

**Minutes for the Joint Consolidation/ Shared Services Study Commission of
Princeton Borough**

and

Princeton Township

October 26, 2011 – 7:10 p.m.

Township Municipal Building – Committee Room, Princeton NJ

Public Forum: Township Committee and Borough Council

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:09 p.m., with Linda McDermott, Township Clerk reading the Open Public Meetings Act Statement:

The following is an accurate statement concerning the providing of notice of this meeting and said statement shall be entered in the minutes of this meeting.

Notice of this meeting as required by sections 4a, 3d, 13 and 14 of the Open Public Meetings Act has been provided to the public in the form of the written notice attached hereto,

On October 11, 2011, at 2:30 p.m., said notice was posted in the official bulletin board, transmitted to the Princeton Packet, the Trenton Times, the Town Topics, filed with the Township Clerk and posted on the Princeton Borough and Princeton Township websites.

2. ROLL CALL

ATTENDEES:

Commission Members Present – Anton Lahnston, (Chair), Valerie Haynes (Vice Chair), Mayor Chad Goerner, Carol Golden, Mayor Mildred Trotman, David Goldfarb, Ryan Lilienthal, Bernie Miller, Alice Small, Bill Metro, M. Patrick Simon, Bob Bruschi, James Pascale and DCA Representative Eugene McCarthy

Others Present: Joseph Stefko (Center for Governmental Research-CGR)

Roll Call for the Township Committee and the Borough Council was called out by Deputy Clerk McDermott. There was a quorum present, therefore, the meeting was held.

Mayor Goerner welcomed everyone to the meeting. The October 26, 2011 meeting was the final meeting being held between the Township Committee and the Borough Council before the end of the calendar year.

Mayor Goerner started the meeting by ‘thanking’ two individuals sitting on Council who will complete their term serving Princeton Borough and the community: Mayor Mildred Trotman

and Councilman Goldfarb. Also, Borough Clerk Elise Quinty will be retiring at the end of the year.

Per Mayor Goerner, the discussion taking place should be based on true arguments on both sides. When the polls close on November 8, 2011, Princeton will move forward as one community or stay two separate communities. Joe Stefko, CGR was welcomed by Mayor Goerner.

Chair Lahnston indicated that the Commission members would first address questions posed during meetings throughout the course of the consolidation process. Following these comments there would be an opportunity for public comment.

Chair Lahnston asked Mayor Trotman to address the impact of consolidation upon the municipal affordable housing obligation. Affordable Housing compliance is now under DCA and COAH has been disbanded.

Mayor Trotman replied that there would be no change in the total number of units required of the Township and the Borough if consolidation prevails. The Township has been given a certain number of units which they are responsible for building as was the Borough under COAH. Example: Township given 60 units to build and the Borough given 40 units to build. The sum of those numbers would be 100 units. If consolidation prevails, that sum would not increase and the total number would remain 100 units.

Mr. Goldfarb said that although COAH was disbanded, the Supreme Court rulings remain; therefore there is no definite answer to the question. Mayor Goerner agreed, but added that the results would be as stated by Mayor Trotman in that from an affordable housing perspective, the consolidated community would be responsible for whatever metrics are assigned to the community.

Mayor Trotman replied that she is speaking for the numbers which have been assigned and she observed that the units are needed.

Ms. Nemeth indicated that the housing boards in both the Township and Borough would appreciate the opportunity to collaborate on affordable housing because currently they handle affordable housing differently and separately.

Chair Lahnston then asked Joe Stefko of CGR to address the financial analysis of consolidation.

He said that the projected financial impact of consolidation in 2011 dollars and in current budgets is \$3.16 million. Can Mr. Stefko clarify the impact of savings as it impacts taxes along with including the pick-up of solid waste in the Township?

Mr. Stefko gave a summary as to how the \$3.16 million was reached. There was a two part analysis. The first part was a baseline review of every service which both the Township and Borough provide to assess how they deploy their capital and people assets and the cost of the services. This served as the foundation to develop a series of options in the service categories.

There are currently 13 services which are shared between the Township and Borough. The members of the Commission reviewed each of the options on a department by department basis and made a recommendation with the understanding of what the staff would be under each of the

selected options and what the fiscal implications would be under each of the options. There was focus to ensure that there was enough staffing in each of the departments. Therefore, the \$3.16 million dollar figure is the sum of the calculated staffing efficiencies across each of the departments. Some produced savings and some did not which are detailed in the Options Report. The \$3.16 million in efficiency savings is one piece of the overall fiscal impact puzzle to the consolidation puzzle.

Mr. Stefko encouraged people to look at the summary table on the last page of the Tax Impact Analysis. The \$3.16 million is factored in and a portion of the \$3.16 million in staff efficiency savings is off-set by the additional cost of building in town-wide solid waste collection. There are other factors listed as well: open space, tax equalization, library tax, etc. Each is itemized out so that one can look at the projected savings for the average property for the Township and Borough both through the direct impacts of staff efficiency savings and the solid waste recommendations made as well as the secondary impacts, which are less precise and subject to certain equalization rates and based on equalization as it is known today.

Mr. Goldfarb replied that the \$3.16 million is meaningless because the Borough gets no benefit from extending garbage collection to the Township.

Chair Lahnston noted that many people looked at the projections and stated they are too conservative.

He asked whether Mr. Stefko can indicate if he sees greater opportunities for savings through consolidation?

Mr. Stefko indicated that there is potential, yes. But, the additional potential is speculative and is the reason why it is not included in the report. The report quantifies the quantifiable. The potential opportunities include: making decisions about the potential sale of excess properties. This was not included in the report and would be a positive fiscal impact upon the community. Long term benefits are seen from a capital procurement strategy. Example: purchase three pick-up trucks vs. four between two public works departments within the same year because there is more coordinated use by a single department then by two separately operating departments. There is potential as discussed by the public works subcommittee and the Commission recommendations for longer range improvements to public works facilities. There would be a potential benefit to develop some cold storage. Currently, the Township and Borough's public works equipment are not under cover when not in use and this equipment may cost \$200,000 to \$300,000 per item.

Chair Lahnston stated that in the final section of the report, mention is made of the use of \$1.3 million from surplus in the Borough 2011 budget. People are concerned. Chair Lahnston asked what the bases for the concern would be?

Mr. Stefko stated that the item being referred to as 'surplus' is technically a capital fund balance and it is a one shot revenue or a one shot resource. In general, one shot resources should not be linked to recurring expenditures. If one looks at a \$1.3 million spend out of a one shot bucket that in the beginning of the year had \$4.6 million dollars, that rate of continued spend out of that account would completely deplete the account within two to three years and this is basis for concern.

Mr. Goldfarb stated that there will be a tax increase in 2012 whether or not there is consolidation. It is not a \$1.3 million dollar impact because the actual figure is much less.

Mr. Simon said that the actual budget item line is not \$1.3 million, but rather \$2.2 million in spending from the capital surplus. However, the net expected diminishment for 2011 is \$1.3 million which occurs after replenishment. Replenishment comes from certain sources of funds which will flow back into that account, according to the Borough Administrator. The net after replenishment is \$1.3 million. The 2011 budgets and tax rates were looked at for the Borough and Township and were treated on an equal footing.

If the Borough is spending down from one its saving accounts and the Township does not have a corresponding spend down from its balance accounts, how should this be treated? There is a difference in cash flow in the Township vs. the Borough in 2011. The Township on a cash flow basis is running more conservatively than the Borough. The Additional Considerations document describes this difference and walks through a calculation which estimates the longer term impact of taking this into account.

Mr. Lilienthal said that his concern is the \$1.3 million.

Mr. Goldfarb said he was specifically referring to the parking utility.

Bob Bruschi said that it will not be \$1.3 million but \$500 to \$1.1 million will be replenished. He does not want to see the budget at an unsustainable level where the surplus will not be replenished at the same rate as it is being used. Mr. Bruschi stated that Princeton has banked unused tax increases under the state limit, and would be able to use these to raise taxes, if need be in an emergency.

Chair Lahnston said that another topic of discussion is the collection of residential solid waste, which is currently available in the Borough and which the Commission has recommended should be extended to the Township.

Mayor Goerner gave a summary of what it would entail to extend solid waste to the Township. To estimate the cost, Waste Management (current Borough contractor) was contacted. They looked at the density of the Township and estimated a cost of \$240 per parcel. If consolidation passes, there would have to be a re-bid of the contract for the entire new municipality.

Chair Lahnston said that concerns have also been raised regarding transition costs. He asked Mayor Goerner to give the State's decision and Governor Christie's proposal.

Mayor Goerner said that the estimate which was submitted from the Commission to the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) for the transition was \$1.7 million. Governor Christie announced on September 30, 2011 that his office would propose legislation to allow consolidating communities to borrow in order to spread out the cost (the one-time transition costs) over a five year period of time to equate to 20% a year. The Christie administration also offered to provide a grant for 20% of the total approved costs.

Mr. Goldfarb stated that he heard suggestions that the Commission intentionally underestimated the actual projected costs of transition to make the town's application look more attractive to the State with a number less than what the actual cost would be.

Mayor Goerner responded that they have heard a lot of things. “This is not Fox News and people cannot just make up things. David, with all due respect, you were on the Commission, you were on the Finance Committee and you reviewed the transition cost estimates, as well. And, you were at every meeting”.

Mr. Goldfarb said he is not making up things and would like for Chair Lahnston to answer the question as to whether the Commission intentionally underestimated the projected costs of transition in order to make the application to the State look better.

Chair Lahnston replied, “the answer is ‘no’ David”.

At this time, Chair Lahnston addressed the police issues. The Commission recommendation is to reduce the number of sworn officers in the police force from the current 60 to 51 through a transition proposed to take place over a three year period.

Chair Lahnston asked Mr. Metro, Chair of the Police Subcommittee to describe when that coverage is in place, what will the configuration of the patrol units be and what will the coverage be compared to the standard that is in place today? Also, two special units were proposed in addition to what really exists today. What will those two units do?

Mr. Metro replied that the two special units exist today in the Township. The two units are Traffic and the Community Services Unit. At this time, a slide was shown and Mr. Metro explained the coverage today and what is proposed for the future. The slide shows the baseline for the four shifts (24 hour patrol shift coverage and each shift consists of 12 hours). (The graph is enclosed as Attachment A.)

With respect to police retirements and resizing and consolidation: At the end of 2011, there will be eight (8) sworn police officers who will be eligible for retirement. In 2012 and thereafter, the number eligible for retirement increases.

Mr. Miller pointed out that police officers can retire at 20 years of service vs. 25 years of service. However, health benefits improve if officers stay till 25 years.

Chair Lahnston addressed Mrs. Small and Ms. Haynes at this time with respect to the schedules of leaf and brush pick-ups in the Borough and the Township, if consolidated. The concern has been expressed that the Borough does a pick-up every other week, while the Township schedule is more infrequent.

If consolidated, what would the brush/leaf pick-up plan be?

Mrs. Small replied by stating that the leaf/brush collection depends on the need of the neighborhood. The closer neighborhoods in the Borough where there is greater density and prevalence of on-street parking vs. the Township where there is less need. There is a uniform number of pick-ups in the Township and that is the concern in the Borough, where the schedule is adjusted to neighborhood needs. Mrs. Small was surprised to read in the Baseline Report that as a Borough resident, she was receiving daily leaf/brush pick-up. When she posed the question to the Superintendent, it turned out that although crews in the Borough do collect leaf/brush daily, the teams work on a schedule that results in neighborhood collection every other week, a rational expectation for municipal service. If consolidation occurs, Mrs. Small believes that

there will be a rational basis justified in the law to discriminate in the amount of leaf/brush collection based on the need of the neighborhood. The neighborhoods in the Township which are closer to the business district would likely experience an increase in leaf/brush pick-up because consolidation calls for no public works staff layoffs. The savings of \$442,000 were based on the reduction of a superintendent and an engineer. Staff on the ground would remain the same. A special DPW Team would be in place during transition to address this issue in detail.

Barbara Trelstad said that Mrs. Small is correct in that Borough leaf/brush collection pick-up is every other week in fair weather, which is approximately 20 times a year per household.

Chair Lahnston addressed Mayor Trotman at this time. One question posed relates to ratables in the Township and Borough. The claim is that the Borough has more new ratables coming onto the tax rolls than the Township and it is unfair to the Borough residents to give that up.

Chair Lahnston asked if Mayor Trotman can give any insight as to the future ratables anticipated in the two municipalities?

Mayor Trotman replied that 50% of the real property in the Borough is tax exempt; but for a few lots, the Borough is built out for new development. The Township has more space and land on which to build. An inventory of planned and/or anticipated development of new residential units yields 562 in the Borough and 801 in the Township. In the Borough, the inventory of planned and/or anticipated non-residential developments yields 37,500 s.f. and 148,000 s.f. in the Township.

Mr. Simon stated the Borough is nearly fully built-out. The 100 units in the downtown development are on the 2011 tax rolls as vacant land. Due to a pending tax appeal, the assessments are likely to go down in terms of the taxes in 2012 and then go up in subsequent years as the units are built and sold as condos or retained as rentals. Fifty-four units out of the 100 units will be rental units and the Borough gets less tax revenue from a rental unit than from a condo unit. Also, costs in the municipality will go up because there is real cost associated with development such as: schools, police, sewers and traffic.

Mr. Bruschi addressed the retirement plan and costs. The Borough costs are limited and they are capped. For sick time: incentive available is paid at value of 40% of days accumulated to a maximum of \$11,000 per employee. In the Borough, terminal leave is available at the rate of 1 day of pay per year served. For example, after 25 years of service, you receive 25 days of pay, and after 45 years of service, 45 days pay.

Mr. McCarthy also addressed the issue. The retirement benefits and pension will be standard within the two communities. Early retirement incentives can be petitioned and there are costs associated to doing this. A municipality may elect to petition the state to offer early retirement incentives of up to 1.5 times salary for PERS employees and up to 3.0 times salary for PFRS employees. The municipality must cover these costs. (PERS stands for Public Employee Retirement System and PFRS means Police/Fire Retirement System). The municipality may also offer service credit of up to 5 years toward retirement, and toward health benefits in retirement. The Division of Pensions would perform an early retirement cost estimate for the communities should an early retirement program be sought.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

At 8:20 p.m., the Public Comment began. Mayor Goerner stated that each person would be limited to a two to three minute comment time frame.

Phyllis Teitelbaum, resident of Princeton for over 33 years, said that she would like to say to the rest that no one is making up anything. The data and projections are extremely complicated. Honest and thoughtful people can come to different conclusions and not make things up. Many residents have already made up their minds. She would like to point out to the undecided voters in the Borough and Township that they will lose money if they were to consolidate. Analysis show that taxes will not go down; but go up. Police services will be lost. The Township police sent out a letter to all Township residents pointing out that there will be significant losses to Township services (patrol speed, investigative, response time – all of the afore-mentioned were named in their letter). Borough residents will also lose police services. Borough residents will lose their vote (two Township voters for every Borough voter). Elections for Council for the Borough will be out-voted. Borough residents will also lose the guaranteed representation on important boards such as: school board, regional planning board, etc.). In sum, Mrs. Teitelbaum sees no good reason for consolidation and just listed several reasons not to consolidate and she hopes that the undecided voters will vote “NO” to consolidation.

Mr. Miller replied to Ms. Teitelbaum’s remarks and said that the letter did not come from the Township police; but from the Township Police union. Mr. Miller said that there is a difference between the Township Police Department and the union which represents the officers in the department.

Henry Singer, resident of Princeton Township, said that he also would like to address the undecided voters. Princeton is a living, breathing community and is exposed to a range of forces which threaten their viability. Costs are going up and revenues are constrained and the State burdens them with unfunded mandates. Unemployment remains at high levels years into the recovery. Princeton is becoming less affordable day-by-day. If people want to preserve Princeton and everything it stands for, then we must act now and change. Mr. Singer does not want to consider Princeton as a place only the wealthy can afford. Mr. Singer encouraged everyone to get out and vote “YES” for consolidation and do your part to preserve Princeton.

Sandra Persichetti, resident of Princeton Township, and a former Borough resident. Ms. Persichetti addressed the Princeton Community Housing development called Harriet Bryant House. She managed the construction of that building. It straddles the municipal line and cost extra money and time because PCH had to work with both municipalities.. There is more open common space than necessary because the building straddles the municipal line. She finds the brush/leaf pick-up discussion to be so minor in comparison to the lives of citizens. Ms. Persichetti feels that a consolidated Princeton and a consolidated police department would solve all of those problems and encourages people to vote “YES” for consolidation.

Pam Machold, resident of Princeton Township, stated that she moved to the Borough and then moved to the Township and has worked for many commissions in the Princetons and considers them to be resources and are not limited to one part of the community. When asked, “Where are you from?” Residents respond, ‘Princeton’. They do not say ‘Princeton Borough’ or Princeton Township’. They are one community and are here to help each other. A united community can

speak as a greater force to the issues which affect the town. Ms. Machold's message: "Don't fight, unite". Vote "YES" for consolidation. Save money, compost your leaves and give incentives to people to do that. She is impressed with the people in the community who worked so hard through the years and she feels lucky to live in Princeton.

Daniel Harris, resident of Princeton Township, seconded Ms. Machold's comments and 'thanked' all elected and appointed officials as well as everyone else who worked so hard. An issue which was not raised was the Princeton Regional Planning Board on which both members of Borough and Township sit. However, there is no representative of the Princeton Environmental Commission on this board. Over the years, it was deemed that one Environmental Commission member could not be added to the Princeton Regional Planning board; but would need to add two members because there is a Borough Environmental Commission and a Township Environmental Commission. The Princeton Regional Planning Board is one of the most important and effective policy organizations. There are land use and space issues. If consolidation takes place, it is imperative that a representative from the Princeton Environmental Commission be on the Princeton Regional Planning Board. In sum, Mr. Harris urges undecided voters to vote "YES" for consolidation.

Laura Kahn, resident of Princeton Township, indicated that she served on the Princeton Health Commission for 10 years. It was difficult to manage that organization because of having to deal with two governing bodies and two budgets. They do manage and the health departments were consolidated. Ms. Kahn encourages undecided voters to vote "YES" for consolidation because it is a matter of life and death because the life which that vote may save could be your own.

Tony Cline, resident of Princeton Township, stated that through research and policy analysis to consolidate the two government entities, all the trends point to the utility of regional planning and regional governments. This is the third time since Mr. Cline has lived in the community that this issue has been debated and it still generates an enormous amount of discussion and intense opposition. Mr. Cline, a social scientist, finds this quite remarkable. He feels it is time to move ahead and face the future; knowing that problems will occur with consolidation. But, if one takes a long range view and not worry about collecting leaves in the fall and spring and look five to ten years into the future and take into account if the town consolidated years ago, Princeton would be in a much better position today. Mr. Cline urges everyone to move ahead and vote "YES" for consolidation. Also, he was disturbed when he received the letter which was previously mentioned from the Township's Policemen's' Benevolent Association. He contributed to the Township PBA not as a heavy donator; but contributed regularly. The appeals came over the years to support their activities because they were helping community organizations. Mr. Cline assumed they were a non-profit organization that should not take a stand on political issues. He is disturbed that this has happened because it is inappropriate. He urges the Administration of the Township to look into this matter.

Claire Jacobus, resident of Princeton Borough, stated that she served as a commission member 15 years ago and went over the consolidation process at that time. At this time, Ms. Jacobus 'thanked' each commission member for their time and efforts. She is concerned about the tone of the discussion, which bothers Ms. Jacobus. The town needs to consolidate; therefore, Ms. Jacobus urges everyone to vote "YES" for consolidation.

Peter Marks, resident of Princeton Borough, said that he feels that tonight's meeting has been outstanding in that it is useful and much clearer than any presentation heard thus far, and would like credit given to Chair Anton Lahnston. The meeting is well organized; Mr. Marks also gave credit to Carol Golden and Alice Small for a conversation earlier which was extremely helpful to him because they gave view points from both sides. Ms. Golden and Mrs. Small demonstrated that both sides have legitimately held positions, they may not agree; but they are able to speak and respect one another. He also has a high regard for Mr. Simon who is careful, conscientious and honest in his analysis.

Mr. Marks also found Mr. Metro's discussion and detailed presentation regarding the police very useful and helpful. The financial aspect gains a staffing saving of \$3.1 million dollars of which \$1.2 million would be used to equalize trash collection between the Borough and the Township. The remaining \$1.9 million, during the initial five years (approximately \$300,000 per year) will be geared for transition costs and \$1.3 million will be used to close a present deficit in the Borough. Therefore, there will be a combined cash flow in the vicinity of \$300 to \$500 per year. Mr. Marks also commended Ms. Haynes's remarks regarding the infrastructure that needs upgrading, which has a significant potential cost. It is foolish to spend the money twice. Consolidation promises the hope of useful savings and a more efficient use of our tax dollars. Properties which are dissected by Township/Borough lines can be addressed by modifying those lines. Mr. Mark's concern with consolidation is zoning, with the number of new units which have been approved and allowed to be built. This creates transformative change which will spread to ensure that single family neighborhoods are transformed into parking lots and garages and he finds this frightening. The Borough has not used its protections very effectively. In conclusion, Mr. Marks will vote "NO" for consolidation due to the fact that he has a zoning concern. In addition, Mr. Marks also fears that if one of the two zoning protections in the Borough are given up, it will become much easier to approve large scale development.

Mr. Simon responded with an informational comment that the new development listed earlier by Mayor Trotman includes anticipated development for which plans are not yet final and zoning has not yet been approved.

Sheila Berkelhammer, resident of Princeton Borough said that consolidation is an emotional issue. How does one design a neighborhood, when the line runs down the middle of the street? It is the same on both sides. It is a neighborhood. Half is in the Township and half is in the Borough. Ms. Berkelhammer made reference to the John Witherspoon neighborhood, which is densely populated. It has similar housing styles and is split on Leigh Avenue. Several other streets were mentioned and similar comparisons made. If a neighborhood should have a strong voice, how strong can it be when dealing with two municipalities. The second issue relates to "us" vs. "them". When asked where you reside, one says 'Princeton'. Once does not think of the artificial boundary. The Commission worked so hard because their belief is that they are one community. If consolidation succeeds, appointments are made, people elected to boards and commission, the best person for the job will be chosen. There will not be "I am Borough" and "you are Township". Everyone must elect the best person. If more persons from the Borough are chosen, it will no longer be Borough. It will be PRINCETON. Everyone will be *united*. The best interests of the entire community will come into play. Let's put artificial boundaries behind us, Ms. Berkelhammer will vote "YES" consolidation.

Ben Warren resident of the Borough said that there are hidden facts which have not come to light (\$1.2 million for trash collection) and the CGR Report on page 6 (why was not the whole amount put into the report). Therefore, Mr. Warren will vote "NO" on consolidation due to the facts that he feels there are hidden facts which have not come to light.

Mr. Simon responded that there is no finagling with the numbers. The \$3.16 is savings on current services. The Borough's trash pickup is neither increased nor decreased in the cost analysis. In terms of savings, there is neither savings nor loss for Borough trash pickup, and the only added cost to the municipal budget for trash pickup is the \$1.2 million for collection in the Township.

Elizabeth Bates, a member of the Human Services Commission, has resided in both the Borough and Township. Ms. Bates focused on two issues: emergencies and services to the vulnerable. Hurricane Irene showed that the town is not equipped for a crisis situation. Human Services, which takes care of and advocates for the vulnerable (people who may not speak, cannot vote or understand the form of government), currently reports to two municipal governments. This creates inefficiencies in the delivery of services to this population. In a consolidated Princeton there would be a whole community, one not divided, where Human Services would no longer have to go to two governments to adequately serve the people who need its services. Ms. Bates will vote "YES" for consolidation.

Alexie Assmus, resident of the Borough, had a comment on the transition costs shown in documents obtained from the Borough and Township. Ms. Assmus feels this estimate was done too quickly and municipal employees were given under 24 hours to make the estimate. Most of them were unable to do so and did not give estimates. IT gave a well written estimate and put the transition cost at \$2 million dollars, which was slashed to under \$200,000. The other issue addressed by Ms. Assmus was the Borough's capital surplus. She received numbers from an OPRA request which have since been posted on the Preserve Our Historic Princeton website. That fund has skyrocketed over the past 10 years. It now stands at \$3 million. There is an enormous amount of money in that fund as compared to 10 years ago.

Ms. Assmus asked whether the traffic officers and the SNU unit work at night? Mr. Metro responded that sometimes they do in the transition model of 60 provided by the Township police department. This would be up to the discretion of the police chief at that time on how he wants to deploy them.

Mayor Goerner responded to the questions with respect to the IT transition costs request. The IT request was reviewed by the Finance Subcommittee. Many of the IT requests were already included in the existing operating budgets of the two municipalities. Therefore, they were taken out because they were duplicative of the existing operating budgets. Another portion of the IT requests was redundant with the costs already itemized for the police transition. A memorandum was developed and is located on the consolidation website (www.CGR.org/princeton) which tallies the \$1.7 million in transition costs and covers a wide range of categories. This request was also reviewed by DCA.

Mr. Simon indicated that the capital fund has gone up. The Commission did an analysis of the Borough and Township budgets for 2011. However, the Commission did not look at a trend analysis. He stated that a trend analysis would have given misleading results. He cited two examples: equalization, where a trend analysis would have exaggerated the benefits of consolidation to Borough residents; and the capital surplus, where 2010 was an anomalous year due to a large one-time settlement between the Borough and the Township regarding past accounting for capital costs associated with shared services. Both CFOs have adjusted procedures to prevent a similar error going forward.

Kate Warren resident of Princeton Borough said that she received OPRA request documents and other documents and letters have found their way to her porch anonymously. She said an e-mail was sent from Commission Chair Lahnston to the Commission members. The e-mail read as follows: "Back in June of 2011, the Commission prepared the submission for Transition Cost Reimbursement to the DCA. It is important to point out that the one area that was especially complex was IT. The original estimate from IT was over \$2 million." "The estimate was well documented; but exceeded the funding options available from New Jersey to Princeton." The e-mail further stated, "we reduced the amount significantly to \$160,000. Indeed, this gives a conservative estimate; but workable. It is consistent with the guidelines provided by DCA and CGR." Question posed by Ms Warren: What guidelines would dictate what the transition costs should be that are applicable to Princeton from the State? If these estimates were well documented, have they exceeded the funding option available to Princeton?

Mayor Goerner responded that he did not know about the specific e-mail which was sent from Chair Lahnston; but responded that the Commission approached the transition costs by utilizing templates which were done by other municipalities which attempted consolidation - the templates were provided by DCA (Sussex/Wantage templates used). The Commission gave its best estimates because many of the items listed incorporated police equipment. The Commission looked at every aspect to include: supplies & equipment for police, legal aspects, drafting new personnel, procedural manuals, vehicle signage, Master Plan revisions, consulting, incidental costs for identity, transition team expenses, moving costs for both physical items and technology and phone system. Mayor Goerner feels that Ms. Warren is referring to the IT memorandum which incorporated many costs which the municipalities were already incurring. The Commission could not submit items in municipal operating budgets because that would not be considered a transition cost.

Ms. Warren asked Chair Lahnston to address the guidelines. Chair Lahnston replied by stating that he agreed with the statement made by Mayor Goerner. At the time the transition estimate was being prepared, Chair Lahnston was in constant communication with DCA and with CGR trying to determine what would be a reasonable request to go to the State.

Ms. Warren stated that Governor Christie made an announcement that there would be a 20% transitional grant/reimbursement to municipalities that consolidate. Princeton received the State grant which supported part of the study, but she understands that the 2011-2012 State budget does not have any money whatsoever for other communities who would like to look at consolidation. Is this statement correct? Mr. McCarthy replied that this is correct because it is not a budget line item.

Dan Preston, a resident of the Township, thanked the Commission for their hard work. Mr. Preston also thanked everyone in the audience for coming to repeated meetings and presenting their comments to make this a better process, if consolidation passes. There are two Township voters for every Borough voter. Mr. Preston is President of the Princeton Community Democratic Organization and they play an important role in the endorsement of candidates. If consolidation passes, they will be critical to the process and they will address all the concerns raised.

Peter Wolanin, a resident of the Borough, feels that is time to move forward. Consolidation is the best option for Princeton's future. He also observed that when the commission members for the Borough had been selected, he thought the deck was stacked against consolidation. He had expected based on their previous public comments that they would not approve consolidation. The commission's research has changed minds both on the commission and throughout the community. Mr. Wolanin will vote "YES" for consolidation.

The Public Comment portion of the meeting was closed at 9:13 p.m.

At this time, Mayor Goerner asked for additional comments to be made by Council or the Committee members.

Mayor Trotman noted this was the last meeting and there are minutes from September and will they be addressed. Chair Lahnston stated that an additional change was made today and there will be another meeting held on November 21, 2011 and the minutes will be addressed at that time.

Mayor Goerner thanked everyone for coming to the meeting. Consolidation has been a very long process; but again, he thanked everyone for coming out and expressing their concerns and ideas. Mayor Goerner is pro-consolidation. Mayor Goerner feels that a debt of gratitude is owed to the Commission for their hard work, whether people agree with the outcome and vote for or against consolidation on November 8, 2011, a thank you is in order to the Commission and to all of the public who voiced their opinions and/or concerns on the subject of consolidation. Remember to vote on November 8, 2011.

ADJOURNMENT

No other business came before the Council and Committee, therefore, the meeting was adjourned at 9:14 p.m., by Mayor Goerner.

Respectfully submitted,

Phyllis Persicketti, Board Secretary
Joint Consolidation/Shared Services
Study Commission

Patrol Staffing

