

Transition to Cityhood

March 18, 2011

Don Beavers

Michigan Municipal League

Agenda

- Get Organized
- Acquire State Boundary Commission (SBC) Authorization
- Potential Referendum and Elections
- Complete Charter for Proposed City
- Complete Election for Charter Endorsement

Get Organized

- Who will champion this effort?
- What are the differences?
- Why do you want to Become a City?
- Political Alternatives to City Status

Who is the Champion?

- Citizen Based
 - Advantages – Grassroots; Community Ownership
 - Disadvantages – Unfamiliar with Internal Operation of Government
- Council Based
 - Advantages -Familiar with Issues Causing Separation
 - Disadvantages – Public Perception of Politically Motivated Council

What are the Differences?

- Voted Charter vs. General Law Village Act
- One Set of Elected Officials
- One Taxing Assessing Entity
- Single Voting Entity
- City is Primary Form of Government
- City has all Operational Responsibilities –
– (i.e. Assessing, Elections, etc.)

Why Become a City

- Resolution of Issues – (i.e. Sharing of Road Millages)
- Political Control Disputes – (i.e. Who is in the Decision Making Position)
- Dedication (or Priority) of Township Resources to “Village” Needs – (i.e. Infrastructure Improvements)
- City Controls Local Millage Levies (i.e. No Township Taxes to Proposed City Residents)
- Other Issues

Political Alternatives to City Status

- Intergovernmental Agreements 0 (i.e. P.A. 425)
- Sharing of Resources (i.e. Group Purchasing)
- Forming of “Special” Authorities – (i.e. Recreation)
- Resolve Political Differences with Governing Bodies
- Economies Will Force Future Cooperation Between Governments Regardless of Status

Questions ?

Acquire SBC Authorization



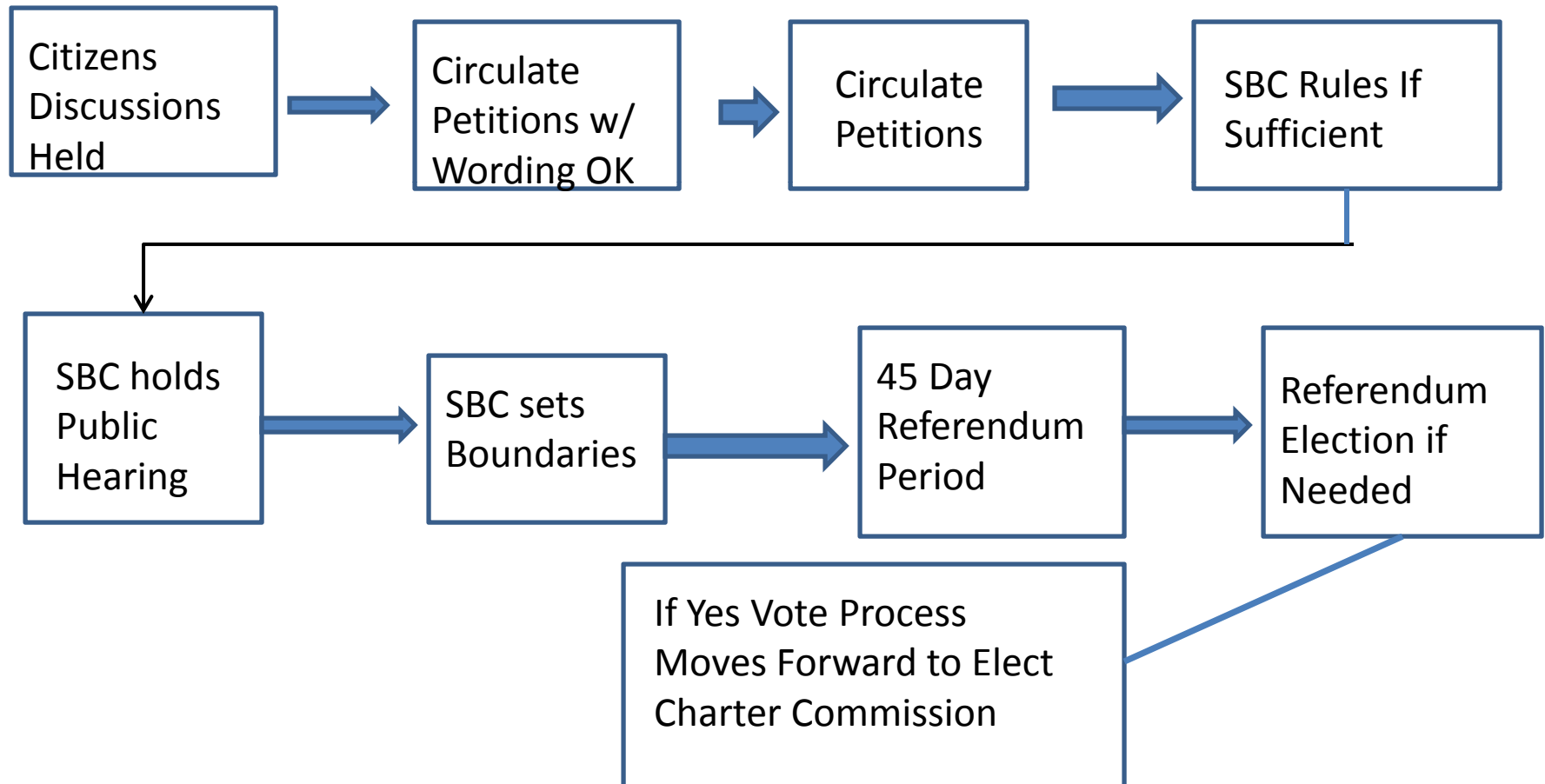
The First Steps in gaining City Status is

- Identify the boundaries of the Proposed City – (i.e. Islands of land to be Incorporated into Proposed City; Squaring off boundaries, etc.)
- Sufficiency Approval by SBC
- Develop Petitions for all voters and land owners of Proposed City for support
- Wording of Petition must be Approved by the SBC
- Circulate Petitions to gather all required Signatures
- SBC Reviews Petitions; if warranted to proceed
- SBC holds Public Hearing in the Community on Transition Process
- SBC updates and/or agrees with Proposed City Boundaries
- SBC Oversees 45 Day Referendum Petitions Period
- SBC Reviews any Referendum Petitions to determine if election is warranted
- SBC Reviews Referendum Election Results and either Authorizes the Process to Move Forward or Rejects the Original Petitions for City Status

It is **STRONGLY** recommended to Obtain Professional Consul on this process to avoid any costly missed steps

A Public Education Program must be initiated and developed for this step and the entire process to gain support for the City Status transition.

Acquire SBC Authorization



Questions ?

Complete Charter for Proposed City



- Establish Charter Commission by Election
 - Petition Circulation of interested Citizens
 - Placement on Ballot
 - Election Completed
 - Elected Nine (9) member Charter Commission Commences

- Complete Charter
 - Elect Chair, Vice-Chair, and Clerk
 - Identify Source of Funds for Support Costs
 - Review Existing Charters
 - Review P.A. (Public Act) for Charter Process
 - Consider Outside Consultant/Contract with Knowledge of Charter Process/Contents
 - Identify Basic Form of Government for Proposed City

- Charter Approved by the Governor through the Attorney General's Office.
 - Need time to incorporate any revisions from the Attorney General's Office and re-submit for Approval. This is usually a 90 Day cycle.

Key Charter Elements

- Required Contents
 - Item One
 - 2
 - 2
- There is a lot of latitude in what is included beyond the required contents. However, too much detail may restrict future needs of Proposed City
- **Charter must be Approved by the Governor** through the Attorney General's Office before Election endorsement by the City

Questions ?

Complete Election for Charter Endorsement

- Hold Election of Charter
- Proposed City Council members election is also included
- Include all registered voters in the proposed city limits.
- Charter must pass within Two Years from SBC Authorization or the Process needs to Start Over Again.
- If Approved, File Charter with **Great Seal**
- Announcement of City Status
- City Operates from New Charter

Questions ?