

Clinton County Government Study Commission Meeting
September 6, 2006
Minutes

Call To Order:

Chairman Dan Harger called the Commission to order at 7:09 p.m. at the Clinton County Education and Resource Center. The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was participated in by all present.

Roll Call:

Ms. Gardner took roll call as follows:

Present were Mr. Mike Hanna, Mr. Daniel Harger, Dr. Kathleen McQuaid, Mr. Richard Novosel, Mr. Terry O'Connor, Mr. Ernie Renninger, Mr. Les Robinson and Dr. Robert Wise arrived at 7:16 p.m.

Absent were: Ms. Deb Day, Ms. June Houser, and Ms. Coreena Meyer.

Pennsylvania Economy League representatives present were Mr. Charles Watters and Mr. Gerald Cross .

Approve Agenda:

Mr. Novosel made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Mr. Robinson seconded the motion. Ms. Gardner took a roll call vote whereby the motion to approve the September 6, 2006 Agenda was approved unanimously.

Meeting Minutes of July 19, 2006:

Mr. Hanna made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of July 19, 2006 as presented. Mr. O'Connor seconded the motion. Ms. Gardner took roll call vote whereby the motion to approve the July 19, 2006 minutes as presented was approved unanimously.

Reports:

Invoice Review:

Treasurer O'Connor presented invoices for PEL expenses for June and July 06 totaling \$4,669.73 for approval.

Mr. O'Connor made a motion to approve payment of the invoices totaling \$4,669.73. Mr. Novosel seconded the motion. Ms. Gardner took a roll call vote whereby the motion to approve payment of the invoices totaling \$4,669.73 was approved unanimously.

Treasurer O'Connor stated that a transfer of funds from budget line items Miscellaneous and Legal will need to occur to cover PEL expenses for the remaining 2006 timeframe.

Chairman Harger announced that the Clinton County Government Study Commission members will be attending budget hearings with the County Commissioners in October.

Communication:

Lehigh County Trip:

Mr. Hanna presented an overview of the Commission's trip to Lehigh County on August 29, 2006. He also provided copies of Jim Runkle's article in The Express. Mr. Robinson noted that The Express, The Record and WPBZ were invited to travel with the Commission to Lehigh. Mr. Runkle from The Express was the only representative available for the trip.

Mr. Hanna noted that the Lehigh Commission Chairman felt that a board of 3 or 9 commissioner do not work that a board of 5 is the best way to go. The Chairman's reasoning being that a board of 3 is not diversified enough and a board of 9 is too many members.

The Commission discussed elected versus appointed executives. It was noted that the Commission can specify in the charter the term limitations but not qualifications for an elected executive. With an elected executive, there is the problem of popularity versus qualifications. On the other side an appointed executive is working for the board that hired them.

The Commission asked the PEL about specific job descriptions and about a transition team for the transition time to a charter form of government. The PEL stated that the Commission would write broad parameters in the in the charter for an appointed executive. The Commission determines who is on the transition team. The transition team would write working job descriptions and a personnel director would write specific job descriptions.

Mr. Robinson reviewed the situation in Lehigh County whereby the taxes were raised significantly. This occurred due to the budget not being approved by the

deadline and defaulted to the proposed budget. This did not occur due to the County being a home rule charter county.

Kiwaniss Presentation:

Chairman Harger announced that Ms. Day and himself made a presentation to the Lock Haven Kiwaniss. The presentation included an overview of where the Commission was, personalities and questions and concerns from the audience.

Financial Consultant Meeting:

Chairman Harger stated Commission Members met with Mr. Weiss, Clinton County Financial Consultant. The Commission received copies of Clinton County's Strategic Plan.

Chairman Harger stated the Commission will continue to work with the County Commissioners. He noted that issues back in the news are Susque-View and police protection.

Old Business:

Nothing to report at this time.

New and Continuing Business:

The PEL gave a brief overview of the slide presentation titled "Drafting a Home Rule Charter for Clinton County" presented at the July 19, 2006 meeting. The presentation is summarized as follows:

Charter Time Frame was reviewed.
Current Clinton County Government Structure.

Home rule basics.

Home rule limitations:

- US Constitution
- PA Constitution
- State laws
- Charter itself

Specific restrictions.

Major drafting issues:

- Scope of powers
- Form of government

- Other matters
- General provisions

Specific items noted:

- Time frame options of putting the charter on the ballot.
- Independence of Municipalities.
- Exiting Authorities continue.
- Continuation of Row Officers.
- Study Commission members can run for County Commissioner.

The PEL noted that first decision to be made by the Commission is the Form of Government. This decision will set the tone for the context of the charter. The next couple of weeks will be spent on the issues surrounding this decision. The PEL suggested the Commission look at ICMA and NACO websites.

Public Comment:

It was noted that there appears to be no correlation between taxes and the structure of the government.

It was also noted the Commission needs to be careful of what election they chose to put the charter on the ballot.

Adjournment:

Dr. McQuaid made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:25 p.m. Mr. Hanna seconded the motion.

Dan Harger, Chairman
Clinton County Government Study Commission

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