

**SHARON HOME RULE CHARTER TRANSITION COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES**

Monday, March 24, 2008, 6:00 P.M.  
Sharon City Council Chambers

**Committee Attendee's:**

Joe Biro	Victor Heutsche	Ed Palanski
Fred Hoffman	William McConnell	Robert Wilson
John Evans – Alternate		
Robert Fiscus – Alternate		

Absent: David George, Darin Flower, Frank Connelly

**Guests:**

Attorney William Madden

**Meeting Minutes:**

Chairman Palanski called the meeting to order.

Motion to accept the minutes from the previous meeting was made by Mr. McConnell and seconded by Mr. Hoffman.

Recently elected alternates John Evans and Robert Fiscus were introduced to the committee. Jennifer Barborak, a previously elected alternate was not present. Chairman Palanski stated that Ms. Barborak would like to participate; however, her attendance at meetings will be limited until the school year comes to an end. In the event of a vacancy, the procedure for voting in one of the alternates will need to be determined.

**BILL NO. 12-08** This bill's main focus is on the decision process for selecting replacement member(s) of city council. Mr. Heutsche advised that Sharon City Council did vote on the bill. He stated that all applicants must be interviewed and that the bill, as drafted and voted on, follows the Charter. Chairman Palanski stated he would like to see the interview process defined. Mr. McConnell questioned the manner by which a replacement to council would be elected. Attorney Madden said that the Charter requires a super majority of 4 votes. If council does not act within 30 days the Charter dictates that the replacement is selected by the Court of Common Pleas. At the previous meeting it was determined that the Transition Committee would define the process as opposed to City Council defining the process. A sub-committee to define the process was comprised of Chairman Palanski, Mr. Flower, Mr. Heutsche and Mr. Connelly. Mr. Hoffman questioned whether sub-committees were a good idea. He was concerned that the sub-committee meetings would be "behind closed doors" and that the discussion must remain open. Mr. Hoffman questioned why the committee could not hammer out the issues at the scheduled meetings. Mr. McConnell commented on how sub-committees were effective in writing the original charter. Drafts were provided and then formally reviewed by the full committee. It was agreed that the Transition Committee would follow a similar course of draft and review.

Discussion ensued regarding the Business, Labor and Industry Advisory Board. A sub-committee to review the possible activities and constitution of this board was formed at the previous meeting and comprised of Mr. Biro, Mr. George and Mr. Wilson. Mr. Biro contacted several citizens that were knowledgeable of much of Sharon's political history. To the best of their recollections, the Business, Labor and Industry Advisory Board has never been active. Mr. Biro's contacts questioned the need or effectiveness of this board moving forward.

Mr. Wilson provided a report on an informational meeting he had with Gary Gulla, Hermitage City Assistant Manager. The meeting focused on the construct of Hermitage's Community and Economic Development Commission. The commission is made up of a seven member board. Three members are defined by business category; finance, commercial and industrial. Members must be citizens of Hermitage, but they do not have to work in Hermitage. The board meets monthly. They do not have resources, but they do make recommendations on most financial issues of the city. The board is involved in grant applications, marketing and promotional campaigns and project reviews. One city commissioner serves as a non-voting member of the board. Members of this board are appointed by the Board of Commissioners. Members serve 4 year terms and the terms are staggered. The city management team provides the board with administrative support. The board and city management is very active with the local economic development agencies – Penn Northwest and Shenango Valley Industrial Development Corporation (SVIDC).

Mr. Heutsche pointed out that Mayor Lucas or Joe Fragle has served as the main contacts for economic development for the city. Mr. McConnell questioned whether the Mayor should have been following the guidelines set forth by the Business, Labor and Industry Advisory Board, and if not, should the board have been dissolved. Chairman Palanski stated that strengthening this board would be an opportunity to bring in talent to help the city. Mr. Heutsche said that vacancies for this board were recently posted with no response. Chairman Palanski stated that posting was not adequate and that a recruitment effort should be implemented.

To conclude the discussion, it was determined that the sub-committee for the Business, Labor and Industry Advisory Board would develop and present a draft for review ahead of the next meeting. Mr. Evans volunteered, and was added as a member of this sub-committee.

The committee reviewed various boards or commissions that should be eliminated. It was voted on unanimously that a recommendation be put forth that eliminates the Wage and Rate Review Committee and the Fair Employment Practice Commission. For clarification, Chairman Palanski stated that unions and state and federal law now covered the duties meant for this committee and commission.

Mr. McConnell questioned whether the Recreation Board should not be rolled into the Recreation Authority. Mr. Heutsche said that there is an ordinance that could address this. Mr. Heutsche said he would distribute the ordinance so that the Transition Committee could review it. Mr. Heutsche also addressed city council serving as liaisons, rather than voting members on various boards and commissions. This would be consistent with the Charter and Mr. Heutsche did not see any issues with it. Mr. Heutsche stated that the fact that city council controlled the "purse strings" gave them the leverage they need to govern effectively. Mr. Heutsche said that council would elect or appoint the liaisons for the various boards and commissions.

The city website will be setup and managed though COG, and specifically Adam Kundrich. The cost is very economical and the obligation would be contractual. Though the Transition Committee does not have specific responsibility for the city website, they expressed interest in providing input on the website's effectiveness.

Mr. McConnell questioned whether the Beautification Commission had been codified. The committee will request that Ms. Barborak provide or present information on the Beautification Commission at her earliest convenience. Chairman Palanski will contact Ms. Barborak.

Mr. Heutsche asked if the Transition Committee could help the city with the issue of collecting taxes and sewer fees. Chairman Palanski and Mr. Hoffman both stated that this was not the responsibility of this committee.

Mr. Heutsche questioned Attorney Madden on whether the city had a personnel manual. Attorney Madden stated that the police, fire and AFSCME members were covered by their contracts. Mr. McConnell asked Attorney Madden if the pension plans were updated to align with the Charter. Attorney Madden answered yes.

It was determined by the committee that meetings would be held once per month beginning in April. The next meeting was scheduled for April 28, 2008 at 6:00 a.m.

There being no further business a motion to adjourn was submitted by Mr. Biro and seconded by Mr. McConnell.

Respectfully submitted by:

Robert E. Wilson  
Secretary-Treasurer