



OHIO CONSTITUTIONAL MODERNIZATION COMMISSION

MINUTES OF THE
COORDINATING COMMITTEE

FOR THE MEETING HELD
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2014

Call to Order:

Chair Trafford called the meeting of the Coordinating Committee to order at 9:00 a.m.

Members Present:

A quorum was present with committee members Trafford, Davidson, Abaray, Fischer, and Mulvihill in attendance.

Approval of Minutes:

The committee approved the minutes of the October 9, 2014 meeting.

Topics Discussed:

Review of Biennial Report

Executive Director Hollon gave an overview of the 2013-2014 Biennial Report. The report is presented in sections and covers a variety of topics such as the hiring of staff and the establishment of the office, the adoption of rules of procedure and conduct, major accomplishments of the Commission in the last two years, and a listing of members who served on the Commission during the biennium. Other sections include a description of activities of the subject matter committees, including the charge to the committees, identification of chairs and members, topics covered, and reports and recommendations issued by those committees. The report also presents similar summaries of the work of the standing committees. The last section includes a summary of presentations made to the full Commission.

The report was sent to committee members for review prior to today's meetings. If the committee approves the report it will go before the full Commission for approval at its meeting at 9:30 a.m.

Chair Trafford commended the staff for their efforts in creating the report. She noted this was a challenge since staff has been on board less than six months. Director Hollon recognized Commission Counsel Shari O'Neill for her work on the report, and invited comments or suggestions.

Judge Fischer moved to approve, with a second by Mr. Mulvihill.

Committee member Abaray asked if the committee could get a list of current members of the Commission. Director Hollon indicated that list exists and further explained that given the state of the records for the last two years, a breakdown of members year by year is not possible.

Vice-Chair Davidson asked about the process for reorganization and reappointment of members of the Commission. Director Hollon explained that legislative members will be reappointed sometime in the first 10 days of 2015; terms of public members will stay as-is until, or unless, there is an alternative plan. With some legislators being term limited, at this point it is not known what action, if any, the General Assembly will take. Chair Trafford stated public members are not scheduled to be reappointed until an even year. Director Hollon concurred that only the legislative membership will be reviewed in early 2015.

Ms. Abaray asked whether staff members were listed in the report. Director Hollon directed her to page four of the report. She suggested a chart of all members and personnel might improve the report.

A formal vote was taken and the biennial report was unanimously approved.

Chair Trafford stated she will report on the report at the Commission meeting, asking for the Commission's approval.

Timeline for Proposed Constitutional Amendment

The committee then heard a presentation by Morgan Cheek, a student at Ohio State University Moritz College of law and a legal intern with the Commission. Ms. Cheek presented a timeline on proposed constitutional amendments, describing the steps that will occur once the Commission decides to approve a report and recommendation for action by the General Assembly.

Ms. Cheek stated that after a subject matter committee approves a report and recommendation, the full Commission then votes to present the proposal to the General Assembly. She noted that this would not be the first time the Commission would have heard a report and recommendation as there would have been previous discussion and a vote. At this point sponsors are determined. Because this would be a joint resolution there needs to be a sponsor from the House and from the Senate. The next step is to forward the joint resolution to Legislative Services Commission (LSC) which will go through the normal process in drafting language. Once the joint resolution passes through the General Assembly, then the language of the proposed amendment goes to the Secretary of State, who then submits the language to the ballot board. The Secretary of State and the Ohio Ballot Board publish the proposal, explaining ballot language and the arguments for and against.

The final step in the process happens before the issue goes on the ballot. Any challenges are taken before the Ohio Supreme Court which has original jurisdiction. On Election Day, the proposal must pass by a simple majority.

Mr. Mulvihill thanked Ms. Cheek for her helpful presentation, asking what LSC's role is in the process. Ms. Cheek replied that LSC would review and check the language of the resolution. Chair Trafford observed that once the proposal is sent to the General Assembly, the legislature handles it and it is no longer a Commission matter. Director Hollon concurred that once the Report and Recommendation is approved and sent on to the General Assembly, it is out of the Commission's hands.

Chair Trafford thanked Ms. Cheek for her presentation, indicating it was very helpful for those public members who don't regularly deal in this arena.

Ms. Abaray asked if anyone had calculated how many months it takes to get a recommendation from the Commission to the voters. When would it have to come out of the General Assembly to be in time to go on the ballot? Steve Steinglass, Policy Advisor to the Commission, answered there is a calendar on the website of the Secretary of State indicating each year what the deadlines are. Usually, it is around early February.

Chair Trafford suggested that Ms. Cheek's presentation along with her written materials could be presented to the Commission at some point in the future.

Adjournment:


With no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 9:20 a.m.

Attachments:

- Notice
- Agenda
- Roll call sheet
- Proposed format of Reports and Recommendations

Approval:

The minutes of the December 13, 2014 meeting of the Coordinating Committee were approved at the January 15, 2015 meeting of the committee.


Kathleen M. Trafford, Chair


Jo-Ann Davidson, Vice-Chair
JUDGE FISCHER