

**SPRINGETTSBURY TOWNSHIP
JOINT FIRE SERVICES AD HOC COMMITTEE**

**MARCH 15, 2005
APPROVED**

Springettsbury Township and Spring Garden Township Joint Fire Services Committee met at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, March 15, 2005 with the purpose of discussion of a potential Joint Fire Service.

MEMBERS IN

ATTENDANCE: Austin Hunt, Spring Garden Township, Commissioner and Member
Zane Sjoberg, Spring Garden Township, Member
Todd Langheine, Springettsbury Township, Alternate
Thomas Englerth, Spring Garden Township, Member
William Mader, Spring Garden Township, Alternate
Gregory Maust, Spring Garden Township, Township Manager
Jon Countess, Spring Garden Township, Public Service Representative
William Schenck, Springettsbury Township, Supervisor and Member
John Holman, Springettsbury Township, Township Manager
Andrew Stern, Springettsbury Township, Director, Interim Fire Chief
Barry Emig, Spring Garden Township, Fire Department

MEMBERS NOT

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs. Ellen Freirich, Springettsbury Township, Primary Citizen Member

ALSO IN

ATTENDANCE: Dan Flohr, Springettsbury Township Fire-Department
Nick Gurreri, Springettsbury Township Supervisor
Tony Surtasky, President, Commonwealth Fire Company, Resident
Keith Prowell, Representative, Spring Garden Township Professional Firefighters
Michael Freet, Spring Garden Township Fire Department
Kevin Keough, Springettsbury Township Fire Department
Rich Mellon, President, Springettsbury Local IAFF 2377 Bargaining Unit
Don Eckert, Prior Member of Springettsbury Township Board of Supervisors and
Member of Springettsbury Volunteer Fire Service and Active Fire Police.
Joe Barron, Victory Fire Company Member
Zack Boyer, Spring Garden Township, Grantley Fire Company Vice President
Firefighter Les Rhoades, Springettsbury Local 2377 Representative

A. CALL TO ORDER:

HOLMAN Mr. Holman, Springettsbury Township Manager, welcomed everyone to the first Joint Meeting and stated that a sign in sheet was located at the entrance to the Board Room for anyone who would like to speak in the public portion of the meeting.

HUNT Mr. Hunt called the first meeting of the Joint Fire Services Ad Hoc Committee meeting to order at 6 p.m. A Quorum was present. He stated that the purpose of the meeting was to meet and lay groundwork for future meetings.

B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

HUNT Chairman Hunt led the Pledge of Allegiance.

C. INTRODUCTION OF STAFF AND BOARD MEMBERS:

HUNT Chairman Hunt stated that the ground work would be laid during this meeting for potential regionalization of fire services. The goal was to solicit input from everyone and keep the meeting somewhat informal. The Board introduced themselves as the committee, which include voting members moving forward with policy; however, input was solicited from everyone in order to determine the best possible solutions. He asked Mr. Holman to introduce information which had been provided to them in a three-ring binder.

D. TRAINING:

1) Review of Binder Material

HOLMAN Mr. Holman stated that he had presented each member with a three-ring binder, which included materials regarding Fire Department Consolidation, Why and How to do it from VFIS, Mission Statement, Rules and Regulations, Sample Meeting Agenda, Public Meetings, Motion and Resolution Procedures, Media Press Relations, Fire Services Plan Ad Hoc Committee Rules and Regulations, Assessment of Fire Services Protection, Department Profiles, Maps of York City and Metro East, school districts and rail crossings, and a state provided Joint Fire Plan, etc. He reviewed the material briefly. He asked the members to review the information. Mr. Holman indicated that if the members would like to see additional items, he and Mr. Maust would review those items for the next session. He added that contracts for each bargaining unit and a graphic display of the departmental set up will be provided. Mr. Holman thanked staff from both municipalities for taking the time to put the book together. He hoped it would be helpful to the Board to move forward with the study.

SCHENCK Mr. Schenck noted that the sample merger plan looked like a merger of some volunteer fire companies and was similar to what had occurred in Springettsbury with the merger of Springettsbury and Commonwealth. That would be a valuable resource, and the by-laws could be included for some additional help.

HOLMAN Mr. Holman stated that he would be glad to send those by-laws to the Board.

HUNT Chairman Hunt indicated that a wealth of talent was in the audience and he asked them to introduce themselves and their affiliation. (They are listed above in the list of attendees).

2) Video: Meeting Management and Professional Liability

HOLMAN Mr. Holman provided a video tape of instruction regarding employment practices and public official liabilities.

HUNT Chairman Hunt stated that the mission of the Board was to collect the facts on fire regionalization and present possible options to the respective Township Boards for further action.

HOLMAN Mr. Holman commented that additional insurance information, which was provided in the video was to help the Board deal with any potential problem areas. He asked the Board to please advise him or Mr. Maust of any difficulties. He indicated both municipalities carry insurance.

E. ACCEPTANCE OF RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR MEETING:

HOLMAN Mr. Holman asked for a motion from the Board to accept the Rules and Regulations for the meeting, which had been previously provided to the Board members. Rules and Regulations were set by each of the governing bodies and agreed to by them. Realistically they set the procedural rules for the meetings, the mission statement for the body and what can be discussed, i.e., matters dealing with the Joint Fire Service Study.

HUNT Chairman Hunt indicated that the official voting quorum should be established. The governing body primary members here this evening are myself, Austin Hunt and William Schenck. The two voting members representing Spring Garden Township are Zane and Jon, and Todd is the voting member for this evening and Tom Englerth. That is the voting quorum for this evening.

MR. HUNT MOVED TO ACCEPT THE RULES AND REGULATIONS AS PRESENTED FOR THE MEETING. MR. COUNTESS WAS SECOND. MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED.

HUNT Chairman Hunt indicated each member had received a huge stack of paper and that which had just been accepted would be a very basic framework for moving forward. He added that there was nothing in there that would be too controversial. He encouraged everyone to become familiar with its contents.

SCHENCK Mr. Schenck stated that what was just accepted was the meeting schedule, for which a date will be set later in the agenda. He indicated that there had been previous discussion concerning alternating the places of meeting.

HOLMAN Mr. Holman indicated that would be determined when the dates for the regular monthly meeting are decided upon. It would be at the Board's direction.

F. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:

HUNT Chairman Hunt indicated that public comment would be encouraged. He asked whether anyone would like to address the Board.

MELLON Mr. Rich Mellon, President of the Springgettsbury Township's Local Firefighter Union, thanked the public members of the committee for making themselves available to tackle this really current issue. They are hoping it will be successful in coming up with something that will benefit, not only the townships, but also the residents of the townships. They feel the subject really needed to be addressed.

HUNT Chairman Hunt wholeheartedly agreed and emphasized that public contribution to this is important.

PROWELL Mr. Keith Prowell, Spring Garden Township Fire Department, stated that their group is very excited about this and is looking forward to it happening. He offered the group's help in any way they can.

G. SET DATES FOR REGULAR MONTHLY COMMITTEE MEETINGS:

HUNT Chairman Hunt stated that, as far as some of the background conversation, personally he would prefer to go to the same location continually. He suggested to meet at Springgettsbury Township. It had also been proposed that the meetings would be scheduled for the third Tuesday of each month. He asked for any thoughts for or against that concept.

COUNTESS Mr. Countess indicated both were satisfactory for him, but he asked whether they are satisfactory for the two people who are missing and whether the third Tuesday was a problem for them.

HOLMAN Mr. Holman responded that as far as he knew it was not a problem for any of them. He had contacted Mrs. Freirich who had a school conflict for this specific date.

ENGLERTH Mr. Englerth indicated that dates and times were fine for him. He thought they should be sure to make the public aware that with one Springgettsbury location, the people from Spring Garden were not being shut out.

HUNT Chairman Hunt responded that it was a great comment and it had been considered. However, he still thought that moving the location would cause as much complication as it might solve. He entertained a motion to set the location at Springgettsbury Township's Board Room on the third Tuesday of each month.

MR. COUNTESS MOVED THAT MEETINGS OF THE JOINT FIRE SERVICES STUDY WILL BE HELD AT THE SPRINGETTSBURY TOWNSHIP BOARD ROOM FACILITIES ON THE

THIRD TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH. MR. SCHENCK WAS SECOND. MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED.

H. REPORTS FROM OFFICIALS, STAFF AND TOWNSHIP COMMITTEES:

MAUST Mr. Maust, Spring Garden Township Manager, reported that there are two individuals who will be involved in upcoming meetings and who have been involved in helping get this effort started. They are Dean Furnsler, DCED, and Robert Hedden, Peer Consultant. Some members of this Committee may know Mr. Fernsler from his involvement with the Department of Community and Economic Development at the state level. The request to DCED for help and support brought Mr. Fernsler's expertise. Through his efforts a second individual, Bob Hedden, was brought in as the Peer Consultant who will be working in parallel doing a technical analysis. He has met with Messrs. Holman and Maust and staff to get some introductory information and spent some time with both of fire services looking at resources. He has taken that information and is initiating his efforts to start analyzing it. Both of these gentlemen will come before the full committee, although not on a monthly basis. It will be good to know what their role is and how beneficial they have been toward getting the process started. They will continue to be involved moving through the entire process.

HUNT Chairman Hunt indicated they both had stressed that they are eager to contribute. It's a physically long drive for them but if there is a reason for them to contribute meaningfully to the discussion, they will be glad to attend. If we know ahead of time that there's an issue where they could have a direct bearing on it, they will be asked to come and will be more than happy to do that.

I. CORRESPONDENCE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS:

There were no communications for discussions.

J. OLD BUSINESS:

There was no Old Business.

K. NEW BUSINESS:

HOLMAN Mr. Holman asked whether there was anything the committee would like to see on the next meeting Agenda.

HUNT Chairman Hunt responded that this was a monumental task, which seemed intimidating as to how to begin. As he approached this challenge, he was unsure as a layman if he had a real good understanding of the current structure of the volunteer and career fire aspects. He wondered whether they should begin to get

the panel up to speed on the current status. He was open to staff comments as to what the most efficient way would be, which may be to have the staff or an organization representative provide a five-minute overview of their individual organizations. He noted that there was background information in the book.

HOLMAN Mr. Holman responded that there are experts within the audience. He had requested Mr. Stern and Mr. Emig to prepare a short power point presentation for the next meeting on the structure of the Springettsbury Fire Department, where they are located, and an explanation of the different departments. In addition, copies will be provided of the current labor relations contracts. They will be providing a more descriptive diagram of the work force and the management administration of each of the departments. It would be good to get input from each of our Bargaining Unit representatives and how they see the departments right now. That could be scheduled for the next meeting.

SCHENCK Mr. Schenck asked about the volunteer companies and whether the expectation would be that they would be represented or that they would be involved.

HOLMAN Mr. Holman had not had an opportunity to contact Mr. Astor, however, he will request that he attend the next meeting.

HUNT Chairman Hunt added that he would encourage a five-minute presentation from each of the companies. It should be a concise presentation, just to bring the Committee up to speed on who they are and what they are about.

HOLMAN Mr. Holman responded that would be scheduled for the next meeting.

SCHENCK Mr. Schenck asked whether that would include the Emergency Medical or not.

HOLMAN Mr. Holman responded that the Emergency Medical Services would not be included at this time.

SCHENCK Mr. Schenck noted that there was some inter-twining, but for the purposes of this committee, the focus will be primarily on the fire services.

HUNT Chairman Hunt indicated that there is logic to that. Currently there is a career component of Springettsbury that has EMS Ambulance Service. In Spring Garden there are no Township employees running EMS services. His goal for this committee was to move forward with a foundation and not tackle everything all at once. The delivery of fire services between Spring Garden and Springettsbury is very parallel and is more easily combined than some of the other rings outward. He continued that it was not his intention to elbow them out of the discussion, but he would like to not include them in the first round of discussion.

- SCHENCK** Mr. Schenck agreed with Chairman Hunt's statement. It will become very complicated as the rings go out. Just on the fire service there are three volunteer companies and two different paid professional units involved.
- HOLMAN** Mr. Holman added that there are two different classes of townships.
- SCHENCK** Mr. Schenck noted that first class does not necessarily mean better, just that there are many underlying factors. If the rest of the committee is fine with that, that was some of the background.
- HUNT** Chairman Hunt commented that was fine with Spring Garden. He added that with that statement, it should also be noted that there would be a goal to pick a time period of perhaps two years, five years, ten years, and if the Committee does its job well with the fire service delivery, it will be a good foundation to add additional services to and additional municipalities moving outwards. His goal is to develop a good foundation that can be scalable outward in a lot of directions. He asked whether there would be anything else to add to the next Agenda. He noted that he and Mr. Schenck had been working on this for several years so they have an advantage of a lot more background.
- COUNTESS** Mr. Countess indicated he was curious about the ownership of the facilities and equipment.
- HOLMAN** Mr. Holman responded that Mr. Hedden will provide a full detailed report on every facility. That's his job to do a technical breakout of everything literally down to the fittings for the hoses for each of the departments up through the buildings for the volunteers, who owns them, how they're insured. He had already started that process about three or four months ago. That information is being compiled for the Board, which is part of the state's commitment to work on this Joint Fire Services.
- SCHENCK** Mr. Schenck indicated it would be helpful to just give a real brief summary of the information without getting into all the details.
- HOLMAN** Mr. Holman stated that a brief description will be included in the presentations.
- HUNT** Chairman Hunt noted that the information should include staffing, size, and a rough approximation of call volume. He asked whether the public members could be given a brief overview of other things going on in parallel.
- HOLMAN** Mr. Fernsler had been working with the townships and he will be brought in as the process moves forward.
- HUNT** Chairman Hunt noted he understood that his role was to facilitate Mr. Hedden's report.

- HOLMAN** Mr. Holman added that he was to help this Board, which is one of his roles. He would like to have them both come to the next meeting in order to provide an overview of what they are doing. The Board would gain a greater understanding of how the state is participating in this process and how each will come together to provide solid information and direction.
- HUNT** Chairman Hunt noted that Mr. Fernsler is the point of contact in going forward to the extent that they desire to expand this initial scope including his providing initial technical support. He is a key player who will be available and who is an initial sounding board relative to anything that DCED could do as the process moves forward.
- MADER** Mr. Mader asked whether the process had by declaration or some other definition of the two Boards been locked to Springettsbury and Spring Garden Township.
- HUNT** Chairman Hunt responded that the Boards had taken formal action to show their support of the idea, which had enabled this committee to develop a model proposal for the Board's review. At this point the Boards are not locked in to anything but are eager to look at something. One of the things he found most exciting was that merging two career fire departments had not been done any place else in Pennsylvania. It could either fail in a big way or succeed in a big way. He hoped that answered Mr. Mader's question.
- MADER** Mr. Mader responded that it had. He wondered what would happen if York Township or Hellam Township came knocking at the door.
- HUNT** Chairman Hunt indicated that he thought those knocks would come in the future. He reiterated his comment to not try to do it all in the first step. If the knock came at this point he would have to request that they come back at a later time. It is a very complicated matter with two townships, five organizations and other interested parties. The model should be scaleable but not until there is a good foundation.
- SCHENCK** Mr. Schenck added that every municipality that touches these borders are well aware of this discussion and process. If they would have early comments, they would be welcomed. He agreed with Chairman Hunt's comments due to the complications. Once the structure is built then others can be added.
- ENGLERTH** Mr. Englerth was glad to know that other municipalities are aware that the process was being explored.
- HUNT** Chairman Hunt stated they are absolutely aware and are very interested in seeing it happen. Their comments should be encouraged as a member of the public. He

personally will discourage participation on this side of the table until a good foundation is in place.

HUNT Chairman Hunt asked Mr. Holman and Mr. Maust how they visualized disseminating materials and whether packets would be transmitted electronically.

HOLMAN Mr. Holman responded that the information would be electronically transmitted in advance.

HUNT Chairman Hunt asked what he meant by in advance.

HOLMAN Mr. Holman responded that his goal would be to get the information at the latest on the Friday before, or if possible sooner, in order to review it over the weekend. He added comments concerning bringing on an Intern for a focus on the administrative work and preparation of the Agendas.

COUNTESS Mr. Countess commented that occasionally he has difficulty opening some attachments in special programs that his computer would not recognize. He asked what software would be used for the electronic transmittals.

HOLMAN Mr. Holman responded that the attachments will either be in Word or Excel. There may be PDF files, and that would depend on what the state transmits. He suggested that Mr. Countess contact him if he had any problems with attachments.

MAUST Mr. Maust added that the key would be whatever problem surfaced to please let either Mr. Holman or himself know, as they are in regular communication.

HUNT Chairman Hunt indicated that the meetings are scheduled to begin at six and end at eight o'clock by the rules unless there is a vote taken to extend it in one hour increments. He added that this is very complicated but he will try to move it forward expeditiously.

SCHENCK Mr. Schenck commented that he is the Township-designated representative to the Volunteer Fire Company. They meet once a month. He pledged to them that he would communicate everything that is going on with this committee. Minutes of this meeting will be provided and he wanted to make sure that they are distributed and posted to the volunteer companies. He wanted to be sure that all the communications are provided.

HOLMAN Mr. Holman added that, once the minutes are approved, they will be posted on the website for anyone who wanted to read them. The Agenda will be posted on the website as well on the Friday prior to the meeting. Notices will be posted on the buildings as well. The whole idea is to have an open process.

I. COMMITTEE RESOLUTIONS:

There were no Committee Resolutions for discussion.

J. ADJOURNMENT:

**MR. SCHENCK MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. MR. COUNTESS WAS SECOND.
MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED.**

HUNT Chairman Hunt adjourned the meeting at 7:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John Holman
Secretary

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