



OHIO CONSTITUTIONAL MODERNIZATION COMMISSION

REVISED MINUTES OF THE COORDINATING COMMITTEE

FOR THE MEETING HELD
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2014

Call to Order:

Chair Kathleen Trafford called the meeting of the Coordinating Committee to order at 3:08 p.m.

Members Present:

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

Approval of Minutes:

The minutes of the September 12, 2013 committee meeting were reviewed and approved.

Discussion:

Chair Trafford began a discussion of the need for subject matter committees to have a mechanism for advancing issues. Chair Trafford noted that a conference call with all of the subject matter committee chairs would not be in violation of Sunshine Laws and would help the Coordinating Committee guide subject matter committees more thoroughly.

Vice-chair Jo Ann Davidson explained that the role of the Coordinating Committee might not be clear to the subject matter committees. She added that there is a need for protocol and guidance on a written product from the Coordinating Committee. It was suggested that the committee provide a visual guide for recommendations of what end products should look like. Ms. Davidson also noted that it might be helpful for the Coordinating Committee to know the issues ahead of time so that Commission members and members of the public could prepare their opinions. Several committee members agreed that the subject matter committees are struggling with the next steps once a topic has been properly deliberated.

Chair Trafford asked about the appropriate language for presentation of these topics. Ms. Davidson stated that it should be in constitutional language and that a legislative member of each committee would be able to ask the Legislative Service Commission for that assistance.

Committee members agreed this would be the most effective way to prepare the legislature for a hearing on recommendations made by the Commission. Committee member Dennis Mulvihill suggested there be a report made at the end of each deliberation process to keep a record of why a revision was or was not recommended.

Senator Larry Obhof brought up the need to look at constitutional issues that are obsolete in each respective committee. Sen. Obhof explained that the issues could be grouped together to become a single ballot issue with an explanation of what changes are being made to the constitution. He added the need for the constitution to be clear and concise.

Chair Trafford suggested that subject matter committee chairs could compile a list of sections assigned to their committees that are obsolete. Mr. Mulvihill suggested that members of each committee would need to develop method for determining whether a provision is obsolete. He expressed that commonality needs to be evident, and that all recommendations regarding obsolete provisions must addressed by section and must be publicized. Sen. Obhof supported that statement by citing as example the constitution's requirement that proposed initiated amendments need to be published in newspapers preceding elections, a requirement that would be reviewed by the Constitutional Revision and Updating Committee. Mr. Mulvihill raised the question of modernizing provisions for publicizing amendments because of digital upgrades. Senator Bill Coley responded that there might be push back on that notion.

Chair Trafford said that she will reach out to the chairs before the next meeting for a conference call to decide if it is necessary for the Coordinating Committee to meet.

Ms. Davidson asked Chair Trafford if she had spoken with the attorney general's office regarding a question brought up at the September 12, 2013 meeting. Chair Trafford had undertaken to inquire if committee members could call in to listen to committee discussion if they were unable to physically attend. Chair Trafford stated that the attorney general's office advised her that members may call in, but only to hear discussion relevant to future votes. She added, a committee member participating via phone call cannot participate in conversation, only listen.

Adjournment:

With no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 3:36 p.m.

Approval:

The minutes of the February 13, 2014 meeting of the Coordinating Committee were approved at the March 13, 2014 meeting of the committee.

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

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