

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

Wednesday, September 14, 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 Judith L. Schwank
Senator Timothy P. Kearney
Representative R. Lee James
Representative Dan Moul
Representative Jerry Knowles
Representative Robert Freeman**

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
Aaron Weltner, Senator Judy Ward's Office
Joseph Fouse, Senator Dush'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)
Aden Bittinger, House Legislative Policy and Research Office
Rick Vilello, PA Department of Community and Economic Development
Eric Jespersen, Pennsylvania State Geospatial Coordinating Board
Ashley White, County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania
Brianna Petitti, County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania
Kaitlin Errickson, Pennsylvania Municipal League
Barb Huesken, Pennsylvania NewsMedia Association**

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Ed Troxell, Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs
Ron Grutza, Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs
Tammy Shearer, Pennsylvania State Association of Elected County Officials
Joe Gerdes, Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors
George Bivens, Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors
Emme Reiser, Pennsylvania Association of Realtors

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 Wednesday, August 10, 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, September 12, 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.

As the first order of business, the Members discussed the Commission budget request for Fiscal Year (FY) 2023-2024. The Director noted that the aggregate proposed budget for the Commission's general operation is less than the FY 2022-2023 budget request, with the requested amount for FY 2023-2024 totaling \$1,075,017.00. The Director noted that the line items for Senate medical and prescription drug benefits were increased by 8.7 percent, and the line item for Commission staff salaries reflects a projected salary increase through combined cost-of-living and merit increments of 5 percent for staff. Overall, the budget request for FY 2023-2024 is 10 percent lower than the appropriation the Commission requested during FY 2021-2022. Representative Freeman suggested that the line item "subscriptions" be renamed "subscriptions or other contingencies" to better reflect the possible entries that could be incorporated in that category. On a motion by Representative Freeman and a second by Representative James, the Members unanimously agreed to alter the line-item identifier "subscriptions" to "subscriptions or other contingencies" and to tender the proposed FY 2023-2024 Commission budget request to the Budget Secretary by the October 6 submission deadline.

The Members reviewed the minutes of the June 15, 2022, business meeting, which were unanimously approved on a motion by Senator Ward and a second by Senator Dush. The financial reports for the months of June, July and August 2022 were presented, and an explanation was given by the Executive Director. The financial reports were unanimously approved on a motion by Senator Schwank and a second by Senator Kearney.

The Chairman then requested a motion to approve the Commission code account request for FY 2023-2024 in the amount of \$0.00, consistent with the code account budget request for FY 2021-2022. The requested decrease is a result of having a sufficient code account fund balance. Consolidations of the Borough Code (Title 8) and the Third Class City Code (Title 11) have also attributed to the ample fund balance. Upon consolidation, the printing of the aforementioned Titles became the responsibility of the Legislative Reference Bureau (LRB), thus precluding the necessity for a separate printing. The Executive Director reported that the Commission will only be responsible for the printing of a new supplement to the Second Class Township Code during

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FY 2022-23. The Members unanimously agreed to the proposed FY 2023-2024 code account request on a motion by Representative Moul, which was seconded by Representative Freeman.

The Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors' (PSATS) resolutions adopted from its 2021-2022 annual conference were reviewed by the Members for possible addition to the Commission's legislative package for FY 2023-2024. PSATS' Government Relations Director Joe Gerdes and Legislative Policy Analyst George Bivens were in attendance to address the Members' questions. The following is a list of recommended PSATS' proposals and the favored actions determined by the Commission Members:

- Exclude government entities that own cemeteries from registration requirements of the Burial Grounds Act and include municipalities in the current non-profit exemptions (Resolution 21-25). The Commission staff was instructed to draft legislation for possible introduction in the 2023-2024 legislative session.
- Require the Department of General Services to allow an early auction process for municipalities to bid on vehicles prior to public auction (Resolution 21-57). Commission staff was instructed to draft legislation for possible introduction in the 2023-2024 legislative session.
- Adopt a standard ID card for emergency responders, local officials, and essential employees (Resolution 22-39). Commission staff was instructed to coordinate with the local government associations to identify likely logistical and expense issues involved with this undertaking.

Additionally, the following potential legislative measures were discussed outside of the resolutions:

- Raise auditor compensation up to fifteen dollars and create an opt-out option for municipalities with CPA firms. See Senate Bill 1058 (Pittman). Senate Bill 1058 passed the Senate (50-0) and was referred to the House Local Government Committee.
- Tie auditor compensation to the Consumer-Price Index. See Senate Bill 1058 (Pittman). Senate Bill 1058 passed the Senate (50-0) and was referred to the House Local Government Committee.
- Provide a cost-of-living adjustment for supervisors following the next election cycle. The Commission Members will revisit this matter during the 2023-2024 legislative session. The salary scale was last set in 1996.
- Enable municipalities to recognize the service of public officials, employees, and volunteers. The Commission Members will revisit this matter during the 2023-2024 legislative session.

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.' Ms. Frey provided the Members with a flyer promoting Symposium presentations from

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Shippensburg University, Franklin and Marshall College, the Pennsylvania Economy League, the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee, and other noted practitioners who will speak on such topics as municipal finance, stormwater management, public employee recruiting, municipal liability, public input and feedback, and municipal boundaries. On-line registration for this event has commenced. Individuals wishing to register may do so by visiting the Commission’s website at www.lgc.state.pa.us and clicking on the banner at the top of the homepage. Participants may attend in person or via Zoom.

The Executive Director apprised the Members on the status of Commission sponsored legislation. It is hopeful that a few additional bills will be signed into law prior to the end of the 2021-2022 legislative session, which ends November 30, 2022.

As the last order of business, the Executive Director announced that the next business meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 19, 2022, at 9:00 a.m. in Room 515 Irvis Office Building. At that meeting, the Members will be reviewing the resolutions submitted by the Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs and an update on the Boundary Change study will be provided.

The meeting adjourned at 10:10 a.m.

ATTESTED: _____
October 14, 2022