

**Minutes for the Joint Consolidation/ Shared Services Study Commission of
Princeton Borough
and
Princeton Township
February 15, 2012 – 7:08 p.m.
Township Municipal Building – Committee Room, Princeton NJ**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:08 p.m., with Phyllis 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 February 2, 2012 at 7:30 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.

ROLL CALL - ATTENDEES

Commission Members Present – Anton Lahnston, (Chair), Mayor Chad Goerner and Valerie Haynes (Vice Chair), Ryan Lilienthal, Bernie Miller, Bill Metro, M. Patrick Simon, Barbara Trelstad, Heather Howard and Department of Community Affairs (DCA) Representative Eugene McCarthy

Absent: Bob Bruschi, (Borough Administrator), James Pascale (Township Administrator), Alice Small and Carol Golden

Also Present: Jack Ciattarelli, Assemblyman, District 16 (Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex and Somerset Counties)

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

REVIEW and APPROVE MINUTES FROM JANUARY 9, 2012

On page 4, the word ‘transition’ is spelled incorrectly. A motion was made by Mr. Simon to approve the minutes with the noted change to be made and seconded by Mayor Goerner. All

committee members voted “YES” (there were no “NAYS”). Ms. Persicketti will forward the minutes to CGR for posting on their website.

UPDATE ON THE TRANSITION TASK FORCE – BERNIE MILLER, CHAD GOERNER

Mr. Miller said that he volunteered to serve on the Transition Task Force (TTF) Police Subcommittee which will include police, fire and first aid rescue. The subcommittee has not met. TTF Chair Freda will be a member of all subcommittees as was Chair Lahnston. Mayor Goerner said that the TTF had two meetings thus far. February 22, 2012 will be the next scheduled meeting. Mayor Goerner also stated that there has been some confusion in that some of the TTF members are trying to reinvent the wheel. Roger Martindell sent a letter to the editor which appeared in the Princeton Packet and Town Topics and Mr. Goerner said the letter, was confusing in that the letter indicated that it would give the TTF the ability to reinvent the entire process. Mayor Goerner said that he will send a follow-up letter to the editors. Chair Lahnston felt that one of the intentions of the letter was to ‘look at opportunities’. The TTF is charged with looking at the opportunities that are available beyond what the Commission did.

Mayor Goerner said that at the next TTF meeting they will receive a proposal from CGR on project management services. Joe Stefko will be representing CGR.

The two administrators worked with the department heads and they released to the TTF working documents that show the proposed organizational structure for each department under the new municipality. It reflected the reduction of staff for the departments. It did not detail the specific reductions and match up the cost savings which were identified by the Consolidation Commission.

CGR’s role is different in the TTF because they would be tasked to develop a time line and prioritize what needs to get done by the end of 2012. Ms. Haynes commented on press reports regarding TTF’s discussion of whether all TTF meetings would be public. She offered to serve as a resource regarding compliance with the Open Public Meetings Law. Chair Lahnston said that it was decided that every meeting will be advertised as an open meeting. If the meeting needs to go into Executive Session, it will.

A. Set up Accountabilities (at least one member) Between Commission and the Task Force Subcommittees (identified on 02/08/12)

Chair Lahnston said that there were five (5) subcommittees formed by the TTF (to date) and he is asking for volunteers from the Commission to be the Liaison to those subcommittees. Chair Lahnston stated that the Consolidation/Shared Services Commission members are resources and are available to assist and support the TTF.

- (1) TTF Joint Subcommittee for Finance-- Pat Simon from the Consolidation Commission will serve on the Subcommittee. Additional Consolidation Commission members are: Mayor Goerner and Ms. Howard (Borough Councilwoman).
- (2) TTF Subcommittee for Public Works, Engineering and Recreation Maintenance – It was noted that the Commission specifically included the Recreation Maintenance

- crew and not the Recreation Department in general. Consolidation Commission liaisons to the Subcommittee: Ms. Trelstad and Ms. Haynes;
- (3) TTF Subcommittee for Communications and Outreach – Ms. Golden and Chair Lahnston will be liaisons.
 - (4) TTF Subcommittee for Police – Commission members Mr. Metro and Mr. Miller (also on Township Committee) will serve as liaisons.
 - (5) TTF Subcommittee for Personnel – Mayor Goerner gave a brief summary of what was discussed at the TTF meeting regarding Personnel. Chair Lahnston will ask Ms. Small to be the Commission Liaison.

Chair Lahnston said that the liaison should be connected with the work of the subcommittee and bring requests back to the Commission to support the work of TTF.

COMMENTS FROM ASSEMBLYMAN JACK M. CIATTARELLI, LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT 16

(a) Legislation to Support Consolidation Transition Costs

Chair Lahnston said that there is Legislation being prepared which supports some of the Transition costs. Assemblyman Jack Ciattarelli is working on this legislation. Assemblyman Ciattarelli stated that he is an advocate of Consolidation. Property taxes are high. Assemblyman Ciattarelli further stated that there is proposed legislation – Assembly Bill No 471-- which will authorize the special appropriations for payment of certain expenses incurred by municipalities to implement a municipal consolidation. Assemblyman Ciattarelli said that any upfront non-recurring expenses specific to municipal consolidation can be amortized for five years. In addition the State will pick up the cost for year one. Mr. Simon asked if there are transition costs which are deferred to after a year, would they qualify for reimbursement? Assemblyman Ciattarelli said the answer would be “yes”. Any of the non-recurring expenses, may not happen in year one; but can be used within the five year time-frame. The new municipal entity is responsible for years two through five. Mayor Goerner looked at the proposed legislation distributed by the Assemblyman and said it was consistent with the terms which were discussed with the Governor's office in the fall of 2011. The town still has the ability for emergency appropriations without the legislation for non-recurring transition costs. However, they will have to go before the local Finance Board for approval. The town can adopt their municipal budgets for this year not including the non-recurring transition costs. Until the Assembly Bill 471 is passed, the town will have to go before the local Finance Board. Mayor Goerner stated that they received assurance from Governor Christie that they will receive their 20% grant to off-set their first year of transition costs. Chair Lahnston asked if there is anything that the Consolidation Commission should be doing to support what is being proposed? Assemblyman Ciattarelli said Consolidation is the top priority on his to-do list. This item will be placed on the docket via fast-track. If it does not move forward then the Consolidation Commission will be asked to make calls, send e-mails, etc. Mr. McCarthy indicated that there is language in the State budget currently referencing the 20 percent grant. Chair Lahnston asked if there were any other comments, or questions. None were posed at this time. Chair Lahnston stated that if needed, Assemblyman Ciattarelli should reach out to the Consolidation Commission because they are willing to help any way they can.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The Public Comments portion of the meeting opened at 7:59 p.m. No one from the public came forward; therefore, a motion was made to close the Public Comments portion of the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

REVIEW THE COMMISSION'S PANEL AT THE "COURAGE TO CONNECT: SEMINAR ON MARCH 28, 2012 (IN EAST BRUNSWICK)

Chair Lahnston said that the panel consists of five residents and they have 1 hour and 20 minutes. The lead is Mayor Goerner. The presentations of the Commission will be as follows: 1.) Mayor Goerner will provide the background up to the forming of the Commission. 2.) Chair Lahnston will cover the process through the approval by the municipal bodies in July 2011. 3.) The formation of the Commission Subcommittees will be presented by Mr. Miller. 4.) The work of the Community Engagement Subcommittee will be handled by Mrs. Small. 5.) The Campaign to Unite Princeton will be discussed by Liz Lempert. The fee for the seminar is \$35.00 but will be waived for members of the Commission. Chair Lahnston indicated that the work on this presentation would be completed by March 16, 2012.

A request from Courage to Connect for a written overview of the "Roles and Responsibilities of a Commissioner" has been completed by Alice Small, Patrick Simon and Carol Golden. The 'Roles and Responsibilities for Consolidation/Shared Services Commission Members' report is a very good piece of work, per Chair Lahnston, and will be published in a booklet prepared by Courage to Connect.

OTHER BUSINESS

- a. **Budget Update** – Chair Lahnston said that he did not receive a copy of the budget from Administrator Pascale. He will obtain a copy and get it to the Commission members. He does not feel that there is anything significant change from the last report. The Commission is still operating with the same budget received 1½ years ago. There are some very small charges from CGR and for secretarial work during the past month. Chair Lahnston said he would e-mail a copy of the updated budget to the Commission in the next couple of days.
- b. **Other** – Chair Lahnston will send an e-mail if there will be a meeting (he does not want a meeting if there is not enough substance). Mr. Miller said that the commission members will serve on the TTF subcommittees and they should be involved by the next meeting. Mr. Miller would like a meeting.

Mr. Simon said that on Saturday at 9:00 a.m., Princeton Future will be hosting a session on 'Emergency Management' lasting approximately three hours. Mr. Lilienthal 'thanked' Bill Metro for all his hard work in preparation for this upcoming Princeton Future meeting. Also, it was noted that Princeton Future will hold a discussion at a later date concerning 'Physical Plant Issues' in Princeton (because buildings will be in transition) and community input is important.

NEXT MEETING DATE – MARCH 21, 2012

ADJOURNMENT

No other business came before the Committee, therefore, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Ms. Trelstad and the motion was seconded by Mayor Goerner. The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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

/p