

IN-PERSON AND LIVESTREAM BUSINESS MEETING OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION

Wednesday, June 15, 2022

The meeting of the Local Government Commission (Commission) was called to order by Senator Scott E. Hutchinson at 9:05 a.m. in Room 515 Irvis Office Building with the following Commission Members, staff and guests participating in-person and remotely:

MEMBERS

Senator Scott E. Hutchinson, Chair
Senator Judy Ward
Senator Cris Dush
Senator Timothy P. Kearney
Representative R. Lee James
Representative Dan Moul
Representative Jerry Knowles

STAFF

David A. Greene, Executive Director
Kristopher J. Gazsi, Assistant Director
Martin A. Toth, Associate Legal Counsel
Julia Frey, Research Analyst
Jaren Bittinger, Research Analyst
Karen S. Bear, Executive Assistant
Sonya I. Ebersole, Fiscal Administrator

GUESTS

Justin Leventry, Senator Hutchinson's Office
Matthew Deegan, Senator Hutchinson's Office
Nathan Akers, Senator Judy Ward's Office
Matt Maniskas, Senator Schwank's Office
Sam Arnold, Senator Kearney's Office
Bre Medevich, Representative Freeman's Office
Mary Yoder, Senate Local Government Committee (R)
Rob Gaertner, House Local Government Committee (R)
Jon Castelli, House Local Government Committee (D)
Evelyn Chianelli, PA Department of Community and Economic Development
Ashley White, County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania
Brianna Petitti, County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania
Barb Huesken, Pennsylvania NewsMedia Association
Ed Troxell, Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs
Ron Grutza, Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs
Joe Gerdes, Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors
George Bivens, Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors
Al Wright

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The Executive Director made a statement that the in-person and virtual meeting was being recorded and conducted with both Member and Commission staff participation. On Friday, June 3, 2022, notice of the meeting was posted on the committee meeting pages of the Senate of Pennsylvania and the House of Representatives through the Legislative Data Processing Center. The meeting agenda was posted on the Commission's website, www.lgc.state.pa.us, on Monday, June 13, 2022, and outside of the Commission's office located at 506 Irvis Office Building. Any questions on agenda items for consideration by the Commission were addressed during the meeting. After adjournment, the recording of the meeting will be posted on the Commission's website at www.lgc.state.pa.us.

The Members reviewed the minutes of the May 25, 2022, business meeting, which were unanimously approved on a motion by Senator Dush and a second by Representative James. The financial reports for the month of May 2022 were presented, and an explanation was given by the Executive Director. The financial reports were unanimously approved on a motion by Representative Moul and a second by Senator Ward.

The Executive Director disclosed to the Members a proposed Commission summer project pertaining to case studies of boundary issues. The Civic Boundary Working Group is an ad hoc team associated with the State Geospatial Coordinating Board (GeoBoard). The group includes stakeholders from the public and private sectors with a common goal of mitigating modern boundary data discrepancies and protecting the legal record. Commission Assistant Director-Legal Counsel Kris Gazsi has been participating in the Working Group for the last five years to better understand the surrounding issues, and act on opportunities where the Working Group's goals align with the Commission's charge to advance efficiency and effectiveness in Pennsylvania local government. To that end, the Working Group has asked the Commission to research and prepare a report for the General Assembly outlining some of the potential issues that can arise from these boundary discrepancies. The goal of the research is to present various case studies from throughout the Commonwealth where two or more different versions of municipal boundaries currently exist. It is anticipated that that the report will include five sections and to the greatest extent possible the case studies will be anonymized as to not draw particular attention to any one area of the Commonwealth. The goal is to educate the General Assembly on this issue, not single out any district or area. After a brief discussion, the Members unanimously approved the project. Chairman Hutchinson, as well as several other Members, stressed the importance of this research. Commission Research Analysts Julia Frey and Jaren Bittinger will also participate in the study.

Commission Research Analyst Julia Frey updated the Members on the preparation of the Commission's second annual Local Government Symposium slated for Thursday, October 6, 2022. This year's theme is 'Looking Forward: Local Government in an Evolving Landscape.' Request for proposals was tendered with a deadline for submissions by the close of business on Wednesday, June 15, 2022. However, the submission date has been extended until Thursday, June 30, 2022. To date six proposals have been received with two more anticipated. Proposals from local government officials, university faculty and students, state and regional professionals who study and work with local governments, state legislators, and other stakeholders were encouraged. Successful presenters will be notified by Friday, July 15, 2022. Ms. Frey commented

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that she is hopeful that the above-referenced boundary issue report will be finalized so that the results can be presented at the October 6 Symposium.

The Executive Director presented to the Members the proposed Commission strategic plan for the Legislative Session 2023-2024. Commission staff will meet during the summer to finalize its planning themes and goals for the upcoming session. A few of the items to be discussed are how to generate and advance new and traditional products; increase the Commission’s visibility, communication, and access; expand technological capability and efficiency; improve administrative functions; enhance educational access and responsibility; and foster personnel continuity. After a brief discussion, the Executive Director stated that an outline of more specific projects will be given to the Members at a later date.

A review of the status of the Commission’s sponsored legislation was given by the Executive Director. It was noted that several Commission bills are moving through the legislative process. Chairman Hutchinson and the Executive Director are optimistic that a few of the bills will become law by the end of this legislative session. The last day for the 2021-2022 legislative session is November 30, 2022.

As the last order of business, the Executive Director announced that the business meeting scheduled for Wednesday, July 13, 2022, in Room 515 Irvis Office Building at 9:00 a.m. has been cancelled. The next business meeting will be Wednesday, September 14, 2022, at 9:00 a.m. in Room 515 Irvis Office Building.

The meeting adjourned at 9:33 a.m.

ATTESTED: _____
June 29, 2022