

Concord Township
Government Study Commission (GSC)
Minutes of Meeting of August 6, 2015

I. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL and PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

The meeting was called to order by GSC Chairman James Gray at 7:07 PM on August 6, 2015, at the Concord Township Municipal Building. GSC members who were present: James Gray, Rosemary Fiumara, Diane Bohr, Joshua Twersky, Robert Tribit, Andrew Briner and Matthew Houtmann. Also present: GSC Solicitor Michael Maddren. Following roll call, the meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS.

Rufus Miley, 22 Leopard Run, asked why the option of a Township of the First Class was not studied by the Commission. Chairman Gray advised him that it had been studied extensively, as evidenced by the GSC Minutes and materials posted on the website. Mr. Maddren explained that the Home Rule Charter and Optional Plans law - under which the GSC was formed - does not allow the GSC to change the class of municipality. Under the law, the GSC cannot put a referendum question on the ballot: "Should Concord Township change to a Township of the First Class?"

Dan Foster, 121 Andrien Road, commented about the recent decision in the Supreme Court case involving Concord Township and Concord First, and how that decision affects the GSC. Mr. Foster was reminded that the residents of Concord Township voted to have a Government Study Commission, and that the seven Commissioners have taken an oath to fulfill the duties for which they were elected. Mr. Maddren stated that the GSC is not a party to any litigation (the Supreme Court having denied the petition to intervene), and will proceed to draft a Home Rule Charter for presentation to the residents of Concord Township.

III. OLD BUSINESS.

R. Fiumara made a motion to approve the Minutes of July 16, 2015 meeting; motion seconded by J. Twersky. A voice vote was called for and Commission Members voted unanimously (7-to-0) to approve the motion.

Committee Report on PA Economy League (PEL) Proposal The committee consisting of Rosemary Fiumara, Matt Houtmann and Josh Twersky met with PEL officials Gerry Cross, Joe Boyle, and Lynne Shedlock on July 29 to obtain a detailed explanation of the items listed in the RFP (Request for Proposal). The PEL formula for gathering information was discussed, and also the fact that the GSC members are capable and willing to do a large percentage of the work that will be required to draft the Home Rule Charter. After speaking with the committee, PEL acknowledged that the GSC is probably leaning toward a "skeletal" charter. At the meeting, the "not to exceed" fee proposed by PEL of

\$67,850.00 was discussed and how that figure was calculated. Committee members agreed that the knowledge, experience, and expertise of the PEL staff would be very helpful and beneficial. M. Houtmann made a motion - **contingent upon the approval of the Concord Township Board of Supervisors** - to accept the proposal delivered by PEL, as written, but in the letter of acceptance there should be an acknowledgement that the Government Study Commission is willing and has the talent to contribute to the endeavor in an effort to expedite the schedule; and that the total proposal is not to exceed \$67,850.00. Motion seconded by R. Fiumara. A voice vote was called for and Commission Members voted unanimously (7-to-0) to approve the motion. It was agreed that Mr. Maddren would contact the Township Manager to request that she arrange a meeting with at least one of the Township Supervisors and GSC members J. Gray, R. Fiumara and J. Twersky to discuss financial aspects of PEL proposal and budgetary issues. A. Briner will serve as the alternate, if the meeting is set for a date when J. Twersky is on vacation. R. Fiumara will contact PEL by phone to let them know the current status, and she will ultimately prepare the Letter of Acceptance to be signed by PEL officials, if approval is granted by the BOS.

IV. NEW BUSINESS.

Formulate Strategy to Draft Home Rule Charter - General Discussion on Priorities, Timetable and Budget: Discussed in detail under “Old Business” above.

It was agreed that future GSC meetings would start at 4:30 PM on the first and third Thursdays of each month, at least through 2015. D. Bohr will contact Township Manager Brenda Lamanna and request that a notice be placed in the Daily Times and on the Township website, and to confirm that the public meeting room is available at that time. A second public *hearing* will be scheduled at some point in the future, as the Home Rule Charter is being prepared and developed, and will be held at 7:00 PM (not 4:30 PM). There was a lengthy discussion about the best ways to involve the residents in the process, either by public “forums”, visiting the larger communities such as Fox Hill Farm and Maris Grove, etc. Mr. Maddren suggested that an Interim Report would serve as a useful tool to be used by the residents, whether distributed by mail, email, or hand-delivery; alternatively, an Interim Report could be posted on the Township GSC webpage, and residents could be notified by postcard, i.e., as to the method to access the Interim Report.

Mr. Maddren will provide GSC members with maps of the 2010 census tracts for discussion at the next public meeting on August 20.

R. Tribit will email to the members the Home Rule Charter from Plymouth Township (Montgomery Co.), and a list of the 77 municipalities in Pennsylvania which have adopted Home Rule Charters as of January 2013, as well as the links to access those HRCs.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT.

R.Miley, 22 Leopard Run, asked how he could obtain a copy of the PEL RFP. Once accepted and/or approved for acceptance, the RFP becomes a public document and a copy will be posted on the GSC website. J. Gray asked R. Fiumara to confirm with PEL that the GSC has permission to post it. Mr. Miley also suggested that the GSC contact Tom Comitta for population numbers, since he prepared a comprehensive plan for the Township.

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J.Schoenberger, Maris Grove, asked why the meetings were being changed to 4:30 PM and was told it was to accommodate family commitments of Commission members and out of deference to the PEL personnel, who have a two-hour drive to attend meetings.

VI. OTHER BUSINESS.

Treasurer's Report: GSC Treasurer Joshua Twersky submitted a bill for legal services dated August 8, 2015, from the Maddren Law Office, for services rendered from July 2, 2015 to July 30, 2015, in the amount of \$2,280.00. R. Fiumara made a motion to approve payment of the bill; seconded by R. Tribit. A voice vote was called for and Commission Members voted unanimously (7-0) to approve the motion.

VII. ADJOURNMENT.

There being no further business to discuss, A. Briner made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 PM, seconded by M. Houtmann. A voice vote was called for and Commission Members voted unanimously (7-0) to approve the motion.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane S. Bohr, Secretary
Concord Township Government Study Commission

Next Meeting: Thursday, August 20, 2015 at 4:30 P.M.