

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

**JULY 19, 2005
APPROVED**

Springettsbury Township and Spring Garden Township Joint Fire Services Committee convened at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, July 19, 2005 at the Springettsbury Township Office located at 1501 Mt. Zion Road, York, PA for the purpose of further joint fire services discussion.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Austin Hunt, Spring Garden Township
Zane Sjoberg, Spring Garden Township
Don Bishop, Springettsbury Township
Bill Schenck, Springettsbury Township
William Mader, Spring Garden Township
Ellen Freireich, Springettsbury Township
John Holman, Springettsbury Township
Gregory Maust, Spring Garden Township
Andrew Stern, Springettsbury Township
Barry Emig, Spring Garden Township

**MEMBERS NOT
IN ATTENDANCE:** Todd Langheine, Springettsbury Township
Thomas Englerth, Spring Garden Township
David Meckley, Spring Garden Township
Jon Countess, Spring Garden Township

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:
Members of Springettsbury and Spring Garden Fire Companies
Rich Mellon, Springettsbury Township FD
Keith Prowell, Springettsbury Township FD
Kristi Reese, Springettsbury Township
Jean Abreght, Stenographer

A. Call to Order:

HUNT Chairman 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 reported that a Quorum was established with the following voting members: Mr. Hunt, Mr. Schenck, Mr. Mader, Mr. Sjoberg and Mrs. Freireich.

D. Approval of Meeting Minutes: June 21, 2005

MS. FREIREICH MOVED TO APPROVE MINUTES OF THE JUNE 21, 2005 MEETING AS PRESENTED. MR. SCHENCK WAS SECOND. MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED.

E. Public Participation: Comments from the Public

**PROWELL
MELLON**

Mr. Keith Prowell and Mr. Rich Mellon of Springettsbury Township Fire Department presented two printed reports to the Board. They stated that the studies accurately portray the situation in the fire service and suggested that the Board become familiar with the recommendations. They indicated that report #148 dealt specifically with volunteer fire companies and most of the comments pertain to their situation. They thought that there was good information within that study. The second report, Senate Resolution 60, provided the findings of the State Fire Commissioner's office in terms of determining how to provide direct and indirect assistance to the fire services in Pennsylvania; especially since it provided the local flavor from Central Pennsylvania. Many local fire officials had provided input as well.

One item they especially requested was that the Committee work slowly in order to get it right. They suggested not to skim over the regional authority. Currently there is no legal basis or legislative basis for regional fire authority in Pennsylvania. That is one of the prime objectives of Resolution 60 which, if passed, would allow the forming of regional firefighters. They asked that the Committee give that careful consideration during the process.

Mr. Prowell asked when the appropriate time would be for them to speak during the meetings.

HUNT

Mr. Hunt responded that their speaking during this portion of the Agenda was completely acceptable. He suggested that in the future they would contact Ms. Reese or Mr. Holman before the meeting in order to include items on the Agenda. He added that the meeting is an informal information gathering with some form of a traditional meeting; however, they encourage any comments that are pertinent to the situation within reason.

F. Staff Reports:

1. Meeting with Dean Fernsler

MAUST

Mr. Maust reported that, following the last month's meeting, he and Mr. Holman determined that it would be beneficial to meet with Dean Fernsler, the DCED contact. Following the review with

Mr. Fernsler, he reported that everyone at DCED was excited about the progress to date. He commented that they were moving faster than expected. DCED is very supportive of what had been done toward joint efforts toward providing municipal services. They discussed additional support in terms of grants which may become available and were given direction to contact the local senators and representatives for funds through the Community Revitalization Programs. Mr. Maust stated that Mr. Fernsler and/or Mr. Bob Heddon may attend the August meeting in terms of obtaining an updated report on Mr. Heddon's parallel efforts with the technical aspects of the program.

HOLMAN Mr. Holman echoed Mr. Maust's comments. The project of combining paid firefighters had not been accomplished very often. Mr. Holman thought the meeting was very productive.

2. Update from Chief Emig and Interim Chief Stern

STERN Interim Chief Stern reported that following the last meeting the Township Managers challenged the Fire Chiefs to begin developing some ideas as to defining the identity of the organization being created. Each department met with the union representatives and some of the career firemen. They are working on suggested names and patches for what is being created. He was hopeful that it would be ready for a presentation in August.

HUNT Chairman Hunt asked how they viewed the process conceptually, and whether they would come prepared with a single recommendation or with a rank list.

STERN Chief Stern responded it would be the consensus of the group of career chiefs and firefighters to have a single recommendation with a request for guidance as to whether it would be acceptable or not.

HUNT Chairman Hunt noted that he was not sure whether the Committee would be the correct body to act on the recommendation, or whether it would take the recommendation and pass along to the parent municipalities. He suggested following through on that paradigm to come forward with their best recommendation. If the Committee approved, they will pass it along with endorsement for approval or acceptance by the parent municipality. He asked the Managers whether they agreed with that logic.

HOLMAN Mr. Holman responded that anything recommended from this Committee would be recommended to the Board of Supervisors or Board of Commissioners.

HUNT Chairman Hunt noted that the subtlety was that this Committee is not the Board to accept or reject.

HOLMAN Mr. Holman responded that the Committee is to make recommendations.

G. Guest Presentation

1. Glen Hostetter, Fire Marshall/Commissioner, Spring Township, Berks County

HUNT Chairman Hunt introduced Mr. Glen Hostetter, who had some experience in merging four volunteer departments. Springettsbury and Spring Garden are, at this point, focusing primarily on the career departments. The volunteers may come along when and if it makes sense. Mr. Hostetter's experience was in volunteer activities so the comparison is not exactly the same.

SCHENCK Mr. Schenck recognized that this was essentially mergers of volunteer companies. However, he indicated there would be valuable lessons and processes learned from their experience.

HUNT Chairman Hunt commented that one action was designed to convince people that the concept was a good idea; the other was more the detail of how it was accomplished.

HOSTETTER Mr. Hostetter provided a lengthy PowerPoint presentation, a copy of which detail is made part of this record. A synopsis of some of the information follows.

- Spring Township is 19-1/2 sq. miles; 25,000 people, rapidly growing
- Merger encompassed 3 Township and 1 Borough Volunteer Fire Department.
- Township began the process with inquiries concerning the fire service.
- One result was realization of duplication of equipment, etc.
- Reduction of Duplication of Equipment and Services
- Formed a Fire Service Committee including 6 business people with no connection fire services.
- Instruction to Committee: How to form a merged company and operate like a business.
- Fire service committee met monthly; formed subcommittees
- Decline of Volunteers, Economy, Time Involved for drills, meetings, fund raising.
- Rising Costs of fire service/equipment
- Demographics of community now and future.

- Established information databank of fire companies including fire calls, false alarms, etc.
- Established Mission Statement as first priority.
- Examination of funding receipts/expenditures.
- Developed a common Standard Operations Procedure resulting in cost reduction and increased net worth within the community.
- Developed a Central Administrative Structure to work toward same goals.
- Sharing of Training Programs resulting in consistent strengthening of training.
- Elimination of Jurisdictional Disputes.
- Enhancement, preservation and continuity of the volunteer fire service.
- Municipal Agreement was established with each fire company enabling township to take over bills and equipment. If merger failed, all would return back to municipality.
- Upon completion of study, Fire Services Committee made recommendations to the Board of Supervisors as to how to accomplish the mission.
- New Stations more strategically located.
- Fund Raising Activities eliminated; funded by Township on a half mill fire tax.
- Central Budgeting and Finance/ Finance Committee Established
- Better Use of Manpower & Talents including Sharing of Manpower.
- Longevity Programs – Retirement programs for volunteers.
- Developed an Incentive Program for Volunteers
- Establishment of a Fire Commission to Oversee Administrative Functions

HUNT

Chairman Hunt asked what he would include in Administrative Functions.

HOSTETTER

Mr. Hostetter responded that some of the functions would include preparation of the budget, participation in the selection of officers, etc. The organization has become more efficient and effective than the separate organizations.

Mr. Hostetter returned to his PowerPoint presentation:

- Issue of Patches – One of the more difficult to determine what the organization will be called. This took 6 attempts.

- SOG's include 6 categories: Administrative, Standards & Training, Response to Alarms, Safety, Maintenance, Appendix & Forms.
- Legislation Committee provides information on available grants and loans.
- Legal Structure – How to structure the new company; what can and can't be done legally.
- Dissolve Existing Companies – Some will stay as paper companies. Some cannot be dissolved.
- Establishment of Joint Relief Association

HOSTETTER

Mr. Hostetter continued that the process takes time and commitment. Each person needed to be open with opinions, but all must continue to work within the Mission Statement. He noted that one of the biggest recommendations came from the Demographics Committee, which suggested a station be placed in the northern portion of the Township. Since then a station had been opened within the central location with plans for a future station in the northern section.

SCHENCK

Mr. Schenck asked what kind of comment had come from the public and membership when recommendations were made for a new station.

HOSTETTER

Mr. Hostetter responded that the public comment was amazing in that they agreed because it would take the sirens away from their back door.

HUNT

Chairman Hunt asked about the company's response.

HOSTETTER

Mr. Hostetter responded that they had their full support. It continued through the merger with the painting of all the fire trucks the same color for continuity, which helped with the acceptance. He provided testimony of the response following the move to the new station. Everyone had gone home that day and were only home an hour when they had a working fire. In addition, there were two working rescues within three hours after that. They averaged 76 people out to the calls. It was a big success. They continue to average 20 to 25 individuals coming to calls.

SCHENCK

Mr. Schenck asked what the initial push or pull was that caused all this to happen. Did the Township push the organization to do this, or did the fire organization suggest that this be done.

HOSTETTER

Mr. Hostetter responded that the Township wanted the study started. In the beginning they did not have 100% cooperation.

SCHENCK Mr. Schenck wondered whether the Committee would be charged with things such as developing or writing the SOG's, etc.

HUNT Chairman Hunt indicated that his understanding was that Chief Emig and Chief Stern are working together on that.

HOLMAN Mr. Holman indicated that the Mission Statement does include the development of proposed SOG's.

SCHENCK Mr. Schenck noted that they had done a great job of forming the subcommittees. If this Committee is charged with developing them, he would hope to have the help of staff to clearly define all the subcommittees.

HUNT Chairman Hunt stated that at some point in the near future, a list of subcommittees should be established with one or two Board members included to fill in details and force problems to the surface.

MAUST Mr. Maust agreed that the subcommittee assignments was a good idea and that they should begin thinking about getting them formed.

SCHENCK Mr. Schenck added that there was a need to preserve the volunteer organization. Mr. Hostetter's presentation was heavily weighted on the volunteer side, but this local volunteer side needs to be preserved as well.

FREIREICH Mrs. Freireich stated that before the development of some of the items, there should be a better understanding of what the basic structure will be. The mechanism would be good to move it forward, however. Because there is no organization at this point, how could anyone begin putting together Standard Operating Guidelines. The organization must be established with the Mission Statement first with the name of the entity. Following that can be discussion about strategic and tactical kinds of things.

HOLMAN Mr. Holman stated that the subcommittees should be made up of a member of two of this Committee and other volunteers. He did not see the two Managers writing SOP's, but he could see the two Chiefs doing so. Preservation and enhancement of the Volunteer Fire Service is a project that Mr. Schenck had been working on for some time. For a subcommittee to begin working on that, even if the organization is not formed, would not be a waste of time.

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- FREIREICH** Mrs. Freireich indicated she thought that they could work more simultaneously.
- HOLMAN** Mr. Holman stated that he did not believe there was a need for the Committee to form a subcommittee in the sense of developing the overall management structure. That is what the Committee is doing currently.
- HOSTETTER** Mr. Hostetter interjected that he thought the focus should be with a demographics committee to review where the calls come from, how many calls and the manpower situation.
- SCHENCK** Mr. Schenck stated he thought that report was being prepared.
- HOSTETTER** Mr. Hostetter added that it must be the starting point. It will reveal what the structure will look like because the SOG's will build off of the proposed structure. SOG's will bring out the Command Unit.
- HOLMAN** Mr. Holman indicated that they are hoping to have that report during the August meeting.
- MAUST** Mr. Maust added that a lot of the report had been completed. Mr. Fernsler stated that Mr. Hedden was far enough along that he might have a draft report by August.
- HUNT** Chairman Hunt noted that his understanding was that the report from Mr. Hedden report was a base-line inventory of current assets and activities.
- MAUST** Mr. Maust responded that it was a big part of it. His expectation was that he also would have included some guidance as to things they need to review. Perhaps even his thoughts on locations for stations, etc. That was his initial read on what he would be putting together.
- HUNT** Chairman Hunt asked for confirmation of that.
- MELLON** Mr. Mellon indicated that the Scope of Services the Chief submitted to Bob Hedden is what he is going by, and that included demographics.
- HUNT** Chairman Hunt asked whether that would include any projections going forward.

- HOLMAN** Mr. Holman noted that it was frustrating waiting for the reports to come in.
- MAUST** Mr. Maust commented that he has a lot of things to review.
- SCHENCK** Mr. Schenck stated that it was the nuts and bolts of this whole operation. He indicated that the Committee needed to establish the structure and operation and what the Committee will do in the future.
- HOLMAN** Mr. Holman commented that there are a number of paid men. This would be the first time the full time firefighters have dealt with it at all. The state is committed to doing that demographic.
- HOSTETTER** Mr. Hostetter stated that he would not want to have the Chiefs working on SOG's and have them come back and discover that the structure would be different. It is a long and painstaking process, and if it were changed mid-point, it would blow the wind out of their sails.
- HUNT** Chairman Hunt concluded that hopefully Mr. Hedden will have an update, if not a detailed report, for the August meeting.
- MAUST** Mr. Maust indicated that at least a progress report had been requested, unless he is further along.
- HUNT** Chairman Hunt requested that if any type of preliminary draft was received, it could be emailed to the Committee prior to the meeting.
- HOLMAN** Mr. Holman noted that anything that is received from Mr. Hedden will have to go through Mr. Fernsler. He will contact him to get that accomplished.

H. Correspondence and Other Communications:

- 1. Press Release from June 21 Meeting**
- 2. Article from Representative Gillespie**

HUNT Chairman Hunt acknowledged receipt in the packets of the Press Release from the June 21st meeting, as well as the Article from Representative Gillespie.

I. Old Business:

- 1. Grant Application Status: Shared Municipal Services Program**

- HUNT** Chairman Hunt stated that the board had received copies of the Resolution. He asked for a review of the status.
- HOLMAN** Mr. Holman reported that they met with Dean Fernsler with regard to the Shared Municipal Services Program. The Resolution was completed by the board at a previous meeting. The Resolution was done by Spring Garden Township and will be placed on the Springettsbury Township Agenda on July 28th. Mr. Fernsler looked forward to receiving this application but this will be actually the third grant request that this committee had submitted. The initial one started the funding by Mr. Hedden and Mr. Fernsler to begin the process. The second one will be discussed under New Business; third one will be when the new board is ready to go and an organization, provided it is recommended to move forward for the Shared Municipal Services Program. This program will pay to help get that organization up and running including anything from painting trucks to developing SOG's. Spring Garden agreed to be the lead agency on this grant because Springettsbury Township already had submitted an application. The grant is about half written already, and they will work jointly on it.
- MAUST** Mr. Maust added that one thing Mr. Fernsler explained was with the Shared Municipal Services Program essentially it's pretty wide open, no exceptions. Monies cannot go directly to buildings or equipment, pretty much anything else is open for consideration.
- HOLMAN** Mr. Holman noted that they look favorably on something that had already been approved to go forward. He recommended an application be submitted for a legislative grant, which is the Emergency Responders Resource and Training Program through DCED. They plan to meet with the legislators to ask them to fund where to go with this Committee to develop what is in this COG to pay for the legal services and documents that are needed, some actuarial services and other documents. To apply for that through our legislators, Mr. Maust is arranging for a meeting with Senator Waugh, who was one of the first legislators to work on this project.
- MAUST** Mr. Maust indicated that early in the process when they first submitted the request for support with DCED they met with Senator Waugh. He was very supportive of this concept, so again, they had reached a point in time where it would be very beneficial to give all of the legislators an update on where the process stands in order to get support moving forward.

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- HOLMAN** Mr. Holman noted that after meeting with Senator Waugh they will meet with the full legislative delegation.
- SCHENCK** Mr. Schenck asked whether the grant would be quicker and easier than the Shared Municipal Services Program.
- MAUST** Mr. Maust responded that there are two benefits. It is not a matching program. There is more flexibility and it fills the gap with where the process stands and where it needs to go.
- SCHENCK** Mr. Schenck commented that it will help form the organization. Once the organization is formed more solidly the potential is there for the Shared Municipal Services.
- MAUST** Mr. Maust responded that it would be twisting the programs to work for the best benefit going forward.
- HOLMAN** Mr. Holman added that again Spring Garden agreed to be the lead agency on that application. As a Shared group this will be looked on much more favorably than any other application put in individually.
- SCHENCK** Mr. Schenck thought that might be worth telling the legislators in a semi-informal gathering.
- HOLMAN** Mr. Holman responded that it would be worth doing that. As a courtesy they will meet with Senator Waugh's office because the process began with him. Mr. Fernsler recommended to meet with Senator Waugh first and coordinate that meeting through Senator Waugh's office with all the local legislators. He may advise us to meet with Representative Gillespie and put it together. The local legislators do meet on a monthly basis here in the county.
- SCHENCK** Mr. Schenck thought it might be appropriate to get on their Agenda when they meet as a group.
- HOLMAN** Mr. Holman noted that one of the rules during that meeting is that no money could be requested.
- SCHENCK** Mr. Schenck suggested to just update them of the process.
- FREIREICH** Mrs. Freireich noted that this would only include the grant part; no money is being requested.
- MAUST** Mr. Maust reiterated that they should begin with Senator Waugh and get direction and guidance as to what would be best, knowing

that at some point the information needed to be spread to the representatives.

HOLMAN Mr. Holman indicated that they will notify the Board members when the meeting is set up. Mr. Holman asked for a recommendation to apply for Emergency Responders Resources and Training Program through DCED and the letter can be signed by the Chairman.

MR. SCHENCK MOVED TO APPLY FOR THE EMERGENCY RESPONDER RESOURCES POTENTIAL GRANT. MRS. FREIREICH WAS SECOND. MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED.

J. New Business:

HUNT Chairman Hunt indicated that Ms. Reese had developed a PowerPoint presentation, paper copy of which was distributed in the packet, to begin the thought process of the Board's structure.

REESE Ms. Reese provided the presentation, "How Would the Board be Structured," a copy of which will be made a part of these minutes. Some of the main points included:

- Membership – How many Voting Members; Alternates; Split among Municipalities
- Qualifications – Resident, Member of Governing Body, Term of Service
- Responsibilities – Policy Approval, Financial, Planning/Short & Long Term
- Accountability – Report to who; What authority would they have: Advisory/Legislative
- Organization Chart

SCHENCK Mr. Schenck commented that he was accustomed to serving on the Township Board, as well as the Fire Company Board. The direction is always to have an odd number of people.

FREIREICH Ms. Freireich added that an odd number would break tie votes.

HOSTETTER Mr. Hostetter noted that the only thing an alternate has is to help in a tie vote. Many alternates do not attend meetings. A commitment is needed from them.

HUNT Chairman Hunt asked about the resident requirement.

- HOSTETTER** Mr. Hostetter responded that they had a residency requirement. All their people had to either work or live within the Township. They needed a vested interest within the Township.
- HUNT** Chairman Hunt asked if an individual was employed in the Township and not a resident, whether they were still eligible for the board.
- HOSTETTER** Mr. Hostetter responded that was correct. The motel manager didn't live within the Township but had a vested interest in it.
- HUNT** Chairman Hunt indicated they had always been resident-based.
- HOSTETTER** Mr. Hostetter indicated it was just a matter of opinion. They did not want to lose the chance to have very top-notch people involved in the program.
- HUNT** Chairman Hunt questioned whether the volunteer members of Springettsbury and Spring Garden lived within their respective townships.
- SCHENCK** Mr. Schenck responded that many don't live in the Township.
- FREIREICH** Ms. Freireich noted that it is different if the volunteer person sits on the board.
- HUNT** Chairman Hunt clarified that the board that Ms. Reese was presenting would be the working operation of the joint fire and rescue, which will be the appointed board that oversees the layman-called fire operations. Through various organization structure then they will be making detailed decisions to relate and help. He indicated that it would be the long-term board going forward. Although that had been clear in his mind, it had not been stated.
- HOLMAN** Mr. Holman stated that planning will develop as the process moves forward. Recommendations will be made as to authority for approving payments, budget approval, costs and revenues, reporting procedures and requirements, hiring, firing and appointments of new board members. Accountability cannot be transferred which remains with the governing body, but responsibility may be transferred to this board. A lengthy discussion was held surrounding issues and questions. A synopsis of this discussion follows:
- Authority must be established by ordinance; responsibilities defined.

- Regional police departments – Draw from experience – Agenda item in August.
- Reporting requirements to two different municipalities might be cumbersome.
- Board does not have the ability to tax.
- Governing bodies relinquish responsibilities to the new board.
- Police authorities must report back to governing body.
- Line between municipalities and operations board; defined level of service; defined amount of money.
- Fire Chiefs currently provide monthly reports to Board of Supervisors.
- Joint ordinances could be established.
- Autonomy is important.
- Guidelines established for hiring and firing.
- Volunteers are the backbone.
- Major issues such as bond issues must revert back to elected officials; not day-to-day matters.

HUNT Chairman Hunt referred to the Organizational Chart and asked Mr. Holman for his interpretation of the red dotted lines.

HOLMAN Mr. Holman responded that the Managers should be kept informed and as one of their responsibilities is to report back to the Board of Supervisors on any issues that require attention. That would allow the director of this organization to come back to the Managers.

HUNT Chairman Hunt stated that the purpose of this panel was to promote discussion, and it had done so. In my mind it has raised more questions than answers.

HOLMAN Mr. Holman responded that was the whole purpose, to raise questions in order to obtain answers and get discussion going.

HUNT Chairman Hunt indicated it would be a good stopping point. He reiterated his request to have the police regional board expert to elaborate next month.

SCHENCK Chairman Schenck mentioned the need to clearly define the boundaries of things which are advisory, and those which are legislative.

HUNT Mr. Hunt thanked Ms. Reese and Mr. Holman for a very good presentation and input. Having completed the formal Agenda, he asked for any public comments. Hearing none, he called for Adjournment.

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L. Adjournment:

Chairman Hunt adjourned the meeting at 8 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John Holman
Secretary

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