

**SPRINGETTSBURY/SPRING GARDEN TOWNSHIPS
JOINT FIRE SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**APRIL 24, 2006
APPROVED**

Springettsbury and Spring Garden Townships Joint Fire Services Committee convened on Monday, April 24, 2006, at 6:00 p.m. at the Springettsbury Township Offices located at 1501 Mt. Zion Road, York, PA.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Austin Hunt, Spring Garden Township
Bill Schenck, Springettsbury Township
Ellen Freireich, Springettsbury Township
Jon Countess, Spring Garden Township
Holly Gumke, Spring Garden Township
John Fullmer, Jr., Spring Garden Township
John Holman, Springettsbury Township
Gregory Maust, Spring Garden Township
Andrew Stern, Springettsbury Township

**MEMBERS NOT
IN ATTENDANCE:** Don Bishop, Springettsbury Township
Todd Langheine, Spring Garden Township
William Mader, Spring Garden Township
Barry Emig, Spring Garden Township

**ALSO IN
ATTENDANCE:** Members of Springettsbury and Spring Garden Fire Co.
George Mount, Springettsbury Township
Dave Eckman, Springettsbury Township Fire Company
Zane Sjoberg, Spring Garden Township
Keith Prowell, Spring Garden Township FD
Scott Curtis, Spring Garden/Grantley FC
D. Robert Brady II, Grantley Fire Company
Mike Bashein, (Retired) Springettsbury Township FC
Rich Mellon, Springettsbury Township FC
Don Eckert, Springettsbury Township Volunteer FC
Bob Astor, Springettsbury Township Volunteer FC
Tony Surtasky, Springettsbury Township Volunteer FC
Amanda Amspacher, Springettsbury Township
Jean Abreght, Stenographer

A. Call to Order

HUNT Chairman Austin Hunt called the meeting to order at 6 p.m.

B. Pledge of Allegiance

HUNT Chairman Hunt led the Pledge of Allegiance.

C. Determination of Voting Quorum

HOLMAN Mr. Holman certified that a Quorum was present with the following members: Jon Countess, Ellen Freireich, Holly Gumke, Austin Hunt, Bill Schenck; also John Fullmer, Jr.

D. Approval of Meeting Minutes: March 21, 2006

HUNT Chairman Hunt indicated that Joe Barron of Victory Fire Company had spoken during the March 21st meeting; however, his name was not listed as an attendee and it should be added.

MS. FREIREICH MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES AS CORRECTED. MR. COUNTESS WAS SECOND. MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED.

E. Public Participation: Comments from the Public

There were no public comments.

F. Correspondence and Other Communications

SCHENCK Mr. Schenck introduced Don Eckert, who had been spearheading the volunteer group meeting with the Springettsbury Volunteer Fire Company. They had been creating information about what they provide.

ECKERT Mr. Don Eckert provided some paperwork to the Committee, which included one-line definitions of the committee, which had functioned under Mr. Schenck's direction, along with the subcommittee associated with the volunteer portion in consideration for the merger. The list included items that the Springettsbury Township Volunteer Fire Company is involved in and responsible for, along with the contributions they make toward the overall fire service within Springettsbury Township. Mr. Eckert indicated that, following this endeavor with the Springettsbury volunteers, it would be desirable to do the same with Spring Garden's volunteers.

SCHENCK Mr. Schenck asked whether Mr. Eckert could envision the volunteers functioning the same way or differently if the merger were to take place.

ECKERT Mr. Eckert responded that they had viewed it as though they were not part of a merger but remain as they are currently in relationship to the career department. He noted one thing that would change related to costs and replacement of equipment, as there might not be any ability or advantage from a volunteer group to participate in the purchase or replacement of apparatus. Projection of ownership of equipment likely would change.

HUNT Chairman Hunt asked what piece of equipment was replaced when the volunteers co-purchased the ladder truck.

- ECKERT** Mr. Eckert responded that it had been the snorkel.
- HUNT** Chairman Hunt asked whether the snorkel was completely owned by volunteers.
- ECKERT** Mr. Eckert responded that he could not answer the question because he had not been involved.
- ASTOR** Mr. Bob Astor responded that the snorkel was the previous aerial vehicle that the Springettsbury Township Volunteer Fire Company owned. It was replaced by Truck 16, the current aerial America LaFrance. And that was a joint purchase between the Springettsbury Township Volunteer Fire Company, Springettsbury Township Relief Association, and the Township.
- SCHENCK** Mr. Schenck noted that one thing the exercise revealed was documentation of a lot of activity going on through the volunteers, which may be a duplication of effort and may need to be separated.
- ECKERT** Mr. Eckert commented that as a volunteer organization they manage and maintain the day-to-day operations of the facilities and coordinate and pay for truck repairs that make it possible to provide the fire service to the residents of Springettsbury.
- HUNT** Chairman Hunt asked Mr. Eckert if he could see any major obstacles or advantages to maintaining three individual volunteer areas within the region.
- ECKERT** Mr. Eckert responded that he did not see anything major. One item that would need attention would be the yearly budget operation because the ability for volunteers to do fundraising as in years past had become impossible.
- HUNT** Chairman Hunt asked whether he could see any disadvantage to creating a merged volunteer department.
- ECKERT** Mr. Eckert responded that it would be workable; however, there are a lot of issues to work through, such as the fire police, which is a very important volunteer area that is their responsibility in Springettsbury Township. As it grows into a larger area, there will be a need for a known chain of command.
- HUNT** Chairman Hunt noted that there had been a long history of Spring Garden and Springettsbury career firefighters participating together. He asked whether there was a similar history with the volunteers, i.e., a cross-volunteer activity.
- ECKERT** Mr. Eckert responded that over the years the number of qualified volunteers dwindled with the need for the kind of training and the hours invested to get that training. However, there are limited qualified volunteers who do participate with the career professionals.

- HUNT** Chairman Hunt asked whether there was a lot of cross over with Victory and Grantley.
- ECKERT** Mr. Eckert responded that there is not much as a volunteer fire company, but more with fire police. They had worked together in the fire police area for years.
- ASTOR** Mr. Astor noted that there had been occasions where Springettsbury had responded in Spring Garden Township as first due in boxes set up with 911, as well as their responding first due into Springettsbury Township. He indicated that they see more interaction between volunteer companies in that respect than previously.
- HUNT** Chairman Hunt asked representatives from Grantley or Victory what they thought was the next best step to opening up a formal dialog with Spring Garden volunteers.
- CURTIS** Mr. Scott Curtis, Spring Garden/Grantley indicated that they were waiting to see what Springettsbury would put together. Once that was done, they would get together with them and compare notes.
- ECKERT** Mr. Eckert responded that they are willing to do that.
- CURTIS** Mr. Curtis added that he thought it was the only logical choice.
- HUNT** Chairman Hunt thought that was great and suggested that when they get together they should review the pros and cons of a larger umbrella association versus keeping individual associations. He noted that the biggest disadvantage he saw would be a potential loss of identity in the fire police which must be weighed carefully. One idea that had not been reviewed would be having different districts within a regional administrative structure. He added that the information will be very helpful to additional consultant work to be done. Chairman Hunt thanked Don Eckert and his committee for the work they had completed.
- HOLMAN** Mr. Holman stated that the Capitalization and Inventory Subcommittee Report, the inventories for Springettsbury Township Volunteer Fire Company and Spring Garden Township Fire Companies, had been received as of April 19, 2006. He will be sending them out in electronic format, and they will be reviewed by the Chiefs. He assumed Mr. Mader would be getting them together.
- HUNT** Chairman Hunt indicated that Bill Mader had done a great job and he wanted to thank him personally.

G. Staff Reports

1. Grant Application Status

DCED Grant

MAUST Mr. Maust reported that there are several different grant activities; however, an update was received March 30th regarding the grant application submitted earlier to Senator Waugh's office. In approximately six weeks there will be a response from DCED which will be in mid-May approximately. The grant request was for \$83,000 to provide various forms of professional services, legal, and actuarial reviews as part of the ongoing study effort. He expected more information prior to the May meeting.

HUNT Chairman Hunt asked whether any costs had been incurred that would be covered by the grant.

MAUST Mr. Maust responded that there had been very few except very minor expenses for legal costs.

Inter-governmental Grant

MAUST Mr. Maust noted that there had been a submission made to the County of York for Inter-governmental Cooperation Grant consideration on April 13th for approximately \$19,500.

HUNT Chairman Hunt requested Ms. Amspacher to provide sub-bullet points for each grant item on future agendas.

2. Update from Staff – Economic Review-Inventory

HUNT Chairman Hunt asked for a report on the Economic Review activity.

STERN Mr. Stern responded that there was nothing new to report.

HUNT Chairman Hunt asked whether the report had been prepared and was ready to forward to the consultant.

STERN Mr. Stern responded that it will be forwarded.

H. Old Business

HUNT Chairman Hunt reported that they had hoped to hear from Dean Fernsler, DCED, this evening. Unfortunately, he had another appointment and was unable to attend. In addition, at the eleventh hour, Chief Heddon added some additional material that couldn't be compiled quickly enough to be distributed, so unfortunately, the Chief Heddon report is not available for distribution.

HOLMAN Mr. Holman stated that Mr. Fernsler does plan to have it available in May.

2. Status of Draft Charter Agreement

HUNT Chairman Hunt stated that there had been no substantive changes to the status of the draft charter agreement. There had been only some minor typographical errors.

I. New Business

1. Grant Application under DCED Municipal Service Program for Economic Review of Joint Fire Service

HUNT Chairman Hunt asked Mr. Holman to provide the latest information on the new proposal for DCED.

HOLMAN Mr. Holman stated that the one thing the Heddon study indicated was a recommendation for joint services and for an additional study to be done. Mr. Fernsler agreed and recommended that another grant application be submitted for a DCED grant to hire a consultant to do a full, detailed study including economics on the proposed joint fire study. He had provided to the board, and to members of the volunteer companies present and the paid members, a copy of the application under the Pennsylvania Department of Economic Development. The grant was applied for in the amount of \$29,925, and there would have been a 50% matching share split between the townships. In addition to that, there is the shared municipal services program grant narrative. They had called Mr. Fernsler and asked him if the state would be able to increase their share on this as this would be a burden on the communities in mid-year. The amount awarded as opposed to \$29,925 was a total of \$45,000, or 75% of the consultant's cost. Therefore, the match instead of being \$14,850 for each of the municipalities would be under the award \$7,425, which was significantly less than anticipated. Mr. Holman had provided to the board a copy of Carroll Buracker's proposal, which was submitted with the grant. This proposal matched what was put into the application. References on his company had been provided as well. The firm is well known and had done a number of joint fire including paid and volunteer fire departments and combined departments. Mr. Holman had provided his and Mr. Maust's name for contacts. They will be present at the next meeting. Mr. Holman noted that, should the contract be awarded, it would not include an implementation portion, which would be an additional cost. Mr. Holman indicated that the total time frame from the date the contract is signed to completion is four months.

HUNT Chairman Hunt indicated that both Chiefs and both Managers had seen presentations from the consultants. The Buracker consultant had appealed to the Chiefs on a technical level and appealed to the joint managers on an accounting level, and appealed to DCED on a professional level.

HOLMAN Mr. Holman noted that DCED felt the Committee had done its homework. He indicated that it was rare to see a grant turned around in three to four weeks.

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- HUNT** Chairman Hunt stated that the committee needed to endorse the study and request a resolution from each of the municipal boards.
- HOLMAN** Mr. Holman requested that the committee endorse the acceptance of the grant and that each of the governing bodies provide the matching share.
- MAUST** Mr. Maust stated that an overview would be provided during the next Commissioner's meeting in Spring Garden Township on May 10th. They would request formal action on their share at that time.
- HOLMAN** Mr. Holman noted that Springettsbury's meeting will be held on May 11th and also on May 20th. However, they will meet also on April 27th and he indicated he would discuss it with the Chairman to see if they could act on the resolution.
- MAUST** Mr. Maust stated that it would be possible to issue a Notice to Proceed by the 11th with body elected body's support.
- HUNT** Chairman Hunt noted that money had been budgeted in both municipalities.
- SCHENCK** Mr. Schenck asked how much money had been spent of Springettsbury's budget.
- HOLMAN** Mr. Holman responded that \$15,000 had been budgeted between both the Administrative line item and the Board of Supervisors line item for the project in 2006. Very little had been spent to date, and everything is split 50/50.
- HUNT** Chairman Hunt summarized the information regarding the consultant and strongly encouraged the committee to endorse the plan. He asked Commissioners Fullmer and Gumke and Supervisor Schenck for any further recommendations.
- GUMKE** Ms. Gumke commented that, just on the proposal alone and based on the importance of this effort, the firm had never done any combination career and volunteer consolidation in Pennsylvania.
- HUNT** Chairman Hunt noted that they are aware of the situations in Pennsylvania; however, they simply have not had an opportunity to do this type of study. He stated that it was important to stay on schedule and to provide any information that is requested. Both Chiefs are providing documentation for Mr. Heddon and that document will be included in the report. It will be a prima facia review, and the paid and volunteer men all will be involved.

MR. COUNTESS MOVED THAT THE COMMITTEE RECOMMEND TO THE GOVERNING BODIES OF BOTH TOWNSHIPS THAT A RESOLUTION BE ADOPTED ALLOCATING OR APPROPRIATING THE MATCHING SHARE TO FUND THE PROPOSAL AND THAT THE PROPOSAL OF CARROLL BURACKER AND ASSOCIATIONS BE ACCEPTED. MS. GUMKE WAS SECOND. MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED.

- HUNT** Chairman Hunt commented that he had been very frustrated by the lack of progress. This is a huge jump forward not only in sophistication, but also in acceleration of the timeline. We could conceivably have a huge portion of our questions answered by the end of September. He reiterated Mr. Holman's comment that it would not cover implementation.
- HOLMAN** Mr. Holman responded that it will enable the committee to make a recommendation to the Boards with a full and detailed plan.
- SCHENCK** Mr. Schenck asked whether there was anything in the document that is considered confidential.
- HOLMAN** Mr. Holman responded that there is not; it is a public document. He wanted the committee members to have it first.
- SCHENCK** Mr. Schenck stated that he knew Mr. Eckert's committee was interested in making sure that this committee covers all the bases.
- HOLMAN** Mr. Holman responded that Mr. Eckert had been provided a copy, as well as each of the principals.
- HOLMAN** Mr. Holman reported that discussions had been held AND the board approved that management meet with the bargaining units to determine a framework of discussions. He had been anticipating receipt of a letter from the personnel attorney, which was received this date. He will review the letter with Mr. Maust and the bargaining unit representatives. Following that review the Springettsbury and Spring Garden firefighters and unions will sign off and sit down to develop a framework for discussions.
- HUNT** Chairman Hunt asked whether they would be able to move forward prior to the next committee meeting.
- HOLMAN** Mr. Holman responded that they would be able to do so.
- HUNT** Chairman Hunt asked if he would re-state the mission statement of that subcommittee.
- HOLMAN** Mr. Holman responded that the mission is to investigate the possibility of a combined labor agreement without binding anyone to the agreement and without reopening our contracts for discussion in a general scope different areas that we would have to review should a joint contract go together. There are a number of different issues that are labor related. I wanted to make sure both labor and management were protected.

J. Committee Resolutions

There were none for discussion

K. Adjournment

HUNT Chairman Hunt called for any additional items for discussion. He noted that the May meeting will be back on the normal schedule, the third Tuesday, May 16, 2006 at 6 p.m. He adjourned the meeting at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John Holman
Secretary

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