

**Proposed Minutes for  
Meeting of the Illinois Reform Commission  
Thursday, January 22, 2009**

- **Call to Order:**

Patrick Collins called the meeting to order at 1:30 PM

- **Roll Call:**

In Attendance:

Anita Alvarez, Patrick Collins, Pamela Davis, Hanke Gratteau, Tasha Green, Reverend Dennis H. Holtschneider, David Hoffman, Douglas L. Johnson, M.D., Ph.D., Kate Maehr, Brad McMillan, N. Duane Noland, Lawrence Oliver, Reverend Scott Willis

Conference Line:

Pat Fitzgerald, Sheila Simon

- **Welcome by Chairman Patrick Collins:**

Patrick Collins welcomed those assembled to the meeting and noted that he planned to follow the Agenda so that the meeting would end on time. He then asked the Commissioners to stand and be sworn in as members of the Illinois Reform Commission. Mr. Collins thanked everyone for coming and thanked the CBA for hosting the event. He noted that there was 100% participation of the Commission at this first meeting, with two members attending via a conference line. Mr. Collins said that he was honored to chair the Commission and wanted each member of the Commission to share with the public the reasons why they were there today and what they hoped to accomplish.

Mr. Collins noted that the January 16, 2009 Order signed by Lt. Governor Pat Quinn would be followed in the proceedings. He also said that there would be a spirit of teamwork and the Commission would be independent, since there was an urgency to have a report in 100 days. He thanked the Lt. Governor Pat Quinn for asking him to chair the Commission and also thanked the speakers for coming together so quickly. The mission is to focus on the key issues facing Illinois. The Commission would be working with an open-minded view and was here to be educated and listen to opposing viewpoints. They will also attempt to be inter-active. Many responses have already been received from the public via the website, ReformIllinoisNow.org, and Mr. Collins encouraged those in attendance to participate. The Commission would like to address problems on a state-wide level and expect to be in different parts of the State. The Commission will also be spontaneous as they have 100 days to draft their written report. Mr. Collins stated that he had no pre-conceived notion of what the forum would address.

Mr. Collins then stated he would give a little background on himself and that each member of the Commission would do the same.

- **Comments from Commissioners:**

Mr. Collins introduced his credentials, stating that his years as a prosecutor brought a good perspective to the table. He has seen corruption at all levels of government and feels that the Commission can have an impact on reform in Illinois.

David Hoffman introduced himself, stating he has worked for the past three years as Inspector General for the City of Chicago. He agreed to be a part of this Commission for several reasons. He said that our corruption problem remains very serious and is very harmful, this is the right time to be working on this, the Commission is working strictly independently of state officials and government, and the Commission has the potential to make a contribution on this issue. Mr. Hoffman hoped there would be follow-up work on the Commission's task once it has been completed.

Reverend Dennis H. Holtschneider stated that the recent scandals in Illinois have caused great harm, but also opened a door to do some good and make some changes. He noted that there are 100 days for the people of Illinois to tell the Commission what they need and want to know. Reverend Holtschneider hoped others would come forth to seize the opportunity to make change.

Sheila Simon thanked Mr. Collins and the Lt. Governor for the opportunity to serve on this group. She thinks it is a rare opportunity because people around the State are ready for action. She brings her own expertise as a member of the city council in Carbondale to the table and said she is interested in getting ideas on limits on campaign contributions and accounting disclosure.

Pat Fitzgerald said that he has pride in Illinois and thinks this is an opportunity for change. He brings to the table a different perspective as someone who works with young people and thinks this is an opportunity to show them that they can make Illinois a better state.

Douglas Johnson, M.D., stated that he is a neurosurgeon in private practice as well as a Navy commander. After 9/11 he had a chance to evaluate what he could do for his country and was deployed to Iraq for a year in the field. He wanted to share some insight about what he has seen about how young people can make a difference in this country.

Anita Alvarez said that she thought this was an opportunity for Illinois to be in the forefront of this type of initiative. Voters are disenfranchised with the voting process and in their elected officials. She wants to make sure voters can have confidence in the people they elect to office.

Lawrence Oliver stated that he is sickened over the level of corruption in state government and feels the Commission has a unique opportunity to make a difference. He favors proposed legislation and executive orders as primary tools to deal with corruption in state government but is open to whatever good ideas the Commission can bear and he is honored to serve.

Hanke Gratteau said that in her years in the newsroom she has seen many, many stories of public officials getting caught in scandals and public corruption. She feels that reputation is everything. She has chosen to serve on this Commission because she hopes that the work of the Commission prompts conversation in all corners of this State.

Tasha Green noted that the Commission needs the community to help the work of the Commission. She stated that the children are watching. It is important to make sure we are teaching our children to be good leaders and use good judgment. Ms. Green hopes the public will join the Commission in making sure this group stays alive.

N. Duane Noland talked about his background as a former legislator downstate. He wants to remind public servants that they need to maintain integrity in serving the public.

Pamela Davis said she was an ordinary citizen who was asked to be part of the Commission and accepted because the hospital she works for was involved in an extortion attempt. She believes that the government is the piece that sets us apart from other countries and that it is the responsibility of every one of us to speak up in order to ensure that we have a platform for the same opportunities for success and happiness.

Reverend Scott Willis said that he does not live in Illinois any longer and his first instinct was to decline the invitation to join the Commission. After speaking to some other people he realized he needed to be a part of this group. He has confidence in Patrick Collins to run this Commission and he is sure the Commission will be successful. Reverend Willis is looking forward to learning and helping to make changes to help the blue collar people in this state.

Kate Maehr stated that every day she has the privilege of meeting people who struggle each day to find food and shelter. These are the people that the government needs to take care of. She wants to see Illinois restore a system that helps everyone in the State, not just the privileged few.

Brad McMillan said it was an honor to be invited to serve on the Commission. He said it was his hope that the current public outrage was not wasted, but instead used to clean up politics in Illinois and make sweeping changes. He hoped that a new governor would take the recommendations of the Commission and use the information to make changes in the State.

Patrick Collins thanked each member for their comments and noted that there is a website, [www.reformillinoisnow.org](http://www.reformillinoisnow.org), for any member of the public to leave their ideas of what the Commission should be doing. He then introduced Lt. Governor Pat Quinn and asked him to address the group.

- **Report of Lt. Governor Pat Quinn:**

Lt. Governor Quinn thanked Patrick Collins for agreeing to chair this Commission. He stated that volunteerism is the heart and soul of democracy and there is a long history of people coming forward in times of crisis to work together. He again noted that this is an independent Commission and that the members should look at the government and politics from top to bottom and make recommendations, whether they thought those recommendations would offend some public officials or not. Lt. Governor Quinn said that the highest office is the office of “citizen” and that the Commission needs to do what it can to strengthen the citizens of Illinois. The citizens of Illinois have high ideals and expect the best.

- **Report of Daniel W. Hynes:**

Daniel W. Hynes, Comptroller of the State of Illinois, spoke next. He asked those present how the average citizen would react to the laws on the books today. He noted that in 2006 a group got together to discuss campaign reform and said integrity must be restored to government in Illinois and it must happen soon. He noted that groups have tried to address problems in all three legislative branches in the past. Mr. Hynes noted that Illinois has banned “Pay to Play” on bidding for contracts. He also felt that it was important that there be a cooling off period for lobbyists who were state officials and go into the private sector. He would like to see work done on the passage of a judicial public funding bill. Mr. Hynes thinks that there is a public desire for change and urged the Commission to “keep up the heat” and work with the legislature to try and get something done immediately. He shares the outrage and disgust over what has gone on over the past few months and offered the assistance of his staff and office to assist the Commission in their work.

Brad McMillan asked where the initiatives of his group fell through. Mr. Hynes stated that one piece of legislation did go through, the “Pay to Play” ban.

Mr. Hynes also said that he felt the Commission should debate and discuss the subject of whether judges should be elected or appointed.

Reverend Willis noted that he feels it is difficult for ordinary citizens to be elected as officials as it can be very expensive to run a campaign. He also felt that families who are active in politics have an edge in getting other family members elected because they are familiar with the process and have name recognition. Mr. Hynes felt that any way to try and level the playing field as far as money determining the outcome of elections would be better for the State and also felt that limits on terms served should be considered.

Mr. Noland asked for Mr. Hynes’ thoughts on large contributions for elections. Mr. Hynes stated that more transparency is needed in this area.

- **Report of former Illinois State Senator Steven Rauschenberger:**

Mr. Rauschenberger distributed a copy of his resume to each of the Commissioners and stated that he felt the root of the problem is in the breakdown of checks and balances in the State. Concentration of authority is unreasonable and unprecedented. There is a problem with abuse of legislative authority. Mr. Rauschenberger also stated that he feels the current system leads to a lot of conflict of interest in legislative employment. The legislative maps are an embarrassment and too many third parties are satisfied with the status quo. There is a lack of outrage in the State of Illinois. He noted that the Commission has its work cut out for itself and said the last four or five major ethics reforms have been total failures. The system in Springfield just doesn’t work.

Mr. McMillan asked Mr. Rauschenberger to put his thoughts down in writing for the Commission and thanked him for his presentation.

- **Report of Robert Rich:**

Robert Rich distributed a document to the Commission entitled “The Illinois Report” and noted that the University of Illinois Institute of Government and Public Affairs, which he is the Director of, has been around since 1948. He felt that the biggest problem is a structural deficit in state finances. There is a need for additional revenue and reduced spending. Mr. Rich noted that one quarter of Illinoisians don’t have health insurance. He felt that the State needs to develop practices that bring in the best from other states in the nation and said that decentralization of decision making is key.

Mr. Rich also spoke of the need for reform of the re-districting process in Illinois and said that campaign finance reform should be a big issue. He also talked about the need for reform of line item veto process. Mr. Rich was in favor of an introduction of term limits in Illinois politics. He said that Illinois has much in its favor and suggested that the members of the Commission speak with the Midwest Council of State Governments for more ideas and information.

- **Report of Patrick Beard:**

The last invited speaker of the day was Patrick Beard, an employee of the State of Illinois. Mr. Beard stated that he had been working for the State for the past 17 years. He has met and worked with many good people. While he occasionally heard rumors of wrongdoing, he admitted that it is difficult sometimes to speak out if you are unsure how it will affect your employment. However, he is distressed about the scandals and questionable activities of public officials and has begun to reach out to other citizens to act and speak out in the name of change. He wanted to encourage the good public servants to speak up and continue their good work.

Ms. Gratteau asked if there were any overt acts that made Mr. Beard fearful of speaking out and losing his job. Mr. Beard said that there were no specific actions. Ms. Gratteau also asked if Mr. Beard had gotten any negative feedback from his supervisors for speaking to the Commission. Mr. Beard said he had not heard anything negative.

At this time, Mr. Collins asked for a short break and announced that the Commission would hear comments from the public after the break.

- **Public Comments:**

Mr. Collins announced that he would be calling up a few members of the audience who had previously filled out comment cards to speak to the Commission and stated that all comments would be distributed to the all of the Commissioners.

Rachel Goodstein stated that she is probably best known for being the President of the Friends of Meigs Field when Mayor Daley tore up Meigs Field overnight. She also ran for Alderman to speak out against corruption in government. She is ready to help the Commission in any way she can and hopes it will be successful for the citizens for Illinois. She handed the members of the Commission a copy of her resume.

Dr. Hugh Devlin stated that he wants to assist the Commission with legislative reform. He is a computer scientist and is interested in dissemination of public data and the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). He gave some handouts to the Commission members entitled “Open Government Data Principles” and “Government Data and the Invisible Hand” and proposed that the Commission revisit the default definition of public information. He asked that the Commission empower the citizens of Illinois to get involved in government.

Dr. Lora Chamberlain distributed some brochures and background information to the Commission and said she represents the Illinois Ballot Integrity Project, an Illinois election protection group focusing on the mechanics of elections. She stated that a few states are running elections much differently than Illinois and it has been very successful. She urged the Commission to read the information and use it to help clean up Illinois politics.

Roger Keats stated that he feels the Commission needs to look at term limits for elected officials and felt that fundraising should be limited to the year officials are candidates for office. He gave the Commissioners a handout entitled “Ten Suggestions for ReformIllinoisNow.org.”

Helen Henderson stated that she works for a school and it disturbs her that so many young people are disenfranchised with the political system. She came to say that she wants to tell people that politicians do not have to be dishonest and that there are many people out there who want to make a change. She offered to assist the Commission in any way they thought possible.

- **Future Meetings:**

Mr. Collins thanked each of the audience members for their thoughts and announced the dates of the future meetings for the Commission. He noted that he did not yet have a list of where these meetings would be held and some would be held in other parts of the State. The list of meetings will be posted on the website.

Hanke Gratteau moved to adopt the dates of future meetings of the Commission as suggested by Mr. Collins. Mr. Noland seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously. The dates are February 5, February 23, March 5, March 13, March 30, April 9, April 24 and May 7.

- **Subject Matter of Future Meetings:**

Mr. Collins stated that based on the discussions and testimony of the meeting, he felt the Commission should begin looking at the following topics:

Campaign Finance  
Procurement Issues  
Transparency/Disclosure  
Government Structure  
Enforcement Issues  
Attitude/Cultures of Corruption

Tasha Green felt that it was important to prioritize the issues to see which should be tackled first. Lawrence Oliver thought that the issue of campaign finance was most mentioned and the public probably expects that to be a tough issue. Hanke Gratteau noted that transparency and disclosure offer an opportunity to affect change in the State. N. Duane Noland thought that campaign finance and transparency and disclosure were two issues that should be looked at right a way. Reverend Willis felt that attitude and seeing people have trust in their government was a priority. Kate Maehr thought that all of the topics were linked and critical. She suggested that the Commission consider having separate meetings for each topic. Sheila Simon noted that campaign finance reform was important to her, and also felt it was a good idea to focus on a single issue at some of the future meetings.

Mr. Collins asked some of the Commission members to work on specific issues. Tentative assignments are as follows:

N. Duane Noland, Lawrence Oliver and Sheila Simon – Campaign Finance

Hanke Gratteau, Douglas Johnson, M.D. and Reverend Scott Willis – Transparency and Disclosure

Tasha Green, Brad McMillan – Government Structure

Anita Alvarez and David Hoffman – Enforcement Issues

Kate Maehr, Reverend Scott Willis and Tasha Green – Attitude/Cultures of Corruption

Patrick Collins – Procurement Issues

Other assignments will be made in the next few days.

Dr. Johnson made a motion to focus on either Campaign Finance or Transparency/Disclosures at the next Commission meeting on February 5, 2009. Hanke Gratteau seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:03 p.m.