

**COMMISSION TO STUDY THE FEASIBILITY OF PUBLIC FUNDING OF  
STATE ELECTION CAMPAIGNS—Chapter 55, Laws of 2008**

**Minutes of Commission Organizational Meeting  
August 15, 2008**

The organizational meeting of the Commission to Study the Feasibility of Public Funding of State Election Campaigns, established by Chapter 55 of the Laws of 2008, was held in Room 104 of the Legislative Office Building, Concord, New Hampshire, on August 15, 2008 at 10:00 a.m., according to notice. All members were present

Commissioner John Rauh, first member appointed, presided. He welcomed the members and members of the public present to the meeting. He introduced New Hampshire House Counsel David Frydman and research staff member Pam Smarling. He asked for someone to keep minutes of the meeting and Commissioner Cook agreed to do so. Mr. Rauh asked if there were items in addition to those on the agenda he prepared and three items were added to the agenda, the consideration of ex officio members (Cmr. Hilton), the consideration of honorary co-chairs of the Commission (Cmr. Abrash Walton) and the establishment of a list of critical tasks to be accomplished by the Commission (Cmr. Rubens).

Commission members introduced themselves briefly.

Commissioner Rauh asked Commissioner Comstock-Gay to ask for and receive e-mails of the contact information and preferred method of communication for each member. Mr. Comstock-Gay agreed to do so.

Attention moved to the method of and selection of a permanent chair of the Commission. Commissioner Rubens indicated that he understood Commissioner Cook was interested in chairing the Commission. Commissioner Cook indicated willingness to do so if Commission members were so inclined and if no other member had a keen desire to do so. After motion duly made (Rubens) and seconded (Abrash Walton), it was, unanimously

**VOTED: To elect Bradford E. Cook as Chair of the Commission.**

Commissioner Rauh turned the chair over to Commissioner Cook. Mr. Cook thanked the members for their votes and spoke about his hopes for the smooth operations of the Commission. The question of a secretary and keeping of minutes for future meetings resulted in a motion (Hilton) and second (Rauh) that was unanimously

**VOTED: That the task of secretary and minute keeping rotate among the members of the Commission on a meeting-by-meeting basis.**

Chairman Cook designated Commissioner Hilton as the secretary pro tem for the next meeting.

In answer to a question about research support for the Commission, Commissioners Comstock-Gay and Rauh volunteered their organizations, Demos and Americans for Campaign Reform, respectively. Pam Smarling and Davie Frydman described their functions and Commissioner Cook volunteered to contact Attorney General Ayotte to inquire about legal support from her office.

The applicability of the state right-to-know law to deliberations of the Commission was discussed. All meetings and deliberations must be open to the public. Meetings of four or more commissioners constitute a public meeting. E-mail discussions of substance must be avoided as they are covered by recent amendments to the law. Commissioner Honigberg volunteered to locate and distribute to the other members an article about the recent amendments and the conducting of public meetings. We are allowed to communicate information and resources, but comment and discussion should be done at meetings of the Commission.

Pam Smarling gave her e-mail address ([pam.smarling@leg.state.nh.us](mailto:pam.smarling@leg.state.nh.us)) and indicated she would be willing to receive minutes and keep them as required.

The next item of business was the schedule for hearings and deliberative meetings of the Commission, which by law is to file its report by the end of November. After discussion, it was agreed that there will be two public hearings, one at the beginning of the process, and the second to consider the draft report. Members expressed a consensus that Fridays during the day in Concord would be the most acceptable time for meetings, with the recognition that all members will not be able to attend all meetings, and the need for telephonic participation may be required (and is allowed and available to a limited extent). Commissioners Comstock-Gay and Rubens agreed to explore a web site for posting minutes, schedules and other information about the Commission's work, and will work with David Frydman to coordinate with the legislative resources. Commissioner Honigberg agreed to contact Governor Lynch's office about the possibility of having a link to the state web site.

After further discussion, the following schedule was set for Commission work:

First Public Hearing (and substantive session as possible): September 2, 2008, 4-8 p.m. LOB Rms 201-203.

Deliberative Sessions: Fridays, September 5 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. (with short lunch break), September 19 and each Friday thereafter with the exception of October 31 and the day after Thanksgiving. LOB Rm 104.

Second Public Hearing: to be set when timing is appropriate.

Chairman Cook noted that the schedule will be considered at each meeting depending on availability and progress of work.

Commissioner Honigberg raised the question of the scope of the Commission's charge, whether it was limited to funding sources, or included the public financing system, as well? Discussion ensued about the great amount of work that has been done previously to design a voluntary public financing system, the limited time available to the Commission, and the limits in the law establishing the Commission. The consensus was that both the system of financing and sources of funds can be discussed by the Commission. Commissioner Comstock-Gay suggested that at the first meeting, we should consider what system or framework it is we believe we are working with, so the amount of money needed can be determined. Commissioner Rauh reminded the members that it is the "feasibility" of public funding, given the constraints of not being able to consider general fund monies, that is the basic charge of the Commission.

Commissioner Rubens agreed to send his critical steps analysis to the other members by e-mail.

Doris "Granny D" Haddock, of Dublin, was recognized by the group for her work to make the issue of public funding known. Discussion of the additional agenda items concerning honorary co-chairs and ex officio members of the Commission led to the conclusion that neither were allowed by the legislation, but an appropriate role for Mrs. Haddock and former New Hampshire Governor Walter R. Peterson, recognizing their years of work and expertise should be found. After motion duly made (Hilton) and seconded (all), it was, unanimously

**VOTED: To name Doris "Granny D" Haddock and Walter R. Peterson as "special consultants" to the Commission.**

Under new business, Commissioner Rubens asked what the Commission considered the term "public funding sources" to include. After discussion, it was agreed that all legal sources of funds other than the state general fund can be considered.

Chairman Cook invited comment from the public. Doris Haddock expressed optimism on the process and progress made by the Commission at its first meeting.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, it was, upon motion duly made and seconded, unanimously

**VOTED: To adjourn.** (at 11:42 a.m.)

**A true record, attest.**

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**Bradford E. Cook, Chair and Secretary, pro tem**

