



OHIO CONSTITUTIONAL MODERNIZATION COMMISSION

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE, TAXATION, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE FOR THE MEETING HELD THURSDAY, MAY 11, 2017

Call to Order:

Chair Douglas Cole called the meeting of the Finance, Taxation, and Economic Development Committee to order at 10:05 a.m.

Members Present:

A quorum was present with Chair Cole, Vice-chair Bell, and committee members Asher, Clyde, Davidson, Dever, Mills, Peterson, and Trafford in attendance.

Approval of Minutes:

The minutes of the April 13, 2017 meeting of the committee were approved.

Discussion:

A Debt Reporting Role for the State Treasurer

Chair Cole raised whether the committee would like to make any informal recommendations regarding the remaining sections of the constitution assigned to the committee.

Regarding a reporting role for the treasurer of state, Chair Cole asked whether there is a sense of the committee regarding the constitutionalizing of debt reporting functions.

Committee member Kathleen Trafford said she believes the committee should note to the Commission that the debt reporting function should be contained within the constitution.

Committee member Jo Ann Davidson noted the ambivalence of the Office of Budget and Management toward having a constitutional reporting function. Chair Cole recalled the opinion of the treasurer's office that a constitutional provision would be preferable.

Committee members generally agreed to the importance of having a debt reporting provision, but there was no strong opinion as to whether it should be a statutory or constitutional provision. Committee member Fred Mills expressed a preference for the provision to be constitutional, but said he would support the general sense of the committee.

Chair Cole proposed a committee statement that a debt reporting function should be taken up as an important topic for assignment to the treasurer with no preference as to whether it should be statutory or constitutional.

The committee supported Chair Cole's proposal, with a motion by Vice-chair Karla Bell, and a second by Ms. Trafford seconded to request Chair Cole to craft language to pass to the Commission reflecting the committee's proposal.

State Debt and Economic Development

Chair Cole asked for the committee's views on how to proceed with the constitutional sections on state debt for economic development.

Ms. Trafford expressed concern regarding the complexity of the provisions, saying she thinks it best not to make a recommendation at this time.

Committee member Herb Asher suggested creating a narrative or history of the provisions and issues discussed by the committee, so that discussions by future groups can benefit from the committee's work. However, he said, such a report should not contain a particular recommendation.

Ms. Davidson agreed that the issue is complicated, and pointed out that prior testimony is already part of the record. She said creating a new overview would perhaps be too much work for staff.

Ms. Bell suggested a simplified summary listing who testified and when, allowing future reviewers to know where to look in the committee record for more details.

Mr. Asher agreed a summary list of the resources would be a reasonable approach.

Chair Cole requested staff to prepare a more summarized version of the state debt and economic development than appears in a May 11 memorandum, including a simplified listing of who testified and when.

Tax Credit Proposal

Referencing a tax credit proposal outlined in the May 11 memorandum, Chair Cole requested the committee's views as to whether to recommend this past language recommended by a witness. The committee expressed no interest, and so passed on recommending anything on this topic.

Corporations

Similarly, the committee did not express interest in making a recommendation on this topic.

There being no further comments or discussion, Chair Cole offered thanks to the committee members for providing their time and expertise. Senator Bob Peterson also offered thanks to the public members of the committee for their service to the Commission.

Mr. Asher thanked Chair Cole for his leadership.

Adjournment:

With no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 10:26 a.m.

Approval:

The minutes of the May 11, 2017 meeting of the Finance, Taxation, and Economic Development Committee were approved at the June 8, 2017 meeting of the full Commission.

/s/ Douglas R. Cole
Douglas R. Cole, Chair

/s/ Karla L. Bell
Karla L. Bell, Vice-chair