

Governmental Procedures and Structure Committee
Taxation and Budget Reform Commission
Senate Office Building, Room 401
Tallahassee, Florida
Friday, July 20, 2007
8:30 – 10:30 a.m.

MEETING MINUTES

(Committee Members: Alan Levine, Chair; Mike Hogan; Julia Johnson; Carlos Lacasa; Patricia Levesque; Jacinta Mathis; Nancy Riley; Darryl Rouson; Greg Turbeville; Ken Wilkinson; Brian Yablonski)

Commissioners Present:

Alan Levine, Chair
Mike Hogan
Julia Johnson
Carlos Lacasa
Patricia Levesque
Jacinta Mathis
Nancy Riley
Greg Turbeville
Ken Wilkinson
Brian Yablonski

Other Commissioners Present:

Allan Bense, TBRC Chair

Excused Absences:

Darryl Rouson

Chairman Levine called the Governmental Procedures and Structure Committee meeting to order at 8:35 a.m.

Staff called the roll and announced the presence of a quorum.

The committee first entertained a presentation by Ben Watkins, Director of the Florida Division of Bond Finance, related to the state bonding process. Mr. Watkins addressed the group on debt authorization, limitations, management, and the various state debt programs. He explained that Florida has a AAA bond rating and is among the best in the country at debt management.

Chairman Levine requested that the committee take up a discussion at a later time on “soft debt,” such as the insurance catastrophe fund and whether or not it should be considered as part of the debt cap.

The committee then entertained a presentation by Bob Nabors, former Special Counsel to Governor Graham and member of the 1997-98 Constitutional Revision Committee, related to constitutional history. Mr. Nabors explained that Florida has the most progressive “home rule” in the nation due to the 1968 constitutional revisions and is a low traditional debt state. His recommendation to the TBRC is to find a way to expand the tax base.

Finally, the committee entertained a presentation by Debby Kearney, General Counsel for the Department of Education, and Tom Cibula, TBRC General Counsel, related to specific constitutional issues affecting the TBRC. Ms. Kearney addressed the group on the differences between state and federal constitutional limitations. Mr. Cibula discussed the results of his research on two constitutional issues that the committee members had requested.

Commissioner Levesque suggested that the committee take up in further discussion at a later time the Blaine Amendment and various collective bargaining and pension issues.

Any presentation documents and audio recordings of the meeting are posted on the commission website at www.floridatbrc.org for further review.

Chairman Levine closed the meeting with a discussion on future meeting dates. It was suggested that the committee meet next in association with the Planning and Budgetary Processes Committee in Orlando in the next 2-3 weeks. It was further suggested that the group plan to meet every two weeks going forward. Chairman Levine requested that the members send their available dates through December to Susan Skelton, TBRC Executive Director, who will coordinate the arrangements for future meetings.

There being no time for further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m.