

CLAY TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES – Police Regionalization  
August 31, 2011

The Supervisors of Clay Township met on a specially scheduled meeting date of August 31, 2011, at the Clay Township Municipal Office, 870 Durlach Road, Stevens, Pennsylvania, at a time and place duly established to hold such a meeting, and advertised and posted in accordance with the Second Class Township Code and the Sunshine Law.

Supervisors present were Timothy Lausch, Chairman, and Justin Harnish, Vice-Chairman and Keith Martin, Secretary.

Clay Township employee present was Bruce Leisey, Township Manager.

Also attending were those listed on the meeting attendance sheet, which is attached to these Minutes.

Tim Lausch called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

**Opening Comments by Board of Supervisors**

Tim Lausch reviewed with the audience the meeting format.

**Overview of Regionalization Study**

Carl A. Segatti provided an overview of the process of the police regionalization study.

**How does a Regional Police Department work**

Chief David Steffen provided an overview on how a regional police department functions.

**Questions and Comments**

Tim Lausch opened the meeting up for public questions and discussion.

**Tom Zeager – 1540 Kleinfeltersville Rd**

Mr. Zeager had several questions regarding the working and personal relationship between Carl Segatti and David Steffen. Was there a hidden agenda with the hiring of Mr. Steffen; what duties did Mr. Steffen carry out prior to being hired as the Warrick Township Chief of Police; who completed the interviews for the new Chief position and why were those people chosen to complete the interviews?

Carl Segatti acknowledged the fact that he and David Steffen did work together at the Northern York County Regional Police Department for several years and are personal friends. Mr. Segatti also noted that because of that working and personal relationship, he removed himself from the hiring process of the new Chief.

The selection of the new Chief began with the advertising of the position. There were 22 applicants for the position. That group was reduced to 8 and then to 4 based on education and

work history. The final 4 applicants were interviewed three separate times and ranked based on those interviews. All ranking was kept confidential until all three interview sessions were completed. The first interview was conducted by a group of three Law Enforcement professional. The second interview was conducted by the three Township Managers. The third interview was conducted by the representing Township Supervisors.

The three Law Enforcement professionals, from out of the area, were chosen to conduct the first interview process based on their professional careers and their non-biased opinions of any of the Townships.

David Steffen also acknowledged his professional and personal relationship with Carl Segatti. He explained that over his 27 years with the Northern York County Regional Police he carried out many duties including patrol and solving major crimes.

Dave Kratzer, Penn Township Manager, asked Carl Segatti how many Law Enforcement professionals contain the law degree that was a requirement of the new Chief. Mr. Segatti said only approximately 2-3% have the qualifications.

Jared Rottmund – 1030 Girl Scout Rd

Mr. Rottmund inquired where Chief Leighty will fall into the regional police department and with the education required for the new Chief what is the salary costs.

David Steffen acknowledged his appreciation for Chief Leighty and will utilize his administrative skills as much as possible his specific position in the new regional police department has not been determined as of this date.

John Doman – 136 Tulip Circle

Mr. Doman acknowledged that he was impressed by Chief Steffen but wanted to know bottom line numbers for the budget.

Bruce Leisey, Township Manager, stated that the entire 2012 budget for the regional department was an estimated 3,306,470 (14% Clay Twp, 41% Penn Twp and 45% Warrick Twp).

The Clay Township 2011 Police budget will be an estimated \$611,000 and the proposed 2012 regional police budget will be an estimated \$462,511.

Jared Rottmund – 1030 Girl Scout Rd

Mr. Rottmund asked what will happen with the current facility debt and utilities.

Bruce Leisey, Township Manager, stated that the Regional Police Department will pay rent to utilize the current facility and pay their portion of the utility charges.

Louis Katz – 30 Meadow Dr

Mr. Katz inquired how many officers the Regional Police Department will employ; will that include all officers from Clay Township and how will the Regional Police Department cover such a large area.

Chief Steffen stated that the Regional Police Department will employ 24 officers.

Carl Segatti stated that the police department will be a 24/7 department. The officers will be patrolling in the Township during the scheduled times. When an officer is not available in the Township to handle a call, an officer patrolling in Penn or Warwick Township will handle the call.

Craig Merkey – 1330 Forest Hill Road

Mr. Merkey asked how many officers do we need currently compared to the number of officers employed.

Carl Segatti stated that according to the study conducted, Clay Township has 4.33 officers employed and according to the study results would only need 1.9 officers to handle current calls for service.

Mr. Merkey then stated so we could have less Clay Township Police Officers now and save money.

Carl Segatti stated, but that would not provide the residents of Clay Township with the police protection they have requested. But with the shared resources of a Regional Police Department that could happen.

Nelson Ramos – 1630 Kleinfeltersville Road

Mr. Ramos asked how many officers are proposed for the 11pm – 7am shift in Clay Township under the Regional Police Department.

Chief Steffen stated one officer.

Mr. Ramos said so once he leaves the Township, we will not have any police coverage.

Chief Steffen explained that officers patrolling in Penn and Warwick Township will handle calls when an officer is not scheduled for Clay Township patrol and the benefit of having the police station in Clay Township that there would always be a supervisor in the station in case of an emergency.

Janice Breneman – 100 Ice House Hill Road

Mrs. Breneman asked if the State Police will still back up when the Regional Police Department is formed.

Chief Steffen stated that in the case of an emergency or for officer safety the State Police will still back up the Regional Police Department but in most cases, other officers on duty from the Regional Police Department will come in to provide the back up.

Roger Zimmerman – 50 Woodcorner Road

Mr. Zimmerman asked if our 14% is based on call volume and how was the Clay Township facility chosen to house the Regional Police Department.

Bruce Leisey, Township Manager, stated that even though the Clay Township facility is not in the middle of the coverage area, it was chosen because it is an updated facility and built to house and facilitate a 24/7 police department. Penn and Warwick Township's have outgrown their current facilities.

Chief Steffen also stressed the fact that the officers should be out in their patrol vehicles and not in the office. Most times the officer will come to the facility at beginning of their shift and not return till the end of their shift.

Mr. Zimmerman stated that he is happy the station is based in Clay Township just for the police traffic that will be seen in the Township.

Louis Katz – 30 Meadow Drive

Mr. Katz asked how the differences in vehicles, computers and firearms will be handled.

Chief Steffen stated that all equipment will be standardized so officers can move from car to car and know where everything is and how it functions. He also stated that there are several grants available to help with the cost of that standardization and there is a line item in the budget for the conversion.

David Kitch – 1500 Furnace Hill Road

Mr. Kitch asked what will happen with the current debt of the new facility.

Bruce Leisey, Township Manager, stated that the Regional Police Department will pay rent to utilize the facility which will be applied to reduce the debt.

Ann Weaver – 275 N Clay Road

Mrs. Weaver asked what will happen to Chief Leighty since a new Regional Police Chief has been hired.

Chief Steffen stated that he sees Chief Leighty as a valuable asset. He and Chief Leighty are already working on several projects for the Regional Police Department together.

Ralph Kurtz – 245 Durlach Road

Mr. Kurtz stated that Clay Township will have better police protection for less money.

Craig Merkey – 1330 Forest Hill Road

Mr. Merkey asked what are the thoughts of the current Clay Township Police Officers regarding the Regional Police Department.

Bruce Leisey, Township Manager, stated that he has spoken with the officers and they are supportive of the Regional Police Department. Mr. Leisey suggested that residents speak with officers personally to hear their thoughts.

Keith Martin, Clay Township Supervisor, stated that the Clay Township Police Officers are looking forward to the advancement opportunities available with the Regional Police Department.

Tom Zeager – 1540 Kleinfeltersville Road

Mr. Zeager asked how much the rent will be for the Regional Police Department to utilize the building.

Bruce Leisey, Township Manager, stated that it would be a range of \$10-12 per sq foot for 5 years (approximately \$70,000 to \$80,000 per year).

Mr. Zeager asked if the Board of Supervisors had spoken with Ephrata Borough regarding police services.

Justin Harnish, Township Supervisor, stated that they had met with Ephrata Borough regarding contracted police services. One concern that the Board of Supervisors had with contracted services is that they don't have a vote or say in what happens with the services provided. With the Regional Police Department we will still have a vote on decisions made. Another major concern was employment security for the current Officers of Clay Township.

Mr. Zeager stated that he had spoken with a representative from Ephrata Borough and the details given to him were different then what was stated tonight.

The Board of Supervisors agreed that going with a Regional Police Department gave them more control and security than going with contracted police services from Ephrata Borough.

John Doman – 136 Tulip Circle

Mr. Doman asked if the Board of Supervisors had worked to reduce the budget of the Clay Township Police Department prior to considering regionalization.

Bruce Leisey, Township Manager, stated that the police budget is already lean and expense reductions have been made for several years including the officers voluntarily forgoing a pay increase last year.

Ralph Kurtz – 245 Durlach Road

Mr. Kurtz asked if any of the officers from the Regional Police Department are qualified to complete DOT inspections.

Chief Steffen stated that there is an officer trained as a weight master.

Glenn Hursh – 515 Clearview Road

Mr. Hursh asked if the officer that is covering Clay Township is busy on an emergency call, who will cover for that officer if another incident happens in Clay Township. Mr. Hursh stated that right now the current Chief would cover. He asked Chief Steffen if he would be responding to calls.

Chief Steffen stated that the coverage area will be broken into patrol districts/zones. Out of natural instinct officers will maneuver themselves towards the area that the first officer is in, in case the need of backup occurs. Chief Steffen also stated that he would not hesitate to respond to a call if it was necessary.

Dave Kitch – 1500 Furnace Hill Road

Mr. Kitch stated that everything discussed tonight is very positive. Mr. Kitch inquired if Clay Township is able to remove itself from the Regional Department and at what cost.

Bruce Leisey, Township Manager, stated that a five year permanent contract is being proposed and after five years a member may withdraw. The cost to withdraw is equal to one year's member's share of the total budget. This cost is payable in increments (50% at 3 months of separation, 25% at 15 months and 25% at 27 months).

Dave Kratzer, Penn Township Manager, stated that the cost to exit the Regional Police Department was spread out to help the Township incorporate that cost into their budget.

Brenda Becker – 315 West Girl Scout Road

Mrs. Becker asked if all members agree after 5 years to disband the Regional Police Department can that be done.

Bruce Leisey, Township Manager, stated that yes after 5 years the Regional Police Department can be disbanded.

Mrs. Becker asked what will be the cost for a new member to enter the Regional Police Department Charter after it has been set up.

Bruce Leisey, Township Manager, stated that there will be a formula to determine the cost depending on membership status (Charter Member or Contract Member).

Mrs. Becker asked how equipment, furniture, computers, vehicles, etc. are being combined and if new items will be purchased are the costs to purchase those items included in the proposed budget numbers.

Bruce Leisey, Township Manager, stated that all items will be appraised for fair market value and each member will receive credit for those items they are bringing into the department. Mr. Leisey also stated that there is a line item in the budget for "start up" costs.

Dave Kratzer, Penn Township Manager, stated that the goal is to use the items that we currently have and only purchase what is absolutely necessary (ie: uniforms, car detailing).

Bruce Leisey, Township Manager, stated that the start up cost for Clay Township will be approximately the same as the credit received for items.

Craig Merkey – 1330 Forest Hill Road

Mr. Merkey stated that our initial budget amount is \$498,000, when will our budget costs return to what our current budget is now.

Bruce Leisey, Township Manager, stated the cost of inflation, capital purchases and additional members to the force will dictate future budget increases.

Tom Zeager – 1540 Kleinfeltersville Road

Mr. Zeager thanked the Board of Supervisors for holding this meeting and stated that he has heard a lot of positive response on the 24/7 police coverage that will be provided by a Regional Police Department.

Mr. Zeager stated that he has been approached by several farmers in the Township asking if there will be “harassment” issues when the Regional Police Department is in place.

Chief Steffen stated that there is a time and place for all calls. He said that there will be more “passive” patrol throughout the Township since the police station will be located in the Township.

Chief Steffen stated that he has an open door policy and if someone feels they are being “harassed” they should contact him to discuss the matter.

Ralph Kurtz – 245 Durlach Road

Mr. Kurtz asked why our building was chosen to be the station for the Regional Police Department since it is not centralized between the Township’s and asked what other Township’s may join the charter.

Bruce Leisey, Township Manager, stated that both Penn and Warwick Township had outgrown their current facilities and the Clay Township building was built to house a larger department.

Tom Zeager – 1540 Kleinfeltersville Road

Mr. Zeager asked what would happen if there was an emergency call in Elizabeth Township and the PA State Police requested that the Regional Department respond to the call.

Chief Steffen said that, of course, an officer from the Regional Department would respond to the call if requested.

Mr. Zeager asked if we would then bill the PA State Police for the services provided.

Chief Steffen stated that at this time the PA State Police would not be billed for the services.

Jared Rottmund – 1030 Girl Scout Road

Mr. Rottmund asked how often will the coverage units the township is purchasing be reviewed.

Chief Steffen and Tim Lausch stated that the amount of coverage units will be reviewed yearly based on call volume.

David Kitch – 1500 Furnace Hill Road

Mr. Kitch asked what the plans were for the \$150,000 that the Township will be saving by going with a Regional Police Department.

Bruce Leisey, Township Manager, stated that the intent is to use the savings to reduce the new facility debt and build up a “rainy day” fund.

Brenda Becker – 315 West Girl Scout Road

Mrs. Becker stated that she has been involved in several contract negotiations and they can be a nightmare. Mrs. Becker asked how is the Township going to handle yearly negotiations. She also stated that better coverage and services comes with a price tag.

Carl Segatti stated that it is hard for an individual Township to hire an officer if they only need ½ an officer but with a Regional Police Department they can share the cost of an officer with the other members.

Dave Kratzer, Penn Township Manager, stated that each Township will make their own decisions regarding police units purchased.

Louis Katz – 30 Meadow Drive

Mr. Katz asked if the calls that were covered by the PA State Police were included in the study.

Carl Segatti stated that yes, there were 350 calls included in the study that the PA State Police covered.

Gary Landis – 110 Yummerdall Road

Mr. Landis stated that he serves as one of the Auditors for Clay Township and is also a resident of Clay Township. Mr. Landis stated that the budget for Clay Township is already “lean” and moving forward with a Regional Police Department is a great solution to allow for 24/7 police coverage and not require a tax increase.

Glen Hursh – 515 Clearview Road

Mr. Hursh asked will the Regional Police Department Chief back up calls in the same way that the current Chief of the Clay Township Police Department does.

Chief Steffen stated that back up will normally be provided by other Regional Police Officers that are on duty but if necessary, he will provide any necessary back up that is needed.

John Ryan – 470 Mt Top Drive

Mr. Ryan asked if there will be any additional support staff hired with the Regional Police Department.

Chief Steffen explained that the officers with the assistance of software and in car computers will be able to complete most of their own paperwork while working. This reduces the number of civilian support staff necessary. At this point, there are no plans to hire any additional civilian support staff.

Ralph Kurtz – 245 Durlach Road

Mr. Kurtz stated that he is satisfied with the current police protection provided.

Jared Rottmund – 1030 Girl Scout Road

Mr. Rottmund stated that he has a personal comfortable level with the current police officers. He asked if the Regional Police Officers will be rotated around or will the same officers patrol the same areas.

Chief Steffen stated that officers will be rotated around to other areas but assured Mr. Rottmund that all Officers will be professional in dealing with all matters.

Mr. Rottmund asked what is the start date for the Regional Police Department.

Bruce Leisey, Township Manager, stated that the proposed start date is January 1, 2012

Jonathan Zimmerman – 1590 Furnace Hill Road

Mr. Zimmerman asked when the Board of Supervisors was going to make their decision.

Bruce Leisey, Township Manager, stated that the Board of Supervisors would consider adoption of the Ordinance to Enter into Municipal Agreement for formation of NLCRPD at their September 12, 2011 scheduled meeting.

Janice Breneman – Icehouse Hill Road

Mrs. Breneman asked who the Regional Board representatives for Clay Township would be.

Bruce Leisey, Township Manager, stated that Supervisor Keith Martin and an another elected or appointed representative would be chosen at the Board of Supervisors meeting on September 12, 2011.

Ken Martin – 198 W Girl Scout Road

Mr. Martin stated that he feels the Regional Police Department is a good idea and a cost savings for the Township and residences.

Tim Lausch closed the meeting.

**Closing Comments by Board of Supervisors**

Tim Lausch, Clay Township Supervisor, stated that the Regional Police Department allows the Township to provide better police coverage and spend Township funds more wisely

Keith Martin, Clay Township Supervisor, stated that the benefits of a Regional Police Department outweigh the fear of change. The Regional Police Department will allow the Township to provided 24/7 police coverage, save the Township budget dollars and utilize the new building.

Justin Harnish, Clay Township Supervisor, stated that the Regional Police Department is a commitment and serious thought and planning has gone into this decision.

**Adjournment**

Keith Martin made a motion, seconded by Justin Harnish, to adjourn the meeting at 10:05 a.m. \*The motion was approved unanimously.

Clay Township Board of Supervisors

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Timothy Lausch, Chairman

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Justin Harnish, Vice-Chairman

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Keith Martin, Secretary