

Post Convention Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
August 7, 1995  
Second Floor, Joeten Dandan Center

I. Call To Order -- The meeting was called to order at 10:30 am with quorum present. Present were Chair Herman T. Guerrero, members Felix R. Nogis, Tomas B. Aldan, Justo S. Quitugua', Esther S. Fleming, David Q. Maratita and John O. DLR. Gonzales. Counsels Howard Willens and Deanne Siemers were also present.

II. Organization and Procedures -- members discussed the organizational composition, concerns and priorities of the Post - Convention Committee.

A. Officers -- Herman T. Guerrero was selected as Chair, Esther S. Fleming the Vice Chair and John O. DLR. Gonzales the Secretary of the Committee.

B. Priorities/Concerns -- discussion resulted in the delineating of the following priorities, mainly (1) public education; (2) preparation of amendments for ballot; (3) appropriation of budget for public education and post-convention expenses; and (4) lobbying the legislature to amend P.L. 9-18 to allow for a special election for the amendments.

1. Public Education -- it was the concensus that the overall goal of the post - convention committee must be to assume an aggressive and unrelenting position in ensuring a comprehensive public education campaign. In its efforts to market the amendments to the public smoothly without unnecessary hamper, the post - convention committee must stand unwavering in defending the proposed amendments from potential legal and political opposition. The committee's bottom line goal is to ensure that the public fully understands all of the proposed amendments in time for voting. This would be accomplished, for example, by extensive weekly press releases of every single proposed amendment per article via newspapers, television and radio spots; via cluster public schools; via government departments or agencies; and most importantly, via well arranged public hearings throughout each or cluster villages throughout the CNMI.

The committee also recommended that we utilize the services of Mrs. Carmèn Taima'nao of the Chamorro Bilingual Program of PSS, retired Chamorro Bilingual expert, Mrs. Dolores I. Marciano, Dr. Rita H. Inos, Deputy Executive Director of PREL, Mr. Jesus Elameto for his Carolinian

Orthography knowledge, Crispin Kaipat, retiree Felipe Ruak and Carolinian Bilingual Program retiree Mr. Francisco Olopai.


2. Preparation of Amendments for Balloting -- discussion ensued on the issue of how to present the amendments to the public for voting, whether by article, amendment or combined as sections. Counsel Willens advised the members of his discussion with the Board of Elections (BOE) legal counsel that the BOE's position is that the presentation of the amendments will be to their discretion, in light of the technicalities and time constraints involved for the upcoming November mid-year elections absent a special election. Both counsels (Willens and Siemers), however, informed the committee to tentatively hold off on any official decisions until they provide the committee with their preliminary findings on how best to present the amendments which would withstand potential legal and political challenges.

3. Appropriation of needed budget for public education and post - convention committee expenses -- member Tom B. Aldan was assigned to configure the overall budget needs of the committee. Among others, funding will be needed for the indexing of the entire convention proceedings off - island, perhaps the Carolinian translation of the draft constitution, retention of the services of a local attorney to assist our counsels, and counsels' services for the post - convention work. Additionally, funding is needed for public education supplies and equipment, printing, translations, necessary media spots and others.

4. Special Elections through the Legislature's amendment of P.L. 9-18 -- with the fate and success of the proposed amendments bearing on the legislature's action to amend P.L. 9 - 18 for a special election, members unanimously agreed that a collective effort was needed to lobby the legislature for their action. The committee unequivocally recommended that November is just too soon and presents a threat that the amendments will not be treated as important, if not, more important than the congressional elections as had been the case in the past. Therefore, members vowed to lobby all it can to have the legislature approve a special election.

III. Adjournment -- there being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 11:30 am.

Respectfully submitted by:



Sec. John O. DLR. Gonzales (8/15/95)

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*Adopted 8/17/95*

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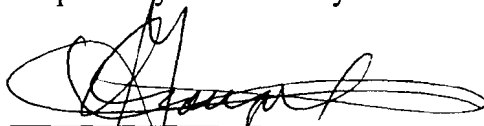
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