

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

**JANUARY 17, 2006
APPROVED**

Springettsbury Township and Spring Garden Township Joint Fire Services Committee convened at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 17, 2006 at the Township Offices located at 1501 Mt. Zion Road, York, PA.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Austin Hunt, Spring Garden Township
Bill Schenck, Springettsbury Township
Don Bishop, Springettsbury Township
William Mader, Spring Garden Township
Ellen Freireich, Springettsbury Township
Jon Countess, Spring Garden Township
John Fullmer, Spring Garden Township
Holly Gumke, Spring Garden Township
Todd Langheine, Spring Garden Township
John Holman, Springettsbury Township
Gregory Maust, Spring Garden Township
Barry Emig, Spring Garden Township

**MEMBERS NOT
IN ATTENDANCE:** Andrew Stern, Springettsbury Township

**ALSO IN
ATTENDANCE:** Members of Springettsbury and Spring Garden FC
Keith Prowell, Spring Garden Township FD
Rich Mellon, Springettsbury Township FC
Don Eckert, Springettsbury Township Volunteer FC
Bob Astor, Springettsbury Township Volunteer FC
Amanda Amspacher, Springettsbury Township
Jean Abrecht, Stenographer

A. Call To Order

HUNT Acting Chairman Austin Hunt called the meeting of the Jt. Fire Services Committee to order at 6:05 p.m.

B. Pledge of Allegiance

HUNT Mr. Hunt led the Pledge of Allegiance.

C. Introduction of New Members

HUNT Mr. Hunt reported that no meeting was held in December due to lack of a Quorum during the holidays. He noted that there had been reorganization meetings within the Townships. He introduced Mr. John Fullmer, a new Township Commissioner for Spring Garden Township, serving as an Alternate on the Committee. He introduced Holly Gumke, the new President Commissioner from Spring Garden Township, a new Primary member to the Committee. He stated that his designation had changed, and Zane Sjoberg, who had served admirably on the committee had resigned due to his participating in night classes toward an MBA

degree and in his desire to have Mr. Hunt continue the service on the committee on such an important issue. Mr. Hunt will fill his position as the Citizen appointee from Spring Garden Township.

D. Nomination and Appointment of Chairman and Vice Chairman

HUNT Acting Chairman Hunt opened the floor for nominations from the floor for a Chairman and Vice Chairman.

MR. COUNTESS MOVED THAT AUSTIN HUNT BE RE-APPOINTED AS CHAIRMAN AND BILL SCHENCK BE RE-APPOINTED AS VICE CHAIRMAN.

MRS. FREIREICH WAS SECOND. MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED.

HUNT Chairman Hunt thanked the Committee for their vote of confidence. Chairman Hunt asked for the report of the Quorum.

HOLMAN Mr. Holman responded that a Quorum was present. He stated that Holly Gumke, Bill Schenck, Austin Hunt, Jon Countess and Ellen Freireich, Primary members, constituted the Quorum. In addition, in attendance were Messrs. Mader, Langeheine, Bishop and Fullmer as Alternate members.

E. Approval of Meeting Minutes: November 15, 2005

MRS. FREIREICH MOVED FOR THE APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 15, 2005. MR. COUNTESS WAS SECOND. MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED.

F. Public Participation: Comments from the Public

There were no public comments.

G. Staff Reports:

1. Grant Application Status

MAUST Mr. Maust reported that he had been in contact with Senator Waugh's office but did not have specific details to report. However, he had inquired as to the status of the grant, the status of review and timing of the effort. He provided a commentary for the new Committee members noting that there had been sessions with Senator Waugh and Senator Armstrong which had been favorable, and much of what was requested in the grant was within the guidelines of the Charter Agreement and supporting efforts going forward.

COUNTESS Mr. Countess asked whether there were any other grant applications for this type of consolidation/merger.

HOLMAN Mr. Holman responded that there might be applications for police consolidation but not for fire.

MAUST Mr. Maust added that there are some other opportunities pending with a more solid organization plan in place mainly through DCED at the state level.

HUNT Chairman Hunt asked whether there had been any communication with Dean Fernsler.

HOLMAN Mr. Holman responded that he had emailed and telephoned Mr. Fernsler but had not heard any news to date; neither had he heard from Mr. Hedden.

HUNT Chairman Hunt stated, for the new members, that Dean Fernsler is the Peer Consultant with DCED. Chief Hedden is a Fire Chief from out of the area, who is creating an assessment of the fire needs, call volume, station locations, internal hierarchy and structure.

HOLMAN Mr. Holman noted that the Committee had been provided a copy of the draft Charter Agreement, as well as an update on the meeting schedule. He requested that any changes to the Contact List be provided to the managers in order to compile an up-to-date list. He added that a thank you letter over the Chairman's signature will be sent to Mr. Sjoberg for his service on the Committee.

2. Update from Staff

There were no staff updates for discussion.

H. Old Business

1. Metro York Fire Rescue – Discussion on Title

HUNT Chairman Hunt noted that the H.1 item appeared on the Agenda to to determine whether there had been any additional comment or feedback from the Career or the Volunteers regarding the name and patch designation.

EMIG Chief Emig responded that there had been no further comments to his knowledge.

HOLMAN Mr. Holman asked whether the Committee would recommend that the name be provided to the municipal bodies to determine whether it is acceptable. Providing the name would be beneficial.

HUNT Chairman Hunt responded that the Spring Garden Board had been made aware of the name and patch designation.

MR. COUNTESS MOVED TO ENDORSE THE NAME, METRO YORK FIRE RESCUE, FOR CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL BY THE GOVERNING BODIES OF SPRING GARDEN AND SPRINGETTSBURY TOWNSHIPS. MS. GUMKE WAS SECOND. MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED.

2. View Draft Charter Agreement

a. Subcommittee Reports

HUNT Chairman Hunt introduced the discussion of the Subcommittee work moving toward a draft document, which will be provided to each municipality for review and possible adoption. He asked Ms. Amspacher whether the document had been distributed to the Volunteers and the bargaining unit contacts.

AMSPACHER Ms. Amspacher responded that it had been distributed to them.

COUNTESS Mr. Countess provided his changes and/or corrections. He added that his first impression was that it resolved 99% of the issues. He had not seen any major issues that were not addressed; only a few blanks to be completed.

HUNT Chairman Hunt responded that in theory the blanks should include just dates. There had been some discussion about a financial review and other labor contract items. He had specifically withdrawn from that as he thought it would be overstepping the authority of the Committee. He recommended to each of the Managers that they do that analysis to support the municipal boards' decisions. The mission of this Committee was to generate this document; going forward will be a decision of the municipalities.

COUNTESS Mr. Countess stated that a framework had been provided; however, there are alternatives in both the pension area and the labor contracts.

HUNT Chairman Hunt asked Mr. Fullmer and Ms. Gumke whether either of them had reviewed the document.

GUMKE Ms. Gumke responded that Mr. Fullmer had done a really good job of reviewing it; however, she had not had a chance to digest the entire document.

HUNT Chairman Hunt asked Mr. Fullmer for his comments.

FULLMER Mr. Fullmer responded that he had reviewed previous documents provided on the Internet, and he had reviewed the draft Charter Agreement, which he determined to be very well written. He had several questions concerning whether it made monetary sense for the municipality or the bargaining units of both townships. His questions centered around how the allocation formulas would work, as well as the assessed value and common level ratio.

- HUNT** Chairman Hunt commented that York County created all the real estate assessments. In theory both Spring Garden and Springettsbury, along with any other joining municipalities, would have the same ratio of correctness for their assessment.
- COUNTESS** Mr. Countess added that the problem that Mr. Fullmer addressed is that any area can have better appreciation than another; however, there is no way to control that as it is a County determination.
- HUNT** Chairman Hunt added that the subject was one of the biggest and most difficult areas the Committee had to address. The simplest solution came to real estate assessment, which could pose difficulties with assessed value of exempt properties.
- COUNTESS** Mr. Countess commented about Clean and Green assessments as well. Actual assessments of Clean and Green could make a difference within the Townships. Farm land typically would not require fire protection; however, he was not sure about barns within the formula.
- GUMKE** Ms. Gumke stated that she was amazed with the work that had been done by the Committee to provide a format to pass along to the boards. She was aware, however, that many details still needed attention.
- HUNT** Chairman Hunt asked Mr. Schenck and Mr. Bishop for their comments as Supervisors.
- SCHENCK** Mr. Schenck responded that assessment seemed to be the most likely common denominator. He noted that the available funds would shift higher to Springettsbury due to a higher assessed value. He had pondered over whether there should be factoring based on fire ratings, older or less protective structures by construction, building codes, etc. He hoped also to receive some comment from some of the Volunteer members.
- BISHOP** Mr. Bishop stated that the amount of work done had been fantastic. The one area that still concerned him as a Supervisor is the extent to which the two municipalities are giving up some sovereignty to this new organization in order to gain efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources and assets. Because the structure will create a new, larger organization, it might be shortsighted not to realize it must be better and operate more efficiently, which will require additional work.
- COUNTESS** Mr. Countess agreed and added that it would be the task the Commission must undertake once the organization is created and at that point there could be no return.
- HUNT** Chairman Hunt indicated that he and Mr. Schenck had discussed some of Mr. Bishop's points in the past, especially the loss of accountability to municipal

boards and the residents, along with the assumption of efficiency. He added that firefighters at all levels will continue to embrace the responsibility to provide fire services and continue to do a great job whether or not there will be a representative attending monthly meetings.

BISHOP Mr. Bishop responded that he would certainly trust the firefighters to do their job; however, he was not sure that he would trust any future bureaucrats to do their job.

HUNT Chairman Hunt added that cost savings would only be seen in the longer term and not in the first year. Two-thirds of the costs are in wages and benefits, and good firefighters are not cheap. He asked Keith Prowell for his comments.

PROWELL Mr. Prowell responded that his group was taking a wait and see attitude. They are somewhat concerned about the pension section. They basically endorse one level for everyone.

HUNT Chairman Hunt noted that the pension issue was outside of the expertise of the Committee.

PROWELL Mr. Prowell added that there is a concern about the Act 600 wording, which he was sure would be addressed at some point.

COUNTESS Mr. Countess noted that he was responsible for that specific subcommittee responsibility. He had discussed it with the Conrad Siegel representative. Mr. Countess stated that he assumed the minute the grant is approved, and assuming the two municipalities give the green light, meetings will be established with the existing administrators or trustees of the pension plans to address their concerns and evaluate those to see what common ground there may be in combining them. If that would not work, an alternative would be to freeze the two existing plans and create a new plan. Everyone would be part of a new plan, and all new hires would be a part of the plan but no one would lose any vested benefits in the existing plan. He added that the alternative is built into the Agreement. He noted that Attorney Hovis had some experience with pension plans during the police regionalization.

HOVIS Attorney Hovis responded that it was not the objective of the Committee. It would be the responsibility of the Conrad Siegel representative to determine what will or will not be legally required.

SCHENCK Mr. Schenck asked David Eckman for his comments.

ECKMAN Mr. Eckman introduced himself as the newly-elected President of the Springettsbury Township Professional Firefighters. He commended the Committee members for their commitment to the project. He indicated that the concept of the public being served by a regionalized fire service was far overdue in Pennsylvania. He also thanked Dean Fernsler of DCED for his expertise and involvement. Mr. Eckman

provided his background as a firefighter, as well as an appointed member and officer of several firefighter organizations including within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. He noted that regionalization of the fire services will enable the firefighters to meet challenges within the 21st century. He was encouraged by the progress made and hoped that it would result in an increase in the level of protection offered to the citizens. Additionally, he hoped that, once up and running, the system will be attractive to other jurisdictions who will want to become part of the Metro-York Fire Rescue Department. He cautioned the Committee against using the purchase of units of time for charging other joining jurisdictions as they will not fit this model. A basic concept of the standard recovery model offered a menu of available fire protection levels. Purchasing jurisdictions would certify the department the level of protection they would require. The department would make the determination of the additional resources needed along with the associated costs. This model seemed to be more suitable for the fire services.

HUNT Chairman Hunt thanked him for his comments. He noted that they had started with a police draft and early during the process realized that using the word units was not appropriate for the fire services. He indicated he would be interested in learning additional information regarding the level of protection method.

ECKMAN Mr. Eckman responded that he had been interested in the assessed value approach, as there could be three municipalities all with the same assessed values but with three different fire service needs.

COUNTESS Mr. Countess thought his point was well taken. He asked whether he thought there was a disparity between Spring Garden and Springettsbury in that respect.

ECKMAN Mr. Eckman responded that he thought the two were very close together at this time. However, as selling or building takes place there could be problems.

COUNTESS Mr. Countess indicated it definitely will be an issue to address; both townships will have serious input as to how the cost will be determined.

HUNT Chairman Hunt commented that an additional benefit of using the apportionment formula based on assessed value would be to assess a fire tax to fund the regional fire effort directly. Some fire professionals had discussed the use of square footages except that there is no bureaucracy to measure and record square footage of buildings in municipalities.

CURTIS Mr. Scott Curtis, representative of Grantley Fire Company, stated that there were several issues he noted within the charter agreement. He noted the mention in Article I, Section B regarding EMS activity and integrating that into the department. He asked about the status of the activities of EMS within the joint fire service.

- HUNT** Chairman Hunt responded that Springettsbury functions with some career EMS township employees and Spring Garden does not have EMS township employees. He stated it is this Committee's intention not to overlook EMS at this time, but not to address that arm of emergency services until a later date.
- CURTIS** Mr. Curtis indicated he understood. He asked about the item concerning municipal funds involving firefighters in the regional fire service passing through the Commission.
- HUNT** Chairman Hunt responded that there is state and federal funding that comes to the municipalities to support volunteers. The Committee wanted to be sure that the money would flow through the Commission's budget to the volunteers in a timely fashion.
- SCHENCK** Mr. Schenck added that it was specifically related to relief issues that would flow from the municipality to the fire Commission to the volunteer company. The relief organizations will remain.
- HUNT** Chairman Hunt added that from the starting point there will be no change. There will be no change to the volunteers. The Committee is encouraging some combination of manifold structure of that but not mandating that. In addition, the Committee will encourage all parties to begin exactly the way they are except that there is an extra link in the flow of funds from the municipalities to the Commission to the volunteers. The Committee is suggesting that the status quo should remain for two years, which provides for any needed changes.
- CURTIS** Mr. Curtis questioned what was meant by the transfer of authorities for certification of volunteer firefighter organization.
- SCHENCK** Mr. Schenck responded that currently the municipalities certify what volunteer companies can cover in their area. The authority would be transferred to the new commission, which would be the group closest to understanding all the needs.
- EMIG** Chief Emig noted his understanding that under state law the volunteer departments are chartered to a municipality.
- ASTOR** Mr. Astor added that the ordinance is established by the municipality.
- SCHENCK** Mr. Schenck noted it states that it establishes and recognizes it.
- COUNTESS** Mr. Countess stated that there was no intent to change how that would operate.
- PROWELL** Mr. Prowell commented that there is a difference between fire companies and actual physical locations. That representation will be with two elected officials and one member at large.

- COUNTESS** Mr. Countess responded that the consultant will make only recommendations. He will create a study; however, the municipalities do not have to adopt it.
- MAUST** Mr. Maust added that once the forum is enacted, there will be two elected officials and one at-large from each of the townships. The neutral body rotates from one municipal body to the other.
- PROWELL** Mr. Prowell commented that within Chief Gross's presentation, the alternative representative in their case never changed because both municipalities had been satisfied. He indicated it might be wise to have the new Committee members review the scope and services agreement in order to be fully aware of the study.
- HUNT** Chairman Hunt expressed his concern that the Hedden report will never be received. He noted that Chief Hedden is an excellent field person, but he might be having difficulty with the conceptual scope of what is required.
- BISHOP** Mr. Bishop asked Scott Curtis about Grantley's interpretation of the time frame of what the Committee is attempting to do.
- CURTIS** Mr. Curtis responded that he had been attending the meetings and listening diligently to what had been said. His personal opinion was that the time frame did not appear to be realistic.
- HUNT** Chairman Hunt commented that Chief Gross, in his presentation, indicated he never thought it could be done so quickly, but he realized it had to be done quickly. He added that the point of no return is before getting started. The next step is the municipal official's decision. This Committee is to generate the Charter Agreement. The municipal boards may review it and they may change everything, as it is a very specific recommendation to accept or reject.
- WIDDALL** Mr. Ken Widdall stated that he had been a resident of Springettsbury Township for 40 years and was actively involved in Springettsbury Township Volunteer Fire Company and served on the Standing Finance Committee. He had read the Agreement, ordinance and the by-laws and felt there were many points of deviation. He commented on the Springettsbury Township Volunteer Fire Company, which had been in existence for five years, and many things surrounding that merged organization had not been accomplished. With an additional organization the problem would be magnified several times.
- SCHENCK** Mr. Schenck indicated that the three documents referenced are internal Springettsbury documents related to a settlement agreement with the Township. Springetts Fire Company and Commonwealth Fire Company agreed to merge to become Springettsbury Township Volunteer Fire Company. Three documents drove that merger: (1) A settlement agreement with the Township because one of the fire companies sued the Township. (2) A set of by-laws that were drafted for the new volunteer fire company, (3) The ordinance that Springettsbury wrote to

create and recognize the Springettsbury Volunteer Fire Company. There is conflicting language in the three documents, and they have a committee working on that. He stated that it is somewhat irrelevant to these discussions because they are unique to the volunteer fire companies, and it will be corrected. Within this current discussion, the independence of the volunteer fire companies is being recognized, and they are being asked to support the professional efforts.

WIDDALL Mr. Widdall asked whether he could have a copy of the draft Charter Agreement to read for himself.

SCHENCK Mr. Schenck provided him with a copy.

HUNT Chairman Hunt noted that it had been emailed to someone within his organization. Chairman Hunt asked Chief Emig if he had any thoughts or concerns.

EMIG Chief Emig responded that he had read through the draft and suggested that some of the technical aspects probably could use a little bit of help, specifically the apportionment. Other than that he thought it was pretty straight forward.

COUNTESS Mr. Countess asked what the next step would be as far as the draft agreement.

HUNT Chairman Hunt responded that he visualized taking in all the comments and various other legal reviews and next month, having a final draft copy that this Committee then votes to accept and present the document to the municipal boards. At that point the Committee's work is suspended, not necessarily terminated; however, the initial mission will have been fulfilled. Unless the municipal bodies call on the Committee for additional services, the Committee is in recess until officially suspended.

FREIREICH Mrs. Freireich asked when the study would be included. She noted that the study would have an impact on the Charter Agreement. She wondered how the Agreement could be presented to the Townships without it.

HUNT Chairman Hunt stated that the Committee's work had been done based on the available information. The report will be sent to the Townships.

FREIREICH Mrs. Freireich stated that she did not think it advisable to present the Charter Agreement when another major piece of information was yet to be received unless it would be declared a draft with more data to come.

GUMKE Ms. Gumke asked specifically what would be contained in the report.

HOLMAN Mr. Holman responded that the document being prepared by Chief Hedden will include technical detail. Specifically some of the questions to be answered are: How much manning is actually going to be needed for the department. Where does he think a station should be located based on his review. What equipment

should be replaced or retired? What pieces of equipment do or don't mesh together? How many firefighters are needed? How many actual fire stations are necessary?

COUNTESS Mr. Countess noted that the information will be provided to the municipal boards and not to the Committee.

FULLMER Mr. Fullmer commented that it would be good information for the municipality, especially for what additional costs might be.

HOVIS Attorney Hovis indicated that the report would be necessary prior to the municipalities approving the Charter Agreement and will need to be attached to it as an exhibit. Assets that are being provided to these departments by each municipality, the capital contributions, will be dependent upon what the report states.

FREIREICH Mrs. Freireich asked whether the Committee would analyze the report or the Commission eventually created would do so. She agreed that the Townships will want to see the information before voting on it.

HOVIS Attorney Hovis stated that his recommendation will be that the Commission will need the information, as well as some analysis with respect to the pension funds, analysis with respect to the collective bargaining agreement, costs and expenses. He added that the Townships will need many other things prior to voting on the Agreement. Additional enactments must be in place to allow the Townships to communicate through managers, to the Commission, in order to undertake the task of analyzing all the information.

FREIREICH Mrs. Freireich thought it risky to provide only one portion of the review.

HUNT Chairman Hunt stated that there is momentum now and if the Charter Agreement is put in a folder for several more months until the report is received, then the Committee has to recess. Essentially all the Committee will do is read the report and pass it along to the municipalities. He stated that Chief Hedden's report will be very valuable to the municipalities and the Committee, but he could not imagine anything within the report that would change the Charter Agreement.

COUNTESS Mr. Countess agreed and suggested to keep things moving. The Townships will need to begin their review.

HOLMAN Mr. Holman commented that during the next meeting the Committee will review and recommend forwarding the document to the municipal boards for their review with a request to submit comments back to this Committee. That will enable the Committee to resolve any questions or issues.

FREIREICH Mrs. Freireich asked who would be the lead in the municipalities to get the review of the Hedden report and the pension plans.

COUNTESS Mr. Countess responded that it would be the consultant hired upon approval of the grant.

GUMKE Ms. Gumke stated that there needed to be basic information going to the Townships indicating why it was investigated to begin with, the direction it is going, and the true benefits, along with the necessary budget information as well.

ECKERT Mr. Don Eckert indicated his concern that before any control is lost, to be sure to have the right kind of input from the professionals, as well as from the fire services when the critical decisions are made.

HUNT Chairman Hunt responded that the Committee has no authority to sign anything. He wanted to get the Charter Agreement into the hands of those who do have authority to sign and to receive grants, as well as the professionals to enable the process.

ECKERT Mr. Eckert agreed, but suggested to have a roadmap for the next step in the process. He cited difficulties from the fire company merger process five years ago that just are being fixed at this time.

BISHOP Mr. Bishop commented that what the Committee had done with this project was nothing like it was five years ago and it was not necessary to compare the two. He agreed that Mr. Eckert's concept was somewhat the same as Ms. Gumke's comment. Mr. Bishop suggested the look toward a roadmap or an executive summary suggesting the decisions that need to be made and a potential time frame for making those decisions.

FREIREICH Mrs. Freireich added that, as part of that roadmap, advice should be provided as to what additional information will be coming.

WILLARD Mr. Willard added that the concept Mr. Bishop mentioned could be called a master plan.

FULLMER Mr. Fullmer asked whether there was a reason why the Committee was not charged with the financial analysis.

HOLMAN Mr. Holman responded that the concentration had been on the development, central administration and operational structures. Additionally, there are additional elements to come from the Hedden report concerning the development and recommended standard operation guidelines, reduction and/or stabilization of costs and increased efficiency of services, shared resources, training programs, unnecessary duplication of equipment and services, preservation and

enhancement of volunteer services. This technical report will provide some financial analysis.

FULLMER Mr. Fullmer commented that he did not have the documentation in front of him, but he thought what Chairman Hunt was indicating was to get this document to the municipalities; that this group is virtually done. The two municipalities will study the budget and compare the assessments. He suggested looking at this as a group to combine two independent services into one, with one group needed to review the financial aspect.

BISHOP Mr. Bishop responded that it was, in fact, part of the Committee's charter, but from very early, it was decided to outsource that to professionals. Because that report had not yet been received, the Committee is struggling with not having those results.

COUNTESS Mr. Countess stated that the financial responsibility lies entirely with the two governing bodies, which are going to have to make the decision and not the Committee.

MAUST Mr. Maust noted there is no difficulty in taking the document back to the municipal boards. An overview of the detail can be made, and the work involved in the creation of the Charter Agreement would provide a beginning. There will be many questions regarding the financial impact and how that could best be structured. Mr. Maust reported that he and Mr. Holman had scheduled a full-day work session at the end of January to begin the process. He indicated the key thing that will have to be addressed is how that can be best meshed together and organized so that the same information is provided to both boards.

GUMKE Ms. Gumke suggested a meeting of both boards where one presentation would be made to the entire group. At that point everyone could ask questions and interact.

HOLMAN Mr. Holman indicated it would have to be advertised as a public meeting.

FULLMER Mr. Fullmer thought it would be very helpful because the Committee would hear their questions, and they would hear the Committee's questions.

HUNT Chairman Hunt agreed with the idea of a joint presentation. The Committee had provided the internal structure of the Charter Agreement; however, the economic viability had not been addressed. He suggested that the Committee should now be charged with developing an executive summary and a tentative joint operating budget.

COUNTESS Mr. Countess indicated it would be simple to take a one, two, three mill fire tax to see what that would raise in the way of revenue and compare it to each existing budget for fire protection.

HOLMAN Mr. Holman responded that they had spent some time working on the operational budget and the assessment. In addition, they were attempting to determine whether it would lower the millage assessment currently covering the cost of services being provided by each municipality. As a municipal official he would want to see that, and he was sure that the Springettsbury board would as well.

HUNT Chairman Hunt stated that the Committee is to finish the Charter Agreement, present it to the boards and request clear questions needed for their support.

HOVIS Attorney Hovis responded that he wanted to meet with some of the Committee representatives in order to discuss the agreement. He agreed that it should be forwarded on to the townships for further direction. The hard work and hard decisions begin when the numbers hit the page, and that is when a decision will be made to move forward or not. He posed several comments/questions:

- Begin analyzing the impact of the pension funds – under or over funding.
- Does one municipality contribute more than the other?
- What is the impact of the collective bargaining provisions in the agreement?
- What is the study going to say with respect to capital contributions?

He indicated that one person needs to be empowered to begin analyzing that information and hiring an actuary to provide guidance and recommendations to find out whether the pension funds can be meshed and if not, what needs to be done.

Attorney Hovis had several issues with the Charter Agreement:

- Commissioner terms need to be staggered to provide institutional knowledge from member to member over the year.
- The year 2015 for withdrawal seemed aggressive; consider a shorter term.
- Funding of the budget.
- Apportionment goal over a five-year period.

PROWELL Mr. Prowell noted that the roadmap is clearly within the purpose of what the commission is to accomplish. The Commission will consist of elected officials plus one, so the control issue is there. The Commission could look at the Hedden report and determine a five-year plan.

HUNT Chairman Hunt reiterated his recommendation to complete the Charter Agreement next month, if all agree with the final version, and send it on to the municipal bodies and wait for their instructions. He asked whether anyone could see any tasks that had not been accomplished before sending it to the boards.

GUMKE Ms. Gumke indicated that it would be helpful to include the executive summary or some sort of cover letter explanation with the document. She added that there will be a lot of questions.

COUNTESS Mr. Countess added that some of that could be addressed in a joint meeting as she had suggested.

FREIREICH Mrs. Freireich asked whether the meeting would be held before or after the document is sent to the municipalities.

COUNTESS Mr. Countess responded that the recipients should have a chance to review it prior to the meeting.

HUNT Chairman Hunt suggested the following plan:

- Chairman Hunt and Mr. Schenck will meet with Attorney Hovis to compile the comments received and the adjustments.
- A cover letter will be created.
- An Executive Summary will be drafted.
- The final draft Charter Agreement will be submitted for review by the Committee.
- If endorsed it will be sent on to the municipal boards for their review for a joint meeting in March. An overview will be provided and response to any questions.

MR. COUNTESS MOVED TO ADOPT THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE CHAIRMAN AS STATED BY THE CHAIRMAN (ABOVE). MR. SCHENCK WAS SECOND. MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED.

BISHOP Mr. Bishop stated that the document moved the process forward. However, when he read the mission statement for this organization, the document addresses less than 25% of that mission statement. It does not address the primary item, "To develop and investigate the economic and service viability of providing a combined fire service." He suggested a review be done as to how it will be presented to the municipal bodies.

SCHENCK Mr. Schenck responded that the Committee has reached the place where professional help is necessary. The boards will determine whether to obtain that professional help because it will take money to do so. There are two or three levels of professional services needed at this point.

I. New Business:

1. Adoption of 2006 Joint Fire Meeting Schedule

Consensus of the Committee was to adopt the 2006 Joint Fire Meeting Schedule as presented.

1. Allowable Uses of Fire Tax – Mr. Hovis

Item was discussed earlier during the meeting.

J. Committee Resolutions

There were none for discussion.

K. Adjournment

HUNT Chairman Hunt stated that by ordinance the Committee either needed to extend the meeting or call for an adjournment. He suggested adjourning and coming back next month with the formal draft, a finished draft document and an executive summary. At that point the Committee will address the additional points raised by Mr. Bishop. He entertained a motion for adjournment.

**MRS. FREIREICH MOVED FOR ADJOURNMENT. MS. GUMKE WAS SECOND.
MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED.**

HUNT Chairman Hunt adjourned the meeting at 8 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John Holman
Secretary

ja