

MUNICIPALITY OF BETHEL PARK

**MINUTES
OF
HOME RULE STUDY COMMISSION MEETING**

Date: November 18, 2014

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 7:02 p.m.

Present: Brandon Colella, Joe Consolmango, Michael Dobos, James Hannan, Tom Klevan, Christine McIntosh, Jim McLean, Connie Serdy, Carol Stewart

Absent: Paul Dixon, Lorrie Gibbons

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

2. Approval of Minutes of October 7, 2014 Meeting

Motion and second to approve the minutes of the October 7, 2014 meeting; Motion carried unanimously.

3. Adoption of Mission Statement

Motion and second to approve the Mission Statement as amended. Motion carried unanimously.

4. History of Home Rule Adoption in Bethel Park

Chairperson McLean discussed the history of the Home Rule adoption in Bethel Park including the options available under the Pennsylvania Home Rule Charter and Optional Plans Laws and the work done by the two Home Rule Charter Committees elected by Bethel Park voters in the 1970s.

5. Report on Mt. Lebanon Vote on Amendments to Their Home Rule Charter

Chairperson McLean discussed the nine amendments considered by the Home Rule Charter Study Committee in Mt. Lebanon and the two amendments that appeared as referenda on the November ballot – gender neutrality and public notices. Both were approved by a large margin by the Mt. Lebanon electorate. Solicitor McTiernan stated that while the Pennsylvania NewsMedia Association has publicly challenged the legality of public notices posted on Mt. Lebanon’s web site and in the municipal building, no legal case has been filed.

6. Review and Discussion of Chapters 1 – 9 of the Bethel Park Home Rule Charter

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

- a. Section 201 & 303 - Whether there should be term limits for elected officials (Council/Mayor) and/or for appointed members;
- b. Section 201 & 303 - Whether to change or eliminate the “8:00 p.m.” time for when the term of Council members begins and clarify same for the term of the Mayor;
- c. Section 206 - Whether the right of the Mayor to veto ordinances passed by Council should be eliminated;
- d. Section 207 - Whether the right of the Mayor to defer casting a vote in the event of a tie to a special meeting should be revised or eliminated;
- e. Section 308 & 309 - Whether the provisions of special/emergency meetings should be revised or clarified, including to define what an emergency meeting is;
- f. Article 4 - Whether the provisions of the article on Auditors should be revised to conform to actual practice with an appointed as opposed to elected auditor;
- g. Section 502 - Whether the last sentence of this section should be removed (stating that the action of removing the Municipal Manager is not subject to judicial review);
- h. Article 6 - Whether to change who the Police Chief reports to from Council to the Municipal Manager;
- i. Section 603 - Whether the Fire Official should be identified to conform to actual practice (Code Enforcement Officer);
- j. Sections 501, 602, 701, 801 - Whether the qualifications of Manager, Police Chief, Financial Officer and Planner should be clarified/expanded upon in the Charter or in Administrative Code.

7. Public Comment

None

8. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.