

MUNICIPALITY OF BETHEL PARK
MINUTES
OF
HOME RULE STUDY COMMISSION MEETING

Date: January 20, 2015

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Location: Caucus Room – Municipal Building

1. Call to Order; Roll Call

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson McLean at 7:01 p.m.

Present: Joe Consolmango, Michael Dobos, Lorrie Gibbons, Tom Klevan,
Christine McIntosh, Jim McLean, Connie Serdi, Carol Stewart

Absent: Brandon Colella, Paul Dixon, James Hannan

Also Present: William J. Spagnol, Manager
Robert L. McTiernan, Solicitor

2. Approval of Minutes of November 18, 2014 Meeting

Motion and second to approve the minutes of the November 18, 2014 meeting; Motion carried unanimously.

3. Guest Speaker – Steve Feller, Municipal Manager, Mt. Lebanon

Mr. Feller discussed the council/manager form of government used in Mt. Lebanon where the five directors (Finance, Fire, Police, Public Works, and Recreation) report to the Municipal Manager and attend all Board of Commission meetings. The Police Department is one among equals rather than a department with special or different access to the Commission. The hiring of all five department Directors is conducted by the Municipal Manager but must be confirmed by Commissioners. Possible drawbacks to having Police Chief report directly and only to Council include political interference and a division of administrative authority.

4. Discussion on Proposal to Amend Bethel Park Home Rule Charter to have the Police Chief Report to the Municipal Manager

Chairperson McLean discussed the current structure in Bethel Park where the Police Chief reports directly to the Council but the other Department Directors report to the Municipal Manager. The pros and cons of this arrangement were discussed as well as the process for hiring the Police Chief and other Department Directors. Solicitor McTiernan stated that it is common among Home Rule Charter communities to have the Police Chief report to the Municipal Manager.

5. Setting of Public Hearing for February 18, 2015

A public hearing was scheduled in Council Chambers on Wednesday, February 18, 2015 at 7 p.m. for input from residents regarding the proposal to amend the Bethel Park Home Rule Charter to have the Police Chief report to the Municipal Manager rather than to Municipal Council.

6. Review and Discussion of Chapters 10 – 14 of the Bethel Park Home Rule Charter

After discussion, the commission identified the following items for further consideration:

- a. Section 1107 – Consider whether it is pertinent to have a 30-day period after adoption for an ordinance to become effective.
- b. Section 1301 & 1303 – Consider adjusting the amount of contract to reflect current value of dollar.
- c. Section 1307 – Consider tightening the language to reflect PA State Ethics Law where an abstention in voting is required for any real or implied conflict of interest.
- d. Section 1403 – Consider defining “moral turpitude” with specific offenses (Felony 1, 2, 3; Misdemeanor 1, 2, 3, etc.) as well as whether the conviction is relevant if prior to taking office/position or only while currently in office/position.

7. Public Comment

Gus Oakley asked that the commission consider changing the composition of Municipal Council by redistricting into five wards, having one representative elected from each ward and having four elected at-large Council seats.

8. Assignment of Members to Review Other Home Rule Charters

Assignments will be made after the Public Hearing on February 18, 2015.

9. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 9:03 p.m.