

LUZERNE COUNTY HOME RULE TRANSITION COMMITTEE

January 26, 2011

MINUTES

The seventh meeting of the HRTC convened in the Commissioners Meeting Room at the Luzerne County Courthouse, 200 River Street, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. It was called to order by Chairman Jim Haggerty at 6:36pm.

Members in attendance were Rob Bakewell, Vice-Chair Jim Bobeck, Secretary Ronna Ciaruffoli, Chairman Jim Haggerty, Kick Heffron, C J Kersey, Rick Morelli, Treasurer Susan Shoval (telecom) and Steve Urban. Tom Cooney and Maryanne Petrilla were absent.

A vote was taken regarding amendment of the 12 January 2011 minutes to reflect Rick Morelli's disagreement with paragraph 5 of the Omnibus Motion Concerning the Operation of Home Rule Transition Subcommittee Meetings. The vote to amend the minutes passed with a majority vote; Jim Haggerty abstained, and Ronna Ciaruffoli and Kick Heffron voted against the motion. CJ Kersey made a motion to adopt the minutes as amended, with Rob Bakewell seconding the motion. The Minutes of the 12 January 2011 meeting as amended were passed with Kick Heffron being the sole dissenting vote.

Citizen Comment on Agenda Items

There were none

Solicitor Report

Atty Jeff Malak briefed he was in receipt of documents required for bonding of Chairman and Treasurer, and Committee Errors & Omissions coverage. He will submit documents after obtaining necessary signatures.

Treasurer Report

Susan Shoval briefed progress on establishing the HRTC bank account prior to requesting transfer of funds from the Controller.

Reports of Subcommittees and Working Groups

Authorities, Boards and Commissions – CJ Kersey briefed no meetings scheduled to date.

Admin Code – Susan Shoval briefed first meeting was scheduled for 7 February 2011. Ronna Ciaruffoli stated the meeting notice was posted on the HRTC web page at the Luzerne County Website. All meeting notices forwarded to her would be posted on the web page upon request.

Ethics Code – Rob Bakewell briefed the first meeting was scheduled for 7 February 2011 immediately following the Admin Code Subcommittee meeting. He secured response from a Wilkes Student interested in active involvement, and was also gathering names and contacting individuals expressing interest in working on the subcommittee. Rob also stated he was gathering Ethics Codes state and nation-wide.

Personnel Code – Jim Bobeck briefed their 1st meeting was scheduled following the Ethics Code Subcommittee meeting on 7 February 2011. He stated they would address Code/Policy with inclusion of an enforcement mechanism. He further stated he was marshalling people and resources, to include the college community where involvement would be factored into class syllabus.

Personnel and Recruiting – Rick Morelli briefed their first meeting was held 19 January 2011 with open dialog addressing movement forward. Steve Urban distributed packages from Northampton County addressing job descriptions. Citizen members of this subcommittee are Joseph Rish, Dan Guydish, Elizabeth Leo, and Ed Brominski.

Liaison – Kick Heffron distributed a document noting the Liaison workgroup's mission, objectives and tasks. Their basic role is to highlight overlapping concerns or issues that would create redundant or conflicting issues among subcommittees. Their role is dynamic, with functions being identified as the subcommittees progress. Members are Kick Heffron, Ronna Ciaruffoli, Ed Chesnovitch, Tony DePolo, Steve Englot, Mike Giamber, Tom Pribula, and Renee Taffera

Factors in the Charter having the potential of significantly impacting transition to the Home Rule Government January 2012 if not addressed - Maryanne Petrilla was not available to address.

Ronna Ciaruffoli requested each subcommittee forward her copy of their minutes, or notes as to what they want posted in the minutes and/or the web page. When asked about availability of admin clerk (when hired) to attend subcommittee meetings, she stated the HRTC did not budget for the hours it would take to attend, document and report all subcommittees' activities, in addition to the clerk's primary role of attending, documenting, and drafting formal minutes for the HRTC, and additional duties required as subcommittees begin submitting their findings to the HRTC.

Discussion Regarding Clerical Assistant

Ronna stated 41 applications were received, 6 with most notable qualifications and experience were being scheduled for interviews.

Discussion Regarding Meeting Schedule

CJ Kersey's motion to schedule the next HRTC meeting for 23 February 2011 at 6:30 passed unanimously.

Old Business

Extensive discussion followed as to the status of the citizen members of the subcommittees, to include actual role, and migration of advisory members relative to on-going issues with the subcommittees depending on the subject under consideration. Concerns were raised that the ability to run the subcommittee should rest with the HRTC members. Rick Morelli made a motion that citizens appointed to subcommittees should have equal voting rights as HRTC members. Susan Shoal seconded the motion. The motion failed to pass with majority vote; Rick Morelli, Susan Shoal and Steve Urban in favor of, Rob Bakewell abstaining, and Jim Bobeck, Ronna Ciaruffoli, Jim Haggerty, CJ Kersey, and Kick Heffron voting against.

New Business

Rick Morelli asked that the meeting agendas be more specific. Jim Haggerty replied that the meeting topics of discussion for the immediate future would remain static for the most part, with the dynamic part of the meeting being the input from the subcommittees, which was noted on the agenda.

Ronna Ciaruffoli stated she was having difficulty with ready access to the HRTC mail as it was arranged (picking up, or arranging pick-up from Jennifer Jones' office during normal work hours), and suggested establishing a mailbox for the HRTC at a local post office. Steve Urban stated arrangements could be made to allow after-hour access to the mail thru telephone contact with Mr Ed Halloran. Ronna Ciaruffoli agreed that had potential for addressing mail access problems, and would see how that worked in lieu of pursuing rental of post office box.

Ronna Ciaruffoli broached the subject of establishing a Web Site for HRTC addressing upcoming and ongoing activities, progress, and historical documentation, using Cuyahoga County as an example; asking for approval for up to \$1300 to set up and maintain a web site. She stated the \$1300 would be for hosting fees and services, and the time for creation and maintenance of the website would be donated by Mike Giamber, content subject to approval by the HRTC. Following discussion as to specifics, Ronna Ciaruffoli withdrew her request for funding, stating she would bring additional information to the next HRTC meeting.

Citizen Comment (non-agenda items) was proffered by:

Fred Heller from Mountaintop – addressed legislative changes brought about by new government

Paula Schnelly from Swoyersville – County Personnel Policy not recognized by Unions because they weren't part of discussion/negotiations

Colette Check from Dallas - Importance of citizen comment relative to historical records

Walter Griffith from Wilkes-Barre – Transparency in respect to applicants for HRTC admin clerk position, and RFP for website

Concluding Remarks of Committee Members

There were none.

Upon motion by Ronna Ciaruffoli, second by Kick Heffron, and unanimous vote of the committee, the 7th meeting of the HRTC was adjourned at 8:25pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Chairman Jim Haggerty