

**Concord Township  
Government Study Commission (GSC)  
MINUTES OF MEETING OF FEBRUARY 5, 2015**

**I. CALL TO ORDER.**

The meeting was called to order by GSC Chairman James Gray at 7:02 PM on February 5, 2015, at the Concord Township Municipal Building. The following GSC members were present: James Gray, Rosemary Fiumara, Diane Bohr, Joshua Twersky, Andrew Briner, Matthew Houtmann, and Robert Tribit. Also present: GSC Solicitor Michael Maddren.

**II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.**

The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**III. PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS.**

None.

**IV. OLD BUSINESS.**

Motion by J. Twersky to approve the Minutes of January 29, 2015 meeting; seconded by R. Tribit. A voice vote was called for and Commission Members voted unanimously to approve the motion.

**V. NEW BUSINESS.**

**1. Treasurer's Report.**

J. Twersky presented a bill for legal services from Mike Maddren in the amount of \$795.00. J. Gray made a motion to approve payment of the bill; seconded by R. Tribit. A voice vote was called for and Commission Members voted unanimously to approve the motion.

**2. Discussion related to Cheltenham Township Home Rule Charter.**

R. Tribit and J. Twersky provided a description of their visit to Cheltenham Township, Montgomery County, PA on 1/21/15, and recapped the highlights of their review of the numerous documents they were given regarding the adoption of a Home Rule Charter in 1976. Comparisons were made between Concord Township and Cheltenham Township as to population (17,000 v. 37,000). Cheltenham is a 100% Districts/Wards form of government with 7 Council members elected to 4 year terms; it has its own

police department. A copy of the Cheltenham Charter, with commentary provided by the Charter Commission, was provided to all GSC members.

**3. Discussion related to Middletown Township Home Rule Charter.**

M. Houtmann and J. Gray shared their information and impressions from a 1/22/15 discussion with Bruce Clark, who has been the Township Manager of Middletown Township, Delaware County, PA since July 1980. The Middletown Twp. Home Rule Charter became effective in 1978. Middletown has 7 Council members, 4 elected by District and 3 elected at-large, with 3 voting precincts in each District, and those districts are established by population. Council members are elected for 4-year terms but there are no term limits. Middletown adopted a much less detailed form of HRC, and chose to set forth details in its Township Administrative Code. The Code can be revised by ordinance, while Home Rule Charters can only be revised by referendum. Middletown hired consultants to assist with developing the Administrative Code. Middletown Township HRC, as well as the Township Code, can be viewed online. Of note: 1) In Middletown, the Township Manager hires the Township Engineer; 2) The Township Manager can be released at any time by a simple majority vote of the governing body; and 3) Middletown Township does not have its own police force. A follow-up visit to ascertain how Middletown Township enforces codes and ordinances, as well as other issues, would appear to be in order.

The current population of Middletown Township is not known, but numerous demographic similarities between Concord Township and Middletown Township were mentioned.

**4. Agenda Development.**

It was suggested that future interviews/presentations/speakers might be: the PA Economy League, the League of Women Voters, the Township Manager, the Township Code Enforcement Officer, etc.

**5. Public Outreach Update**

M. Houtmann has assembled a list of contact information for the schools, churches, and community groups, including Maris Grove, Fox Hill Farm, The Riviera at Concord.

A PowerPoint presentation has been created, and J. Twersky and R. Tribit will present it to the residents of Maris Grove on February 23.

No final plans yet for a date to meet with residents of Fox Hill Farm.

**V. PUBLIC COMMENT.**

R. Miley, 22 Leopard Run, commented on the various statistics mentioned regarding Cheltenham Twp; expressed concern about the sewer system in Concord and that so many residents still have on-site septic systems; asked for clarification regarding

township auditors under the 2nd Class Township Code; and whether Middletown Township had its own police force.

M. Horwitz, 801 Concord Road, expressed concern about Middletown Township's handling of problems and complaints. (State Police cannot enforce local ordinances.) He also inquired whether the GSC would study the pros and cons of Concord Township having a police force.

J. Schoenberger, Maris Grove, expressed his opinions regarding importance of functionality, citizen involvement, and contemporaneous needs of current times.

D. Foster, 141 Andrien Road, asked where Cheltenham and Middletown Home Rule Charters and Codes could be viewed, and was told links would appear on GSC tab; he also asked about provisions of Middletown's Administrative and Zoning Codes. \*

#### **VI. OTHER BUSINESS.**

J. Twersky asked for permission to register a domain name, so GSC can have its own website and email. The cost would be \$9.17 per year for the registration, and \$3.50 per month per user. R. Tribit made a motion to authorize the expenditure; A. Briner seconded. A voice vote was called for and Commission Members voted unanimously to approve the motion.

#### **VII. ADJOURNMENT.**

There being no further business to discuss, R. Fiumara made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 PM, seconded by J. Twersky. A voice vote was called for and Commission Members voted unanimously to approve the motion.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane S. Bohr, Secretary  
Concord Township  
Government Study Commission

\* [www.middletowntownship.org](http://www.middletowntownship.org)

\* [www.cheltenhamtownship.org](http://www.cheltenhamtownship.org)

**Next Meeting:** Thursday, February 19, 2015 at 7:00 P.M.