

# GOVERNMENT STUDY COMMISSION NEWSLETTER

## BOROUGH OF CARLISLE

August 2014

Issue No. 9

Welcome to the Borough of Carlisle Government Study Commission Newsletter. The commission will use this monthly newsletter to keep citizens informed about the progress of the commission as well as the schedule for key dates and events. More detailed information on the government study commission process can be found [here](#) on the Borough of Carlisle web site.

Please e-mail [CarlislePaHR@gmail.com](mailto:CarlislePaHR@gmail.com) to be added to the e-mail distribution list.

### **Commission Members**

Ken Womack, Chairman; David Sheridan, Vice Chairman; Robert Winston, Secretary/Treasurer; Bill Berwick; Stephen Hughes; Bert Lennon; John Sacrison; Phil Shevlin and Blake Wilson

### **Draft Charter Status**

The commission conducted a public hearing for Monday, June 2<sup>nd</sup> at 7:00 p.m. in Borough Hall to allow citizens an opportunity to comment on an [initial draft charter](#). At this hearing, the commission highlighted seven key items proposed in the new charter:

1. Abolishes the office of elected tax collector and directs council to determine best method of collecting taxes from a list of available options.
2. Maintains same power of taxation and tax rates as the current Pennsylvania Borough Code.
3. Establishes a seven member council consisting of six council members and a mayor elected at large.
4. Enacts term limits for the offices of mayor and council members.
5. Requires all department heads, including the chief of police, to report to the borough manager.
6. Directs the council to enact an administrative code with specific guidance on personnel code, contracting and procurement and a code of ethics.
7. Enables increased citizen participation by establishing procedures for initiative and referendum.

In addition, citizens were provided with a [detailed summary of the draft charter](#). The public commented on a number of issues during the public opinion, particularly the new role for the mayor, the election of council and mayor at large, term limits, and the threshold limits necessary for initiative and referendum.

At its June 10<sup>th</sup> meeting, the commission reviewed the comments from the public hearing, proposed revisions, and directed that an updated draft be prepared for a meeting on July 22, 2014. No further meetings were scheduled until that date.

At its July 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting, the commission reviewed the updated draft and proposed additional revisions and refinements in the language. The commission met again on July 29<sup>th</sup> and, following a review of the updated draft, directed that it be sent to the commission solicitor, Hubert X. Gilroy of Martson Law Offices, for review. After an initial review, Mr. Gilroy recommended that prior to a legal review, some issues might more appropriately be addressed to state agencies. The commission also reviewed an initial draft of the final charter report as well as discussing transition provisions for a home rule charter.

At its July 29<sup>th</sup> meeting, the commission directed the draft charter be sent to appropriate state agencies for review. The draft charter was subsequently sent to the Governor's Center for Local Government Services in the Department of Community and Economic Development and to the Local Government

Commission staff. The government study commission anticipates receiving reviews of the documents prior to the end of August.

On August 12<sup>th</sup>, the commission continued to make recommendations for the draft of the final charter report. This report, mandated by the Home Rule Law, is the summation of the commission's work and will provide the final summary of the commission's recommendations and is a critical element in terms of relaying the commission's recommendations to the public.

At this meeting the commission also continued to discuss transition provisions. This section of the home rule charter will cover arrangements for changes to the form of government outlined in the charter.

### **Meeting Schedule**

The commission will meet again on August 26<sup>th</sup> to review draft charter inputs from state agencies and to continue writing the final charter report and transition provisions. Subsequent meetings will be scheduled based upon the status of reviews. Scheduled meetings will be posted on the Borough's web site.

### **Public Involvement**

The government study commission continues to seek public input and comments on the government study commission process. Please contact the commission via e-mail at [CarlislePaHR@gmail.com](mailto:CarlislePaHR@gmail.com) with your comments and suggestions. You can also find the commission on Facebook at Carlisle Home Rule Study Commission. The commission strongly encourages the public to attend its meetings.

### **Commission Member Spotlight: Ken Womack**

Ken Womack was born and raised in Missouri, earned a BS in Engineering Mechanics from the United States Air Force Academy and an MS in Systems Management from the University of Southern California. He and his wife Alice came to Carlisle in 1992, when he was selected to attend the U.S. Army War College. Except for Ken's military assignments, Carlisle has been the family home since then.

Following his retirement from the United States Air Force in 1997, Ken began a second career in municipal government and activities. He was the first development manager for Carlisle Housing Opportunities Corporation where he supervised development of the first 12 homes in the Pitt Street Pride program. In 1999 he became the Borough of Carlisle planning/zoning/codes manager and zoning officer and in 2004 was promoted to be the assistant borough manager. In 2007, he was selected to be the borough manager in the Borough of Greencastle where he served until his retirement at the end of 2012.

Ken also works as a part-time faculty instructor in the Department of Distance Education at the U.S. Army War College where he has been a faculty member since 1998.

Ken and Alice have two grown daughters, Sarah and Kendall.