

Civics Education Commission Meeting
Center for the Constitution at James Madison's Montpelier
July 2, 2012
10 AM-12 PM

Minutes

Members in Attendance:

Del. Richard L. Anderson, Chair
Sen. Richard H. Black
James H. "Jim" Dillard, II
Beverly Thurston

Thomas C. "Tom" Coen
William R. "Bill" Wilson
John McGlennon
Sean O'Brien

The Chair, Delegate Anderson, called the meeting to order and asked the clerk to call the roll. Members present: Delegate Anderson, T. Coen, J. Dillard, J. McGlennon, B. Thurston, S. O'Brien, B. Wilson. Senator Black arrived a few minutes after roll call, due to travel conflicts.

SUMMARY UPDATE ON 2012 VIRGINIA CIVICS SUMMIT

Del. Anderson called on Del. Jim Dillard to provide an update on the 2012 Virginia Civics Summit, which will take place on November 8, 2012, at the State Capitol in Richmond. He distributed a handout that outlined the day's events, as well as listed speakers for the day. He said about 80% of the speakers he has contacted have confirmed. Discussion took place about streaming the Summit live, and it was decided Mr. Wilson would look into his students filming and editing to post the material on the website. Any questions or suggestions for the summit should be directed to Delegate Dillard.

COOPERATIVE PROGRAMS BETWEEN THE COMMISSION AND OFFICES OF THE HOUSE AND SENATE CLERK

Mr. Jay Pearson spoke on behalf of the House Clerk's Office, explaining the VCU Pre-Service Teacher Institute and its parallels between that program and the Civics Summit. He advocated merging the two programs, incorporating both the House and Senate programs. Del. Dillard asked if there would be any money contributed to the program, to which Mr. Pearson replied that financial details could be discussed if the two programs were to merge.

UPDATE ON CIVICS ISSUES DURING 2012 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Del. Dillard explained his challenges with preserving in-service online course requirements for teacher recertification on state and local government. Beverly Thurston clarified that the online course module is not yet finalized, and Del. Dillard plans to continue his work on this for the next legislative session. The extension of the sunset date for the extension of the Commission was discussed, with members agreeing a new budget amendment is needed to establish the Commission on a more permanent basis, since the extension put in by Sen. Norment is only for the duration of one year. The efforts to eliminate the 3rd grade SOL examination/assessment was not successful this year.

INCORPORATION OF STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT STUDIED IN AP & IB COURSES

Tom Coen discussed several options to advocate the requirement of a state and local government portion added to the curriculum in AP & IB courses. Mr. Ken Bassett, Director of Student Learning in Prince William County Schools, spoke from the audience, suggesting using the Virginia Board of Education as a mechanism in promoting this concept.

UPDATE ON PROPOSAL FOR CLASSROOM PARTICIPATION BY ELECTED OFFICIALS AND CANDIDATES

Del. Dillard asked members to come up with suggestions for the program, and spoke to a handout he distributed. Sen. Black brought up his disapproval in the concept of combative campaign discussions in classrooms, to which Del. Dillard replied that he felt that a debate between the two candidates would be a valuable lesson for students. It seemed among the audience and the members that for some classrooms it would be too early in the year for a politically-charged type of visit from legislators. Mr. Pearson then described NCSL's "Back-to-School" program that encourages bipartisan classroom visits from legislators year round to discuss the legislative process.

REPORT ON JUNE 15, 2012 MEETING SPONSORED BY THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR LEARNING AND CITIZENSHIP

Kelly C. Booz (Center for the Constitution) gave her account of the meeting in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Del. Dillard passed out their notes from the conference. Mrs. Booz recommended, from her experience at this meeting, that the Commission consider requesting the appointment of a member of the Virginia Consortium of Social Studies Specialists.

OTHER BUSINESS/ADJOURNMENT

Del. Dillard expressed the need to encourage the legislative members of the Commission to be more active. Del. Anderson gave the date of the next meeting, which will be Monday, October 1, 2012 (later amended to October 2, 2012) at the General Assembly Building, from 10 AM–12 PM (later amended to 12-2 PM). The meeting adjourned at 12:07 PM.