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From: LAWSON_BRIAN [mailto: [REDACTED]]
Sent: Sunday, December 05, 2010 3:22 PM
To: Steven Russo; Voters First Act
Subject: suggestions on display for commission for deliberation on final 6 members

Dear Mr. Russo:

It might be useful to have a visual display that members could use as they deliberate about selecting the final six members. Staff may have already considered this issue and reached a conclusion on it. Still, you might find the suggestions contained in this email helpful.

Attached are two spreadsheets and screen shots of the spreadsheets showing how they might be used to assist with the deliberation by the Commission to select the final 6 applicants.

The first spreadsheet shows how all the relevant information could be put on one screen and then projected so as to be visible to all commissioners. An operator could make changes to the proposals and update the demographic information as commission members make different proposals (the operator should only make changes to the spreadsheet after being informed by the counsel, chair or secretary as to the content of the current proposal). Obviously this would only be an aid for deliberation -- actual proposals would have to be clearly stated by commission members, seconded, and so on.

I think it is important to provide this information to all the members of the commission as they are deliberating because otherwise they may try to keep track of it themselves and perhaps miss part of the deliberation. Of course, commissioners should come prepared with their own evaluation of applicants from the perspective of analytical skills and impartiality.

The second spreadsheet shows an example of how an amendment to a proposal might be included in the spreadsheet. The advantage of allowing for amendments to the main proposal is that it would make it easier for commission members to try out different combinations of applicants without having to specify an entirely new proposal of 6 applicants each time. Also it may encourage members to express their views and try out different options at a stage which is less final than the vote on the main proposal.

Clearly a proposal regarding the full slate of 6 members must be approved by the required minimum of at least 2 Democrats, 2 Republicans and 1 non-major party member. Perhaps the commission members might want to agree that amendments should be subject to the same requirement.

Although Robert's Rules may allow for second order amendments (i.e. amendments to amendments) I would strongly discourage the commission from making second order amendments

(or higher order amendments). Amendments above first order tend to be difficult for most members to follow. Perhaps you may even feel that first order amendments are too complex.

The first spreadsheet (proposal only) is available on the web here:

http://homepage.smc.edu/lawson_brian/redistrict/displaying%20one%20proposal%20at%20a%20time%20for%20adding%20final%206%20members.xls

The second spreadsheet (proposal and amendment) is available on the web here:

http://homepage.smc.edu/lawson_brian/redistrict/displaying%20one%20proposal%20and%20an%20amendment%20for%20adding%20final%206%20members.xls

The screenshot of both spreadsheets is available as a pdf file here:

http://homepage.smc.edu/lawson_brian/redistrict/screen%20shots.pdf

The proposals shown in the spreadsheets are just illustrative examples (the first two members from each group alphabetically) it is not a slate which I would recommend. I hope you find these suggestions useful.

-- Dr. Lawson

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