

May 25, 2011

**MINUTES FOR JOINT CONSOLIDATION/SHARED SERVICES STUDY
COMMISSION OF PRINCETON BOROUGH AND TOWNSHIP
TOWNSHIP MUNICIPAL BUILDING – COMMITTEE ROOM**

(NOTE THE ROOM CHANGE)

May 25, 2011 AT 7:00PM

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 pm, with Ms. Shabnam Salih 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 May 23, 2011 at 2:00 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

Present: Golden, Haynes, Goerner, Lilienthal, Lahnston, Trotman, McCarthy, Miller, Simon, Goldfarb and Small

Absent: None

Additional Attendees: John Fry, Joe Stefko, Eugene McCarthy, Bob Bruschi and Jim Pascale, Marc Pfeiffer

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3. REVIEW AND APPROVE MINUTES FROM MAY 17, 2011

There are questions about when several revisions were emailed or received. The decision was made to table the motion to approve the minutes.

Motion is made by Mayor Goerner to extend solid waste to the Township, the same as it is in the Borough.

Motion is seconded by Miller.

All vote in favor.

Motion is approved.

4. REPORT FROM FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE INCLUDING RECOMMENDATION (S)

a. UPDATE ON DCA REPORT

Mark Pfeiffer from DCA begins the discussion on the DCA report and explains that the report is a fiscal analysis of the tax impact of consolidation. He also commends the Commission and CGR for the quality of the work they have provided and adds that is it unparallel to anything he's seen in other communities. Further, he explains that the analysis of impact is if consolidation were the case in 2013. He also explains the difference between equalization ratios and the tax assessment issue.

Chairperson Lahnston asks that Commission members to get revisions to Pfeiffer by close of business on Wednesday (June 1st.)

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Mayor Goerner adds that the tax impact analysis (a different document) is a snapshot in time and is meant to coincide with the DCA report analysis.

There is a summation memo, which will be posted online once it is finalized. Mayor Goerner also explains that wording has been added to reflect the request from Goldfarb.

It will include total tax cost estimates and savings.

Goldfarb adds that the \$200 or so annual savings are attributable to the \$3.1 million savings.

Miller explains that the estimated annual savings are not a one shot deal.

Lahnston recommends a motion to approve the Finance Subcommittee document.

Mayor Goerner makes the motion.

Miller seconds the motion.

All vote in favor.

Motion is approved.

5. UPDATE ON ANTICIPATED TRANSITION COSTS

a. PREPARATION OF TRANSITION COSTS TO SUBMIT TO THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY

Lahnston introduces a document that is being developed to request reimbursement from the State of New Jersey for transition costs. This is a work in progress and not yet complete. The current estimate of costs for transition is \$1.3M.

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Reimbursement is possible from the state if consolidation is the final recommendation.

Mayor Goerner states that the finance subcommittee will take on this issue. He asks if there are past examples of the state funding transition costs of consolidation.

Pfeiffer explains that DCA has the capacity to provide transitional funding. In the Montague/Sussex communities, the estimate for transition costs was approximately \$2 million. DCA offered \$200,000 plus a potential \$550,000.

Goldfarb asks Pfeiffer to produce an estimate of potential funding that the finance subcommittee may use in their submittal to the state.

6. COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS FROM THE AUDIENCE

Kate Warren asks if once the Commission gets the funding amount from DCA whether that money will still be available in 2013 for when consolidation actually occurs.

Pfeiffer responds that although there is no guarantee of funding, there will be continuity within the state administration and that that issue will be addressed when the proposal is made.

Marvin Reed asks about the Open Space Tax and adds that more money should be put towards the open space projects. He explains that there will be little to no competition for state aid for transitional funding. He also suggests that the Commission and municipalities be as frugal as possible and to keep in mind that we have three years for consolidation to fully occur.

Mayor Goerner responds that the Open Space Tax is revenue neutral.

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Yina Moore She asks how the unique revenues received by the Borough will be treated. Simon responds that all this was taken into consideration and that the Borough has higher costs and higher revenues.

Ann Neumann explains that she finds consolidation troubling and asks that shared services be put on the ballot along with the consolidation question. She adds concerns about the different cultural and lifestyle issues between the Borough and Township – that the borough has a walking culture and the Township has a car culture.

Mayor Goerner responds that the Commission has heard about the walk-ability issue before. He explains that across municipality borders the two Princetons do share many of the same values.

Ann Neumann adds that the Dinky and library issue are evidence of political differences between the two municipalities.

Marvin Reed explains that as the former Borough mayor he saw the library debate play out and explained that people from both municipalities had differing views on where the library should be located. One's opinion was not based solely on where he/she lived.

Jill Jaracha asks if budgets will be combined or whether municipalities will be starting fresh? She also if the commission did strategic planning. She further explains that the state is looking for municipalities to tighten their belts and if consolidation does not happen what the negative consequences from the state could be.

Mayor Goerner responds that the LUARC Commission helped create the consolidation process. He does not know what the state will do in the case that consolidation does not happen and it may be an issue of concern.

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Goldfarb asks Reed about the LUARC.

Reed explains that certain commissions such as the D& R Commission are losing funding. There is active legislation pending to rejuvenate the LUARC.

Miller responds to the other portion of the question and explains that the Commission did not simply put two budgets together. They analyzed the budgets and structures. However it is not in the scope of the Commission's goal to do strategic planning.

**7. DISCUSS AND VOTE ON RECOMMENDATION TO TOWNSHIP
COMMITTEE AND BOROUGH COUNCIL – THIS IS THE REFERENDUM
QUESTION**

Chairperson Lahnston begins the discussion on consolidation. He explains that it is a great opportunity to be more efficient, harmonious and to provide better services and community programs and better governance to the people.

He makes a motion to recommend consolidation of Princeton Township and Princeton Borough to be governed under a Borough form of government, with partisan elections, staggered terms of office, a 6 person council, an elected mayor and representatives at large.

Haynes seconds the motion.

Goldfarb thanks Lahnston for the work he has put into the Commission and states that the case for consolidation is strong and important and the process should not stop here.

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He adds that he has a problem with the language of the motion and suggests adding that the recommendation be toned down.

Simon asks whether anyone followed up with the attorneys to ask about whether two questions can be on the ballot.

Mayor Goerner explains that the municipal attorneys said two questions are not permitted on the ballot. The will of the Commission has to be either for consolidation or for shared services. Mayor Trotman concurs with Mayor Goerner

Goldfarb proposes an amendment that the commission recommends that the referendum question be put to the voters in November.

Motion is not seconded.

Lahnston goes back to original motion.

Nine vote in favor. One votes against the motion (Goldfarb.)

Motion carries.

Goldfarb recommends that the Commission puts into the final report that if consolidation does not happen then police shared services should occur.

Lahnston explains that the police recommendation already includes that language.

Mayor Goerner states that it is already in the report and if consolidation does not happen then the governing bodies will pick up the shared services issue.

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Mayor Trotman explains that there will be a joint meeting in response to the recommendation from the Commission that the two governing bodies take up the question of sharing police services in the event that consolidation does not go ahead.

8. REVIEW DRAFT REPORT ON RECOMMENDATIONS PREPARED BY CGR

The report is a work in progress. The Chairs of the subcommittees ask their members for some additional help in the upcoming work.

Stefko explains that there is nothing new in the report, that it reiterates the specific recommendations in the same language.

9. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUBCOMMITTEE – PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE – FOCUS ON PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

Golden states that the issues of concern need to be kept in mind as the Commission continues to engage the community. She explains that it is important to be ambassadors to the community on the Commission's work to date.

She explains that the subcommittee has been invited back to several locations. There are offers to hold events at Westminster Choir College/Rider University and the Princeton Seminary.

Lahnston adds that once the recommendation is complete, it will go to the Township Committee and Borough Council. It is important to understand the complexities and the future responsibilities of the Community Engagement subcommittee.

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Mayor Goerner states that the commission needs to thank the subcommittee for their 37+ meetings since December 2010.

Lahnston adds that the Commission appreciates the numerous hosts of neighborhood gatherings and meetings.

10. COMMISSION PREPARATION OF FINAL REPORT:

a. RESPONSIBILITIES OF CGR AND THE SUBCOMMITTEES

The Finance subcommittee will be tasked with the work of the transitional funding report.

b. REVIEW OF THE TIMELINE

The final report is due June 22nd. The draft of the report and the submittal to the State of the transition costs will be by June 3rd.

11. NEW BUSINESS

June 8th scheduling conflict with a Borough Council meeting. Time is changed to 5 p.m. and location will now be at Borough Hall.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by Goerner.

Seconded by Lilienthal.

Meeting is adjourned at 8:47 p.m.

Minutes approved on June 22 2011

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