

GOVERNMENT STUDY COMMISSION

MEETING MIINUTES

February 24, 2007

11:30 a.m.

In Attendance: Gerard J. McGlone, William MacAleer, James Vike, Henry Briggs, Sandra Kelley and Woody VanSciver

The Commission met to select a Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. The following persons volunteered:

Chair	-	
Vice-Chair	-	James Vike
Treasurer	-	Sandra Kelley

It was noted that the recommendation of a Home Rule Charter must be completed within 18 months of certification of election. The election was certified on December 21, 2006.

The members discussed the duties of the Govt. Study Commission and determined that the members should first become familiar with the Home Rule Charter law and should look at other like municipalities that have chosen Home Rule. Finding other like municipalities with similar populations can be found by accessing www.census.gov. Click on PA. Type in City.

We should contact other Boroughs who have adopted Home Rule and ask them the following questions:

- 1) Why did you do it?
- 2) What did you change?
- 3) What were specific challenges and issues that you faced in trying to do it?
- 4) Can someone from your GSC come to a meeting if we asked them to and talk to us? Commissioners from West Chester, Norristown???
- 5) How do you feel about it now? Are there issues that you would change if you could go back and do it now?
- 6) When you put it to the vote, if people challenged this change, what was the basis on which they challenged?

The Manager, Chief, Codes Enforcement Officer and Solicitor will be asked what they find troubling about the Borough Code and what they would like to change if they could. They will be invited to future meetings.

The Commission discussed retaining consultants and experts with experience in HRC. The Commission would present their strategy to a consultant, explain how they expect to approach the task and then have the consultant say "yes" or "no". The Commission then discussed the following:

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- 1) Identify consultants and experts – do research and find out who is available
- 2) Look at the existing Code and see what we like and don't like
- 3) Invite someone from DCED to come in and make a presentation and overview and give the commissioners an opportunity to ask questions
- 4) Run strategy by an expert--consultant or lawyer

Review the Work Schedule on pages 17 & 18 in the Home Rule Charter

Identify qualified experts – DCED, Local contacts network

Prior to the next meeting, the Commission members should do the following:

- 1) Read the Home Rule Charter
- 2) Think about which consultant-types are needed
- 3) Contact attorney

The Commission members took on the following tasks:

- 1) Gerry McGlone -
Obtain a Summary of Borough Code – Look at the DCED website for Local Government Services – Publications – Boro Code – PA Local Government
- 2) Woody VanSciver -
Look into the use of a “blog”. If a resident wants to participate, they must register to post a comment and comments can only be submitted by Borough residents
- 3) Henry Briggs -
Contact Ernie McNeely at West Chester Borough
- 4) Sandra Kelley -
Contact PSAB to see if they have a list of Boroughs who looked into a Home Rule Charter but got shot down by the voters; who prepared a Home Rule Charter but it was not adopted by the voters; tried and failed; tried and decided not to do a HRC
- 5) Bill MacAleer -
Contact Youngsville Borough and Lebanon Borough
- 6) Woody VanSciver -
Contact Portage Borough
- 7) Solicitor -
Ask if we can use a blog – Can the GSC use e-mail communications as a principal source of communicating?

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The Commission set the following meeting schedule that will be advertised:

Tuesdays – 2nd and 4th at 7:00 p.m. in the months of March and April

Mondays – 2nd and 4th at 7:00 p.m. in the months of May, June, July & August

The Commission members agreed that meetings will conclude within 90 minutes.

Motion by Bill MacAleer, seconded by Woody VanSciver and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 1:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra Kelley