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Collection Overview

Creator(s): General Assembly of Rhode Island
Title: Rhode Island Constitutional Convention of 1973
Dates: 1973 Sep 4 - 1973 Oct 4
Quantity: 3 box(es) (1.25 linear feet)
Abstract: The Rhode Island Constitutional Convention of 1973 was convened to amend the state's constitution. The collection contains convention rules and other administrative documents, session journals, publicity, and research on the issues considered.
Identification: rppc_riconcov1973
Language: The records are in English.
Repository: Phillips Memorial Library, Special and Archival Collections 1 Cunningham Square Providence, RI 02918-0001

Historical Information

In January of 1973 an act was passed by the General Assembly of Rhode Island to convene a Constitutional Convention to amend the state's constitution. It was the eleventh convention to gather in the state and only the fifth to be held in a limited form. A limited convention is called to restrict the proceedings to specific prearranged constitutional questions. These included the revision of election laws, the repeal of the prohibition of lotteries, the review of legislator compensation, and the reform of Grand Jury functions in the Judicial System.

The convention opened on September 4, 1973 and the delegates began working on producing an item by item referendum to be voted upon during the Nov. 6th general election of that year. During the month the convention was in session a total of ninety-one proposals were submitted as amendments to the constitution. Of those proposals only seven were approved to be on the election ballot. On November 6, 1973 voters passed five of those seven amendments.

The most important amendments that passed dealt with the reforming of election laws, the procedures for amending the state's basic law, and the procedures for calling future open conventions at regular intervals. The two proposals that were rejected in close voter races, were reforms increasing legislative pay to $2,000 per year and giving four year terms to the state's general officers.

The 1973 Rhode Island Constitutional Convention can be called one the more productive gatherings in Rhode Island's Constitutional history producing some of the greatest changes in the state's basic law.

Scope and Content Note

In 1973 the Rhode Island electorate voted to call a convention to discuss amending specific sections of the State Constitution. Several amendments were adopted by voters during the general election of November 6, 1973. Included here are convention rules and other administrative documents, session journals, publicity, and research on the issues considered.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged in three series

Series List

- Sessions, 1973
- Committees, 1973
Subject Files, 1973

**Index Terms**

Researchers wishing to find related materials should search the catalog under these index terms.

Conley, Patrick T  
Constitutional conventions -- Rhode Island  
Constitutions -- Rhode Island  
Rhode Island. Constitutional Convention (1973)  
Rhode Island -- Politics and government -- 1951-

**Administrative Information**

**Custodial History**

Prior to its donation to Providence College, the collection was acquired and maintained by Patrick T. Conley while he was acting as the Secretary of the Convention.

**Preferred Citation**

Rhode Island Constitutional Convention of 1973, Providence College Library, Special and Archival Collections

**Acquisitions Information**

The collection was donated in 1974 by Patrick T. Conley.

**Processing Information**

The collection was originally processed in 1974 and re-processed in 2009.

**Restrictions**

Open for research.

Terms governing use and reproduction: Photocopying and scanning of materials is a fee based service available in the repository and is allowed at the discretion of the Librarian of Special and Archival Collections when in compliance to the College's policy on copyright and publication.

**Related Material**

Prior to the 1973 convention, a similar convention was held in 1964 in an attempt to rewrite the Rhode Island Constitution, and in 1986, a third convention was held again in an attempt to amend the Rhode Island Constitution. Providence College holds the records of both of these conventions.


There are no known separated materials.
## Inventory

**Series:** Sessions  
**Dates:** 1973  
**Extent:** (16 folders)  
**Material types:**  
- journals (periodicals)  
- manuscripts for publication

### Scope and Content Note

This series contains the typed manuscripts and the published journals detailing each session of the convention. The published journal for the September 25th session (vol. 1, no. 6) is missing, however, the typed manuscript for that session is available.

### Arrangement

The series is arranged chronologically.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 1 Folder</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Act for calling a Constitutional Convention</td>
<td>1973 Jan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Journal of the 1973 Constitutional Convention, vol.1, no.1</td>
<td>1973 Sep 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Journal of the 1973 Constitutional Convention, vol.1 no.2</td>
<td>1973 Sep 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Manuscript of the 1973 Constitutional Convention</td>
<td>1973 Sep 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Journal of the 1973 Constitutional Convention, vol.1 no.3</td>
<td>1973 Sep 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Manuscript of the 1973 Constitutional Convention</td>
<td>1973 Sep 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Journal of the 1973 Constitutional Convention, vol.1, no.4</td>
<td>1973 Sep 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Manuscript of the 1973 Constitutional Convention</td>
<td>1973 Sep 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Journal of the 1973 Constitutional Convention, vol.1, no.5</td>
<td>1973 Sep 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Manuscript of the 1973 Constitutional Convention (vol.1, no.6)</td>
<td>1973 Sep 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Manuscript of the 1973 Constitutional Convention</td>
<td>1973 Sep 27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Series: Committees
Dates: 1973
Extent: (22 folders)
Material types:
- copies (document genres)
- laws (documents)
- minutes
- notes
- official reports

Scope and Content Note
This series contains the typed minute notes of committee meetings, hand written minute notes of meetings, research materials collected, and reports completed by individual committees.

Arrangement
The series is arranged alphabetically.

Box 1 Folder 17 Committee on Administration - Meeting Minutes 1973 Sep 6 - 1973 Sep 11
Box 1 Folder 18 Committee of Administration - Expenditures of the 1973 Constitutional Convention 1973
Box 1 Folder 19 Committee of Administration - Journal Distribution and Expenditures 1973
Box 1 Folder 20 Committee of Elections - Meeting Minutes and Notes 1973 Sep 10 - 1973 Oct 1
Box 2 Folder 21 Committee of Elections - Election Laws and Reports 1973
Box 2 Folder 22 Committee on Grand Jury - Notes 1973 Sep
Box 2 Folder 23 Committee on Grand Jury - System Information and Reports 1973
Box 2 Folder 24 Committee on Legislative Compensation - Minutes and Notes 1973 Sep 10
Box 2 Folder 25 Committee on Legislative Compensation - Research, Reports and Proposals 1967-1973
Box 2 Folder 26 Committee on Lotteries - Minutes and Notes 1973 Sep
Box 2 Folder 27 Committee on Lotteries - Connecticut 1971
Box 2 Folder 28 Committee on Lotteries - Maryland 1972 - 1973
Box 2 Folder 29 Committee on Lotteries - Massachusetts 1971
Box 2 Folder 30 Committee on Lotteries - Michigan 1972
Box 2 Folder 31 Committee on Lotteries - New Hampshire 1963
Box 2 Folder 32 Committee on Lotteries - New Jersey 1968 - 1973
Box 2 Folder 33 Committee on Lotteries - New York 1967 - 1972
Box 2 Folder 34 Committee on Lotteries - Ohio 1972 - 1973
Box 2 Folder 35 Committee on Lotteries - Pennsylvania 1971
Box 2 Folder 36 Committee on Lotteries - Reports and Notes 1973
Box 2 Folder 37 Committee of Public Information 1973 Sep
Box 2 Folder 38 Committee on Resolutions - Minutes and Notes 1973 Sep - 1973 Oct
Series: Subject Files
Dates: 1973
Extent: (9 folders)
Material types:
- briefs (legal documents)
- clippings (information artifacts)
- correspondence
- official reports
- press releases
- proposals
- rosters

Scope and Content Note
This series contains the final proposals and resolutions of the 1973 Rhode Island Constitutional Convention, newspaper clippings, and lists of delegates and officers who attended the convention. The collection also contains correspondence and public statements by Patrick T. Conley concerning the convention.

Arrangement
This series has no special arrangement.

Box 3 Folder 41 Preliminaries to the 1973 Constitutional Convention 1973 Jan - 1973 Aug 23
Box 3 Folder 42 Malinou Brief Regarding Open Sessions of the 1973 Constitutional Convention 1973 Sep 6
Box 3 Folder 43 Correspondence of Patrick T. Conley 1973
Box 3 Folder 44 Public Statements Concerning the 1973 Constitutional Convention 1973
Box 3 Folder 45 Newspaper Clippings Regarding the 1973 Constitutional Convention 1973 May 16 - 1973 Nov 14
Box 3 Folder 46 Rules of the 1973 Constitutional Convention 1965 - 1973
Box 3 Folder 47 List of Delegates, Officers and Roll During the 1973 Constitutional Convention 1973