlines.

Chair Trafford asked if the members of the Coordinating Committee should be tasked with providing periodic reports from their other respective subject matter committees. Chair Trafford

surveyed the members present and found that all subject matter committees have members that also serve on the Coordinating Committee. Vice-chair Davidson asked if this would put Coordinating Committee members in a difficult position if they are not committee chairs. Ms. Abaray suggested that committee chairs could authorize Coordinating Committee members to report back to the Coordinating Committee. Mr. Steinglass suggested that committee chairs could meet with the Coordinating Committee. Rep. Sykes said that any committee chairs' meetings should be noticed and open to the public. Senator Larry Obhof recommended that the Coordinating Committee invite all of the committee chairs to the next Coordinating Committee meeting in August for five- to ten-minute presentations on their committees. Mr. Steinglass noted that committee chairs might be in other committee meetings at the same time. Mr. Steinglass suggested that the first half hour of the Coordinating Committee be designated for committee chairs to testify.

Sen. Obhof moved to have committee chairs appear before the Coordinating Committee in the first half hour the committee meets at the August meeting for presentations and updates from each of the committee chairs. Judge Fischer seconded the motion. The Chair called for a vote. Sen. Obhof's motion was favorably passed with a vote of 6 yeas and 0 nays.

Ms. Abaray noted that, when discussing the Ohio Constitution, committees also may spot issues with statutory enactments and asked whether it is appropriate for the committees to address statutes as well as constitutional provisions. Mr. Steinglass said that the 1970's Ohio Constitutional Revision Commission issued eleven or twelve reports when the commission was finished, and that any significant statutory analysis or recommendations could be noted in the reports. Vice-chair Davidson recommended reports to the General Assembly should include a section on "issues to be considered statutorily," or subjects that the Commission feels should not be in the Ohio Constitution but instead should be in statute. Chair Trafford agreed and added that all reports to the General Assembly should be uniform.

Mr. Steinglass suggested that each subject matter committee also address obsolete material and a list should be collected from the committees with long-term recommendations for eliminating the listed material. Chair Trafford recommended that the Coordinating Committee advise the subject matter committees to keep track of obsolete material now so that it may be addressed later. Vice-chair Davidson defined "obsolete material" as provisions that are no longer in use or are inoperable. Ms. Abaray agreed that the language in the Ohio Constitution needs to be cleaned up, for example, changing "men" to "people." Judge Fischer agreed, adding that if committees are keeping track of obsolete material, they also should be keeping track of language to modernize. Vice-chair Davidson summarized that committees should keep track of three things: provisions that the General Assembly should implement statutorily, obsolete material, and language that needs modernization.

Vice-chair Davidson noted that not all of the Commission members will be involved until the commission's completion date, July 1, 2021, which could be problematic if new commissioners are brought on but have not had the advantage of being at previous committee meetings or hearing testimony. Mr. Steinglass said it is in the charter that the Commission must submit a report to the General Assembly with recommendations every two years, so new commission members could read those reports.

Chair Trafford asked how the Commission should engage the public in its work. Mr. Steinglass suggested the full Commission could meet in locations outside of Columbus. Rep. Sykes said that subject matter committees could be more engaging to the public than a full Commission meeting. Chair Trafford asked if it is up to the Coordinating Committee to coordinate how the subject matter committees engage the public, or if it should be left up to the subject matter committees themselves. Mr. Steinglass noted that the Public Education and Information Committee suggested a letter be posted on the Commission's website as a "public service announcement" or public informational. Chair Trafford said that groups have already requested or been invited to testify before committees.

Adjournment:

With no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 1:58 p.m.

Approval:

The minutes of the July 11, 2013 meeting of the Coordinating Committee were approved at the August 8, 2013 meeting of the committee.

/s/ Kathleen M. Trafford
Kathleen M. Trafford, Chair

/s/ Jo Ann Davidson
Jo Ann Davidson, Vice-chair