



OHIO CONSTITUTIONAL MODERNIZATION COMMISSION

REVISED MINUTES OF THE JUDICIAL BRANCH AND ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE COMMITTEE

FOR THE MEETING HELD
THURSDAY, MARCH 13, 2014

Call to Order:

Chair Janet Abaray called the meeting of the Judicial Branch and Administration of Justice Committee to order at 10:23 a.m.

Members Present:

A quorum was present with Chair Abaray and committee members Curtin, Kurfess, Mulvihill, Obhof, Sapphire, Skindell, and Wagoner in attendance.

Approval of Minutes:

The minutes of the November 14, 2013 meeting of the committee were reviewed and approved.

Discussion:

Chair Abaray asked for the committee's thoughts on proceeding with judiciary branch issues. She said the committee had been discussing several topics, including structure and duplication. Chair Abaray offered to follow Chief Justice Maureen O'Connor's previous testimony on the appointment procedure and then focus on the structure of courts.

Chair Abaray asked whether the committee preferred judicial election, judicial appointment, or a hybrid approach as a recommendation to the full Commission. Chair Abaray offered the possibility of the committee recommending doing away with elections and going to a selection process.

Other members of the committee also contributed to the discussion. These suggested changes were discussed by the committee:

1. Reinstating political party identification on the ballot for judges. Currently judges have very strict guidelines for what they can discuss or not discuss during an election

- cycle. The point of reinstatement of party identification would allow voters to have more information when voting.
2. Moving judicial elections so that they could take place during the off-year elections cycle.
 3. Clarifying the appointment process, because the majority of judges are appointed rather than elected for their first term.
 4. Researching reasons for the drop-off in judicial elections.

During the discussion, committee members expressed interest in continuing research and discussion before preparing anything for the full Commission's consideration.

Adjournment:

With no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 11:24 a.m.

Approval:

The minutes of the March 13, 2014 meeting of the Judicial Branch and Administration of Justice Committee were approved at the April 10, 2014 meeting of the committee.

/s/ Janet Gilligan Abaray
Janet Gilligan Abaray, Chair

/s/ Patrick F. Fischer
Justice Patrick F. Fischer, Vice-chair