

Minutes for the Joint Consolidation/ Shared Services Study Commission of

Princeton Borough

and

Princeton Township

October 24, 2012 – 7:05 p.m.

Township Municipal Building Committee Room, Princeton NJ

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m., with Ms. Persicketti 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 July 7, 2012, 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

Roll Call was called by Ms. Persicketti. There was a quorum present, therefore, the meeting was held.

Commission Members Present – Anton Lahnston, (Chairman), Vice-Chair Haynes, Township Mayor Chad Goerner, Ryan Lilienthal, Patrick Simon, Alice Small (arrived at 7:25 p.m.), Barbara Trelstad, Heather Howard, and Department of Community Affairs (DCA) Representative Eugene McCarthy

Absent: Carol Golden, Bernie Miller

3. REVIEW and APPROVE MINUTES FROM August 15, 2012 – A motion was made to approve the August 15 minutes as read by Ms. Trelstad and Ms. Haynes seconded the motion.

AYES: Lahnston, Goerner, Haynes, Trelstad, Howard and McCarthy

NAYS: None

ABSTENTIONS: Lilienthal and Simon (due to not being present at the meeting)

There were six (6) A"YES" votes, therefore, the August 15, 2012 minutes were approved as read.

Ms. Persicketti will forward the minutes to CGR for posting on the web page.

Chairman Lahnston said that the intention in this meeting is not to make decisions, but to get information to members in key areas so that everyone on the Commission has the same information. That is the primary reason Chairman Lahnston invited Mr. Sillars, representing the TTF Finance Subcommittee, to the meeting.

4. DISCUSSION OF PROGRESS, DECISIONS, ISSUES and/or CONCERNS BY COMMISSION MEMBERS IN THEIR ADVISORY ROLE WITH THE TRANSITION TASK FORCE, THE TTF SUBCOMMITTEES and the GOVERNING BODIES

a. Finance - Mr. Sillars gave an overview which was the same presentation he made to the TTF and the governing bodies (presented below). Mr. Sillars said that the report he presented to the TTF outlined the various benchmarks; projected savings based on staffing and how they compare to the Consolidation Commission's report; the transition costs ; the 2012 operating budgets and any additional savings; and important savings projected for 2013, which are 40% greater than those anticipated by the Consolidation Commission.

- ▶ Longer term – By year three at full implementation, the savings projections give the governing body the opportunity to exceed the \$3.32 savings estimated by the Consolidation Commission.

- ▶ Accelerated staffing changes completed in 2012 will result in \$705k in savings to assist in offsetting transition costs. These savings were not anticipated.

- ▶ In addition to the \$705k offset, the municipalities will receive a 20% reimbursement from the State of New Jersey and they have also received \$500,000 from Princeton University (\$250K to each municipality).

- ▶ The Consolidation Commission gave a figure of \$3.321 million of savings (in 2010 dollars) from staffing changes and the number has increased due to inflation to reflect slightly higher salary & benefit levels in 2012 to be \$3.610 million.

- ▶ Salary Harmonization costs were included by the Finance Subcommittee in the projections and as a transition cost. The Public Safety Committee recommended that the initial staffing level be 56 sworn officers.. Due to attrition, there are presently 54 sworn officers.

In sum, savings for 2013 exceed the original estimates. The transition costs are estimated at \$2.0 million vs. the \$1.7 million outlined by the Consolidation Commission, which did not include separation costs. The 2012 anticipated savings of \$705,000 can serve to offset some of the transition costs and the offset is bolstered by the 20% reimbursement by the State of New Jersey and the \$500,000 contributed by Princeton University. The 2013 Budget stands to save the community an additional estimated \$250,000 to \$400,000. The Consolidation Commission, the

TTF and the governing bodies have positioned the community well to meet the objectives of Consolidation.

Half of the transition costs were already funded, per Mr. Sillars.

With respect to the operating budgets, the department heads were asked to go back and start from “0” and build their budgets, which is a slow process. Identified were \$350-\$400 savings above salary and benefits. Mr. Sillars said that the Consolidation Commission gave them a great start with the plan the Consolidation Commission put together.

Mayor Goerner said that they met with the State and the transition costs are listed by category. They agreed to the procedure but the State would like a request in writing. Also, the extra projected costs have to be built in. Mayor Goerner said that built in are the legal costs for the ordinances. The timeline set forth for submitting transition costs is November/December 2012.

At this point Ms. Howard gave recognition to the outstanding job Mr. McCarthy of the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) has done for Princeton. Mr. McCarthy said that the approach set forth in the beginning for savings has been accomplished. Mr. Simon added that the project pays for itself in less than a year and this message needs to get out to the residents of Princeton.

The job of Parking patrol was briefly discussed and Ms. Trelstad said that rather than having a police officer do parking patrol, a part-time individual could be hired to save money.

Transition and coincidental costs were discussed briefly. Transition costs are costs incurred to implement Consolidation; costs that would not otherwise have been incurred in the near future. Coincidental costs are costs that would have been incurred in the near future regardless of Consolidation. It was noted that the timing for coincidental costs may have been triggered by Consolidation.

b. Community Engagement – Ms. Golden was unable to attend the meeting. Chairman Lahnston said that there are several items on the calendar:

Town Hall meeting to be held on December 3, 2012 – which is hosted by the TTF. Chairman Lahnston encourages every Commission member to attend. The meeting will focus on the report being prepared by CGR on the work of the TTF. The meeting will held in the Community Room in the Public Library commencing at 7:00 p.m. Mayor Goerner said that there will be a Township meeting held on the same evening – December 3, 2012 creating a conflict and awards are planned for the meeting, which is the last meeting of the year. The Mayor said he would look at the possibility of changing the Township meeting date.

Celebration Day – January 1, 2012 –a celebration will be held at 11:00 a.m. at Township Hall to say “thanks” to all who worked for, and volunteered for, the community. The “swearing in” ceremony follows the celebration at noon, also at Township Hall.

c. Personnel - Administrators Bruschi and Monzo are keeping people updated, per Chairman Lahnston. As an example a report was sent from both Administrators to Chairman Lahnston and he forwarded the report via-email to all the JSSCC members. It was pointed out that in the report the iXP company (consultants) has been hired to do the work on the dispatch system. They were the lowest bidder, per Mayor Goerner.

d. Infrastructure and Operations – Ms. Trelstad said there is an issue with bulk waste (furniture, etc.). One company submitted a letter of protest rather than a bid and Mercer County is currently looking into this matter. Mrs. Small indicated that there were multiple bidders (3) and one submitted a blank bid with a protest and stated that “it should have been done like this”. If they go out for re-bids, they will not be back in time to put the services in place by January 1, 2013. The township currently has bulk waste pickup to January 1, 2013 and the Borough has it until February 1, 2013. Mayor Goerner indicated that the current deadline can be extended to April 1, 2013 and if a re-bid is necessary, it will be okay to do such. Ms. Trelstad said she plans to write a letter to *Town Topics* on the subject: *Garbage/Food pick-up and the Bids Proposed*. It will be sent to the newspaper to clarify this matter to the public.

In reference to the Bruschi-Monzo document, Chairman Lahnston said that there are many other items in the memorandum from the Administrators, which may be useful to Commission members.

e. Other – Ms. Trelstad asked if, when staff are changing jobs, are salaries being adjusted? Mr. Simon replied that there are few changes being made. However, other changes may result from collective bargaining.

f. Boards, Commissions and Committees -- Ms. Howard remarked that for people who want to serve on Boards, Committees and Commissions the deadline for applications is November 6, 2012. Mayor Goerner said that the deadline is set in order to get applicants and fill the positions. Chairman Lahnston said that there are 70 applicants thus far which is insufficient to fill positions on BCCs. He is asking the Commission members to encourage people to submit their applications. There is a link in the Township web site which has the application forms, per Mayor Goerner.

5. REVIEW of ADMINISTRATORS’ REPORT FROM OCTOBER 16, 2012 (document distributed prior to the meeting) - Chairman Lahnston skipped over this agenda item because it had been covered earlier in the meeting.

6. UPDATE ON THE TWO CONSOLIDATION DOCUMENTS:

a. WOODROW WILSON SCHOOL INTERNS’ REPORT - Ms. Howard said that the students have completed their working draft and will get the report out in the near future. They spoke to some of the TTF members and the students have done a lot of work. They set December 13 as their deadline for delivery.. It was noted that the students did not know about the report being prepared by CGR but found out about it in Mid-August of 2012 and felt blind-sided but have moved on to complete their report.

Chairman Lahnston stated that he had read the latest version the students’ report.

b. REPORT BEING PREPARED BY CGR - Chairman Lahnston said that the date of the next draft of the CGR report will be November 14, 2012. At the Town Hall Meeting on December 3, 2012 the report will be presented at the Public Library. CGR's final version will be submitted in January once the financial information is complete.

The Woodrow Wilson and the CGR report are two different reports, per Chairman Lahnston. The students' report is more subjective and more opinionated. CGR's report is clinical (what took place step-by-step) and explains (or outlines) why the recommendations were made. The purpose of the CGR report is a document to help the incoming elected officials to go back and look as to why certain things took place as well as some of the areas upon which to focus in 2013. The Woodrow Wilson students' report is written for an external audience (the dos/don'ts) written primarily for other communities that are considering shared services and/or consolidation. Mr. Simon indicated that there are sections in the CGR report about issues which were not resolved.

Ms. Howard added that Professor Amy Lerman (Professor at Princeton) would like to track Consolidation in the community and is conducting a survey to track opinions. There will be a letter going out identifying her in Princeton and the research she is doing on municipal government services (for example police). Mayor Goerner said that she is an independent researcher on the faculty of the Woodrow Wilson School. Some of the questions focus on the level of services received in the Township and the Borough prior to and after consolidation.

7. PUBLIC COMMENT - Chairman Lahnston opened the meeting for public comment at 8:07 p.m. No public came forward; therefore, the public comments portion of the meeting was closed at 8:08 p.m.

8. OTHER BUSINESS – Chairman Lahnston said that with respect to the Commission's budget for consolidation – thus far, \$91,138 has been spent out of the \$120,274 budgeted.

9. NEXT MEETING – NOVEMBER 28 (there is a conflict with a TTF meeting at the same time) Chairman Lahnston said that he feels that the Consolidation Commission should cancel their meeting in November and hold the meeting in December. All Consolidation Commission members were in favor thereof. A motion was made by Mr. Lilienthal to cancel the scheduled November 28, 2012 meeting and Ms. Trelstad seconded the motion. The next Commission meeting will be on December 19, 2012 in the Township Committee Room.

ADJOURNMENT

No other business came before the Commission therefore; a motion was made and seconded to adjourn at 8:10 p.m. by Ms. Trelstad and Mr. Simon seconded the motion. All Commission members were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Phyllis Persicketti, Commission Secretary

Joint Consolidation/Shared Services Study
Commission

/pp