

**Millcreek Township Government Study Commission
Regular Meeting**

March 24, 2025

The regular meeting of the Millcreek Township Government Study Commission was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Chairman Paul Vojtek in the Assembly Room of the Millcreek Township Municipal Building. In attendance were Paul Vojtek, Art Oligeri, John DiPlacido, Bill Schaaf, Donna Shaw and Robert Zonna; Alternates Bob Enas, Kim Huff, Douglas Krugger, Nancy Shea, Marcia Terry and Suzanne Weber; PA DCED Local Government Specialist Mary Ammann and Sheryl Williams. ALOM/Public Partner Consultants Michael Foreman and Toby Cordek were also present. Absent was Commissioner James DeDad.

Following the Pledge to the Flag, Mr. Vojtek called for public comments on agenda items. Former Township Supervisor and Current Auditor John Groh advised the Commissioners to be sure to include a representative from Belle Valley if they decide to recommend an optional government plan that includes five (5) Supervisors or Council members.

On motion by Mr. Schaaf, seconded by Mr. Oligeri, the minutes of the March 10, 2025 regular meeting were approved by unanimous roll call vote.

On motion by Mr. DiPlacido, seconded by Ms. Shaw, a bill from ALOM/Public Partners in the amount of \$11,929.50 was approved for payment by unanimous roll call vote.

Committee Reports

In Budget Committee Chairman Jim DeDad's absence, Mr. Schaaf stated that there were no other financial items to report.

Local Government Structure Committee Chairman John DiPlacido stated that he is basically reporting the information from the previous meeting. He relayed that on March 10th, the Commissioners were asked to review the notes from the March 10th fact-finding and educational session.

The committee interviewed representatives from three (3) Townships and the notes are currently being reviewed by the Commission. He briefly summarized the information that was learned from the following townships:

Stephanie Teoli Kuhls, Township Manager of Middletown Township, Bucks County, a Township of the Second Class, stated their population is 47,000 and is governed by five (5) Supervisors. They are all part-time legislators and there are no paid part-time or full-time Supervisors.

Bob Pellegrino, long-time Township Manager of Northampton Township, Bucks County, a Township of the Second Class, stated their population is 42,000 and that they are governed by a Board of Supervisors. He noted that only one of their Supervisors is employed full-time, and he also serves as the Fire Chief.

Bill Cmorey, former Director of Administration for Bensalem Township, Bucks County, who recently retired, was employed by the Township for 47 years. He explained that he was there in 1987 when the Township changed its form of government to Optional Form of Government - Elected Mayor/Council Plan B, which requires a Director of Administration. He stated that prior to Bensalem's change to Council Plan B, he was the Township Secretary. He also noted that the Township is happy that they changed their form of government.

Mr. DiPlacido reported that his committee met this afternoon with Millcreek Township Supervisors individually, and discussed background, goal-setting priorities, personnel and finance, communications and outreach, and priorities and accountability. Mr. Vojtek thanked the Supervisors for taking the time to meet with the Committee.

Public Outreach, Public Relations, Public Education and Promotions Committee Chairman Art Oligeri reported that his committee met earlier today, and his IT team has confirmed that the Millcreek Government Study website will be up and running in a few days. He stated that his committee is on budget, has spent approximately \$100 on social media to recap the events of February and March to direct residents to the Millcreek Government Study website for more information. He reminded residents that the GSC meetings are open to the public and are also being livestreamed on YouTube.com. Mr. Oligeri stated that Commissioner Donna Shaw will be providing social media spots during April, and Commissioner R.J. Zonna will be covering the month of May. Mr. Oligeri reported that he and Mr. Vojtek will be participating this Thursday in a special WICU-TV telecast to update citizens on what the Millcreek Township GSC has been doing, and noted that the committee is trying to schedule talks with various local civic and community organizations to discuss what the GSC has been working on. Mr. Oligeri relayed that the Public Partners consultants have recommended that two (2) townhall meetings should be scheduled for July and August.

New Business

On motion by Mr. Oligeri, seconded by Ms. Shaw, it was carried by unanimous roll call vote to schedule a second regular meeting for May on May 19, 2025 at 5:30 p.m., pending availability of the Assembly Room, and for the Recording Secretary to place a legal advertisement in the *Erie Times News*. *(Ms. Williams checked the room scheduling calendar later during the meeting and discovered that May 19th was unavailable, so Mr. Vojtek suggested that the commissioners check their schedules and then discuss an alternative meeting date.)*

Committee of the Whole

ALOM/Public Partners Consultant Michael Foreman presented an interactive workshop on the last two (2) forms of optional government to be considered by the GSC: Executive (Mayor) – Council Plan C and Council-Manager. He provided organizational charts of each type of government for the commissioners to study. The Executive (Mayor) – Council Plan C has an elected Mayor and an elected Council of 3, 5, 7 or 9 members, all of which have 4-year terms. The Council elects/chooses one of its own as President. Each form of government also has the option to appoint or elect a Treasurer (term of 4 years if elected). Plan C differs from Plans A and B in that it has a mandated Managing Director position, which is appointed by the Executive (mayor) with the advice of Council, and a department of administration may later be established by ordinance through the administrative code, adopted in the year after approval of the referendum. The Managing Director supervises the departments of government and can be thought of as a personal assistant to the Mayor.

Mr. Foreman explained that under the Council – Manager Plan form of optional government, there is an elected Council of 3, 5, 7 or 9 members, all of which have 4-year terms and the option to appoint or elect a Treasurer (term of 4 years). The Council selects a Manager, created by ordinance, who has executive power over day-to-day operations and is the chief administrative officer of the municipality. The Council has legislative power but is prohibited from being involved in day-to-day operations of the municipality.

Mr. Vojtek asked for clarification on who elects the Mayor/Chairperson under the Council/Manager form of government, to which Mr. Foreman replied that the Mayor is chosen by the Council, not the electorate.

Mr. Foreman reported that the Draft Resident Survey is still a work in progress, and more feedback and suggestions have been received, which are very valuable. Discussion ensued regarding how the GSC will know if the survey is being completed by a resident or not, and whether it should be optional to require the person's address, whether or not residents will be educated well enough at this point to make an informed choice of how many commissioners should sit on the board, and the timeline of the survey. Further discussion raised questions from several commissioners regarding the name of the survey, and whether it should or should not be distributed to residents at all. A suggestion was made to change the title of the survey, and Mr. Foreman stated that he planned to change the title to "Government Service Survey."

Mr. DiPlacido indicated that there may be a better survey result if the electorate has a better understanding of what the Commission recommended and has all the information in front of them to use as their input. It may be better to have only one survey.

Consultant Toby Cordek reminded the GSC that by the end of the meeting on April 14, 2025, they will have reached the end of the studying portion of the various forms of optional government, and that deliberations will begin, as a decision needs to be made by May 19, 2025 on a recommended form of government to present to the voters.

Commissioner Zonna then questioned the actual purpose of the survey, since residents have not yet been privy to the various forms of governmental options available to Millcreek Township. Mr. Oligeri opined that it would be wise to get a sense or "pulse" of the community before they deliberate on types of optional government, but Mr. Zonna argued that the election was the "pulse" of the people.

Mr. Foreman responded by saying that ideally, before the commission makes a decision on a recommendation, there would be a public forum to inform residents about each of the basic four options of government, plus the possibility of "no change in government." Commission Alternate Suzanne Weber reiterated that the mandate was made at the polls for the Commission to look at the issues to see if things can be done differently, and agreed with Mr. Zonna that the survey has no purpose if residents have not yet been given any information.

It was moved by Mr. Schaaf and seconded by Ms. Shaw to table further discussion on the survey until a final draft is ready for presentation. Mr. Vojtek asked Mr. Foreman to make the changes in the survey that were discussed, and to have it ready for presentation at the next meeting on April 14, 2025. Mr. Vojtek called for the vote to table discussion on the survey and it was carried 5-1, with Mr. Zonna voting no. Mr. Foreman stated that he will have another draft ready on April 14th, but it may not be the final draft. Mr. Vojtek asked the commission to think about whether they do or do not want to move forward with the survey, and Mr. Zonna added that he would like to hear about survey results from other townships and how they have helped their Government Study Commissions.

Other Business

There was no other business to be discussed.

Public Comment

Millcreek resident Gerald Servidio questioned what roads, sewer and other such items have to do with the GSC, stating that those issues should be addressed at a Township Supervisors meeting. He noted that data has been collected on Supervisor compensation at other townships throughout the state, but he has not heard anything about compensation for Township Managers from these townships. He read the salaries of the four (4) Cranberry Township Managers, and noted that the budget for their Executives is \$1.4 Million. He relayed that Cranberry's five (5) part-time Supervisors (legislators) earn \$4200 each as well, and compared Cranberry Township's tax information to Millcreek's, which is 14% vs. 4%, respectively. Mr. Servidio asked that the same information be provided regarding the other townships that have been interviewed thus far, and suggested that the commissioners read Title 53,

Chapters 29 and 30, which provide the information on various types of optional governments. He then asked Mr. Cordek if he is going to discuss Chapter 31. Mr. Cordek explained that the Public Comment period is for residents to state their concerns or comments, but that administrators and board members should not be answering questions or speaking in general. Mr. Servidio noted that many Township Managers are employed at the same township for over thirty years, but is in favor of term limits, and added that it would be helpful if the presentations were put up on a screen for the audience to view. Millcreek resident Denis McAndrew stated that he thought the purpose of the GSC was to save residents tax dollars, and that they were elected to decide what is best for Millcreek and to tell the residents why. He opined that a survey is not needed.

Good of the Order

There were no further items for discussion.

There being no further business or public comment, the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 6:39 pm on motion by Mr. Schaaf, seconded by Mr. Oligeri.

Respectfully submitted,

Sheryl A. Williams,
Recording Secretary

Approved April 14, 2025

MILLCREEK TOWNSHIP GOVERNMENT STUDY COMMISSION

John DiPlacido, Secretary