

The Ohio Senate

Tom Niehaus, President
Eric Kearney, Minority Leader



*The Ohio House of
Representatives*

William G. Batchelder, Speaker
Armond Budish, Minority Leader

OHIO CONSTITUTIONAL MODERNIZATION COMMISSION

**MINUTES
December 10, 2012**

Speaker William Batchelder called the meeting of the Ohio Constitutional Modernization Commission meeting to order at 10:10AM and asked staff to call the roll. The following members were present:

Janet Gilligan Abaray
Rep. Amstutz
Herb Asher
Speaker Batchelder
Roger L. Beckett
Karla L. Bell
Paula Brooks
Sen. Capri Cafaro
Rep. Kathleen Clyde
Jo Ann Davidson

Patrick F. Fischer
Judith L. French
Edward L. Gilbert
Rep. Matt Huffman
Sen. Shannon Jones
Charles F. Kurfess
Larry L. Macon
Frederick E. Mills
Dennis P. Mulvihill
Rep. Murray

Sen. Larry Obhof
Chad A. Readler
Joseph P. Rugola
Richard B. Sapphire
Sen. Michael Skindell
Rep. Vernon Sykes
Robert A. Taft
Sen. Charleta B. Tavares
Kathleen M. Trafford
Richard S. Walinski

Staff noted that communication regarding anticipated absences had been received from Sen. Wagoner and Douglas Cole by the Co-Chairs prior to the meeting. Speaker Batchelder asked each member to introduce themselves and noted that fuller biographical backgrounds on the members were provided in their folders.

Speaker Batchelder asked the members to review and approve the minutes from the September 13, 2012. Sen. Skindell moved that the minutes be adopted; the motion was seconded and approved without objection.

Speaker Batchelder noted that the next item on the agenda was adoption of the Commission Report that was required under statute to be submitted to the General Assembly by January 1, 2013, and every two years afterwards. He further stated that a draft Report of Proceedings had been circulated to members in advance of the meeting. A motion to approve the report was made and seconded. Without further discussion or objection, the Report of Proceedings by adopted.

The Commission next heard a presentation by Nancy Rogers and Steven Steinglass, members of the OSU Colloquium Planning Committee, on the recommendations from the March 22, 2012 Colloquium.

The Commission then discussed adoption of a default monthly meeting date so that members could plan their calendars accordingly for the coming year. Speaker Kurfess stated that the Commission members should spend some time educating themselves on the lessons of past commissions. After additional discussion, a motion was made and seconded to reserve the second Thursday of every month for meetings, with 10AM committee meetings and 2PM full Commission meetings, subject to confirmation or adjustment as need by the Co-chairs. Without further discussion or objection, the default meeting date was adopted.

Speaker Batchelder then asked the Commission members for feedback on the establishment of a temporary working group on organization and structure to generate recommendations to the full Commission, using the Colloquium report as a starting place. Members discussed whether one or several working groups should be created and raised staffing levels, budget, organization, committee structure, temporary consultants, and rules of procedure as possible topics for the working group(s) to review. Co-Chair Sykes suggested that a single working group begin reviewing administrative and organization matters first and that members convey their ideas on substantive topics for the Commission to consider to the Co-chairs to compile. After additional discussion, Sen. Skindell motioned that 8 members – four named by each Co-Chair - be designated to comprise with working group, and that members contact either Co-Chair with their interest in serving. The motion was seconded and approved without objection.

The Commission then discussed authorizing the legislative members of the Commission to engage in advocate on the Commission’s budget interests with the legislature and the Commission as the budget process moved forward. A motion was made and seconded to designate Sen. Tavares, Sen. Obhof, Speaker Batchelder, and Rep. Sykes as the point persons in their respective caucuses for this purpose.

The question was raised whether it was appropriate for Commission members to discuss Commission matters and activities with the media and public. Co-Chair Sykes suggested that members were free to discuss matters on an individual basis, but should be clear they are not speaking on behalf of the Commission.

Rep. Sykes noted that the Commission website was being revised to have a form that could be used by the public to submit ideas and feedback to the Commission website, which could be compiled and shared with the Commission.

Speaker Batchelder asked if there was any further business to come before the Commission. Seeing none, the Commission was adjourned.

Speaker William Batchelder
Co-Chair

Rep. Vernon Sykes
Co-Chair