

Commission on Civics Education
Thursday, August 3, 2007
Virginia Historical Society
Richmond, Virginia
10 a.m.

Meeting Summary

The Commission on Civics Education, established by House Bill 1769 as an advisory commission in the executive branch of state government, held its seventh meeting on August 3, 2007.

Members Present

Dr. Stephen G. Bragaw
Thomas C. Coen
The Honorable James H. Dillard, II
Glen H. Hoptman
J. Westwood Smithers, Jr.
Ginger Stanley
Kenneth S. Stroupe, Jr.
Richard C. Sullivan, Jr.
The Honorable Robert Tata
Kathryn Williams

Members Absent

The Honorable Kenneth C. Alexander
Carmela C. Bills
Dr. Sheila G. Hill
The Honorable Frederick M. Quayle
The Honorable William Roscoe Reynolds
The Honorable Beverly J. Sherwood
The Honorable R. Lee Ware, Jr.

Other Persons in Attendance

Katie Hellebush
Susan Hogge
Clint Hubbard
Doug Pond

Ex-Officio Present

Jean Bankos (Designee for The Honorable Timothy M. Kaine)
Alison Landry (Designee for The Honorable Robert F. McDonnell)
Dr. Linda Wallinger (Designee for Dr. Billy K. Cannaday, Jr.)

Ex-Officio Absent

Dr. Mark E. Emblidge
Jeremy Greenfield (Designee for The Honorable Bill Bolling)
Dr. Barbara A. Perry

Department of Education

Betsy Barton
Joel M. Dexter
Beverly Thurston

Welcome

The Honorable Robert Tata called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m. and completed the roll call. The minutes from the June 11, 2007, meeting of the Commission on Civics Education were approved.

Presentations and Discussions

Dr. Stephen Bragaw:

- Discussed plans for the *Virginia Civics Education Summit*.
 - It will be located at the Capitol Building on September 20, 2007, during Civics Week.
 - The budget will include funds to support attendance by 150 teachers. It will come in the form of:
 - \$19,000 from the Virginia Department of Education.
 - A \$5,000 grant from the Center for Civic Education.
 - Virginia Tech will provide registration and coordination services.
 - The number and type of sessions will be determined later.
 - Invitations will be delivered through a Superintendent's Memo and the Virginia Consortium of Social Studies Specialists and College Educators.

There was discussion of expectations for attendance at the *Virginia Civics Education Summit*. The Capitol Annex can accommodate 133 people in its meeting rooms and there are potentially 150 educators attending. It was suggested that many school divisions will choose to send a combination of supervisors and teachers, but that the rooms would be adequate for the numbers who will probably attend. Interest was expressed in having a representative sample of educators from across the Commonwealth. Some thought that the proximity to the opening of schools and a national conference being held the same day might limit the number who are able to participate. However, others reinforced the rationale for holding the gathering during Civics Week.

There were also questions about logistics for the Summit. Virginia Tech will be coordinating and providing registration and other services. Parking for attendees will be available for \$2 in some of the parking decks near the Capitol.

The Honorable James Dillard:

- Discussed the Back to School with Legislators program.
 - Virginia is ranked third in the nation in terms of participation.
 - The presentations by legislators are informational, not partisan in nature.
- Explored ways of encouraging teaching about state and local government.
 - Knowledge of state and local government could be part of the requirements for licensure.
 - Teachers from out of state could be required to learn more information about state and local government in Virginia.
- Continued a discussion from the previous meeting about printing a new and edited version of the *Good People of Virginia*.
 - A source for funding has not been found yet.
 - A partnership with a publishing company is possible and efforts to arrange publication will continue.

Glen Hoptman:

- Presented a brief overview of the Civics Commission's actions and called for a means of continuing its mission.
 - Some parts of the Commission's agenda appear to require a longer term approach.
 - Some sort of permanent standing body could be created to continue the Commission's work.

Discussions centered on finding a means to promote civics education after the Commission's mandate ends next year. One suggestion was using the Social Studies Consortium as a means of organizing and coordinating efforts to improve civics education. Another idea was to form a group similar to that which science educators have done, using representatives from state agencies and other organizations. A third proposal was to look for grants to fund continuation of a body to act in the place of the Commission. It was pointed out that official sanction from the State of Virginia would be needed, regardless of which model was pursued. It was suggested that this might come in the form of new legislation. A group of Commission members volunteered to meet and explore methods of supporting a continuation of the promotion of civics and civic education.

At this point discussion returned to planning the schedule for the *Virginia Civics Education Summit* and to which organizations and individuals should be invited to speak or present.

Adjournment

The Honorable Robert Tata adjourned the meeting at 11:35 a.m.