

Commission on Local Government Reform and Collaboration
June 26, 2009
Minutes

Attendance: Daniel Troy, Co-Chair, Anita Lopez, Co-Chair, Michael Cochran, Jennifer Economus, Rob Roland, Charleta Tavares, Tom Weidman and Larry Wolpert

By Phone: Tim Downing, Dan Foley and Martin Jenkins

The meeting was called to order at 10:33 AM by co-chair Daniel Troy.

Co-Chair Troy asked for approval of the May 29 minutes. Mr. Weidman noted that his name was misspelled in paragraph three and asked that the correction be made. Mr. Roland noted that his name was misspelled throughout and asked that the minutes be corrected.

*Mr. Weidman moved and Ms. Tavares seconded the approval of the minutes **as amended** of May 29, 2009. Without objection, the motion passed.*

Mr. Downing reported no budget activity for the month of June, as no invoices have been submitted at this time.

Co-Chair Troy raised concerns over the appointment by Speaker Budish on June 11 of three new Commission members. Co-Chair Troy asked each of the three current members that were allegedly replaced if they have submitted their resignation, or if their resignation had been solicited, and Wolpert, Jenkins and Foley all responded "no". Co-Chair Troy asked Assistant AG John Williams for clarification of the statutory language creating the Commission, and specifically the process of appointment and filling vacancies of Commission seats.

It was noted by Assistant AG Williams that according to the language which created the Commission, it is his opinion is that there have been no vacancies on the Commission; therefore no new appointments can be made. Mr. Roland questioned precedent for appointments made to commissions and boards by newly elected appointing authorities in the middle of a commission or board term. Assistant AG Williams stated that he was unaware of this type of action, especially when the trigger for new appointments has not been met. Mr. Roland asked what the process would be for requesting an official AG opinion and Mr. Williams answered.

Mr. Cochran recommended that the current Commission not recognize the appointments by the Speaker. Mr. Weidman and Ms. Tavares concurred. Ms. Tavares asked that the Commission make contact with Speaker Budish to clarify

this matter and discern what was intended by this action. Co-Chair Troy agreed to contact the Speaker's office.

Mr. David Wirick, John Glenn Institute, informed Commission members that the John Glenn Institute has posted the call for proposals. The deadline for proposals is July 10, 2009, and all proposals will be reviewed shortly after that date.

Ms. Fought, Ohio Townships Association, provided an update on the development of the web site and web portal.

Co-Chair Troy reviewed the proposal for administration and locations of Public Hearings. Co-Chair Troy stated that if Commission member(s) desire to have a hearing in their area, then it would be the responsibility of that or those Commission member(s) to coordinate logistics and identify presentation speakers or witnesses. Co-Chair Lopez stated that if the Commission is going to have public hearings, then the public should be invited and be given an opportunity to speak.

Mr. Cochran noted that what has been described by Co-Chair Troy and several others is not his definition of a public hearing. Mr. Cochran asked Co-Chair Troy what is the intent of the Public Hearings. Mr. Troy responded that he believed that it was the same intent as usually exists for any public hearing, i.e., an opportunity for citizens, institutions, or interest groups to provide information and suggestions to the body to guide or influence its work. Mr. Weidman noted that in the proposal there is time allotted for public testimony.

Co-Chair Lopez recommended that the Public Hearings be started as a "Committee of the Whole" rather than a full Commission meeting. Co-Chair Lopez noted that attendance by Commission members is currently an issue and she is concerned that there will not be a quorum of Commission members present. Co-Chair Troy stated that the Public Hearing proposal is still a work in progress.

Co-Chair Troy stated that the July meeting will be in Columbus, the August meeting will be in Toledo, the September meeting will be in Cincinnati and the January 2010 meeting will be the Akron/Canton region. Ms. Tavares asked about the location for the July meeting; Co-Chair Troy responded that the meeting will be held in the Columbus area but not necessarily in the Riffe Center. Ms. Tavares expressed concern over the location, noting that parking is an issue downtown and thought it should be held outside of downtown. Ms. Economus stated that she will check the availability of several schools around the Columbus area.

Mr. Gene Krebs, Co-Director of Greater Ohio, gave a presentation entitled "Restoring Our Prosperity: The State Role in Revitalizing Ohio's Communities".

The presentation focused on the disparity of county sales tax dollars and the problems created from revenue-service imbalances as counties and other local governments struggle to provide services. Several Commission members posed questions to Mr. Krebs, to which he responded.

There were no sub-committee reports.

The next meeting of the Commission will be held on July 31, 2009 at 10:30 AM at a location to be determined.

Mr. Cochran moved and Mr. Weidman seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting. Without objection, the meeting was adjourned.