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MONTANA
CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

PUBLIC INFORMATION COMMITTEE
December 10, 1971 Meeting

The Public Information Committee held a meeting at the State Capitol in Room 434 at 10:00 a.m.

Those present were: Chairman John H. Toole, Vice Chairman Margaret Warden, Betty Babcock and Fred Martin. Robert J. Vermillion called and was excused because of weather conditions. President Leo Graybill was unable to attend because of another meeting.

Chairman Toole opened the meeting by saying that he felt that they should basically be a policy committee and not try to conduct the Public Information Committee. He felt that they will need professional help and that the Committee members will be too busy with their own work to devote the time that will be needed to handle the affairs of this office.

He felt that subcommittees should be appointed. Vice Chairman Warden and Mr. Martin thought that they should start to organize by function.

All members agreed that they need staff and they have staff. Also that the Convention was an open one and no one should try to muzzle anyone and everyone should be courteous to all should be contained in a statement that the Committee should release. The members agreed with Mr.

Martin who said our leadership is sound and fair and the facts demonstrate that, and every delegate has an equal right.

Mrs. Babcock stated they should stress cooperation with the news media and TV. With freedom of the press, the story should truthfully be told.

Chairman Toole then told the reporters who were present that his next statement was from John Toole, Vice President of the Constitutional Convention, not as Chairman of the Public Information Committee. He dismissed this brouhaha over the so-called muzzling as being a tempest in a teapot and making a mountain out of a molehill and stated that the Convention will see fit to tell the committee how to operate.

Mrs. Warden said that they do have an open convention. In fact, the first visitors had been Indian visitors which had not been mentioned in the press and she thought they should have been and wished their visit to be noted in the minutes. She said we will need staff and interns to help us. She said that we are here because we were elected and we are here to consider the issues on as many angles as is possible and the news media will have free access to us.

The members of the committee decided after discussion to take the Proposed Policy Statement home so that they could

The Committee recommended designing a form for interested citizens to use in presenting their proposals to

the Convention. They felt it was urgent to get these forms study it. They felt they should come up with a foolproof policy statement and present it to the Convention. Chairman Toole asked Mr. Martin to also draft a statement of policy--double spaced--to express his views and those of the other members of the Committee.

Chairman Toole thought he would call another meeting of the Committee the first of the year. It was decided to have the meeting on January 8, 1972 at noon.

Open Convention

Chairman Toole, after discussion with the members, recommended that the Committee write a letter to the Rules Committee stating that a rule be adopted requiring open meetings of all sessions of the Convention and its Committees. This should be in letter form under Chairman Toole's signature.

Public Hearings

The Committee would recommend to the Rules Committee that 7 days public notice of Committee Hearings would be given so that individuals and groups interested could attend. They also recommended that all be asked to bring written testimony to the Committee.

The Committee recommended 1 week recess later on in the Convention and that each Committee Chairman write an editorial for the daily and weekly newspapers.

Citizen Petitions

The Committee recommended designing a form for interested citizens to use in presenting their proposals to

the Convention. They felt it was urgent to get these forms out immediately and felt that Mr. Marshall Murray, Chairman of the Rules Committee, should be called so this could be accomplished. Mrs. Warden recommended that copies of this form should be sent to all delegates and libraries throughout the state.

Logo

The logo which was designed for use by the Convention was approved and was to be done in blue.

Chairman Toole then asked the guests at the meeting to introduce themselves. They were: John Murphy, Student at the University of Montana; Roger Barber, Research Analyst for the Constitutional Convention Commission who wrote the report on Taxation and Finance and also headed the Public Information Program for the Commission; Cheryl Hutchinson, Aide to Dolores Colburg; Arthur Hutchinson and Dan Foley of Lee Newspapers; and John Kuglin of the Great Falls Tribune.

Mr. Foley asked that all meetings be announced. Mrs. Babcock asked that the names of all visitors to Committees be obtained in some manner. Mr. Dale A. Harris, Executive Director, said that this would be done and that all the names of people who testified would be included at the end of all reports.

Speakers Bureau

Mr. Arbanas' report was discussed. It was decided that a letter be sent to all delegates asking them to take advantage of this interim time as a means of appearing at

Service Clubs and town gatherings to be better know and to acquaint the people with the issues and to listen to their reactions.

Organized Tours for Visitors to Convention

Mr. Harris told the Committee that he would like to use Interns for the tours. The tours would start in the Highway Commission Auditorium showing slides of the way the Convention was organized and its operation. They would be held at regular times throughout the day. Each delegate would be responsible for working in tour program for one day during the Convention.

Schools

Cheryl Hutchinson for the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction in cooperation with the Convention told the members that they had prepared an instructional kit on how to arrange tours of the Convention by schools.

This kit will be kept up-to-date throughout the Convention.

The YMCA Youth Government will hold a Model Constitutional Convention on January 5, 6, 7 and 8. She said that they were open to suggestions--in fact would welcome them.

The members thanked Miss Hutchinson and asked Mr. Harris to write a letter of appreciation to Dolores Colburg.

Television

All agreed that an idea and resource file was what they were working for. Children would take brochures home to their families.