

**Minutes for the Joint Consolidation/ Shared Services Study Commission  
and the  
Transition Task Force (TTF)  
of Princeton Borough and Princeton Township  
December 19, 2012 – 7:05 p.m.  
Borough Hall, Princeton NJ**

**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 February 2, 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.

Chairman Lahnston conducted the meeting.

**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), Ms. Golden, Mayor Goerner, Mr. Lilienthal, Mr. Simon, Mrs. Small, Ms. Trelstad, Ms. Howard, and Department of Community Affairs (DCA) Representative Eugene McCarthy

**Absent:** Vice-Chair Haynes, Mr. Miller and Administrator Bruschi (Borough)

**TTF Members Present:** Vice-Chairman Sillars, Mayor Goerner, Ms. Butler, (Borough Council), Ms. Berkhout, Mr. Middlekauff (arrived at 7:30 p.m.) , Ms. Mather, Mr. Levine (alternate), Mr. McCarthy (DCA Representative)

**Absent:** Chairman Freda, Mayor Moore, Mr. Miller, Mr. Patteson and Mr. Davis

**Also Present:** Acting Administrator Monzo (Twp.) and Ms. Persicketti (Board Secretary for both the Consolidation Commission and the TTF)

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Consolidation Commission** – October 24, 2012 – Mrs. Small said that on page 3, paragraph 5, Mr. McCarthy’s name was spelled incorrectly. The noted change will be made. A motion was made to approve the minutes with the amended change by Ms. Trelstad and Mrs. Small seconded the motion. A general “YES” vote took place and all commission members were in favor. Motion passes and minutes approved.

Also, in the October 24, 2012 minutes, the August 15, 2012 minutes were approved. However, Mr. McCarthy voted. It was pointed out that Mr. McCarthy cannot vote because he is not a voting member. Therefore the minutes of August 15 were not officially approved by a quorum in the meeting on October 24, 2012. Chair Lahnston asked for a new vote of the Commission members present on December 19, 2012 to approve the minutes of August 15, 2012. Mrs. Small made a motion to approve the minutes of August 15, 2012 and Ms. Trelstad seconded the motion. All commission members (Golden, Trelstad, Howard, Goerner, Small and Lahnston) were in favor. Mr. Lillienthal and Mr. Simon ‘abstained’ because they were not at the meeting on August 15, 2012. Motion passes and minutes of August 15, 2012 are approved by a quorum.

**Transition Task Force** – Vice Chair Sillars asked for a motion to approve the November 28, 2012 minutes as read. The motion was made by Ms. Butler and Mayor Goerner seconded the motion. A general “AYES” vote took place and all TTF members were in favor. Motion passes and minutes approved.

## **WOODROW WILSON PRESENTATION**

Chairman Lahnston ‘thanked’ Mr. Logan Clark for coming to the meeting. Chairman Lahnston said that there were five (5) students involved in the project and they did not get credit nor did they receive any pay for the work they conducted which commenced in March of 2012. The students looked at the transition process and consolidation from an outside perspective. They did analysis and provided documentation on the transition. The document prepared by the students looks at issues and how to make them better. Their product is not final. Once completed the students’ report will go on the new Princeton web-page, as well as CGR’s web page and will also be sent to Department of Community Affairs (DCA).

Chairman Lahnston introduced Logan Clark who represented the five (5) students who submitted the document. Mr. Clark gave a brief background on himself and also noted that he is a resident of Princeton. Four of the students are enrolled in the Public Affairs Program and are obtaining their Masters Degree. Mr Clark said the students accomplished the following: open discussion, review the work of the transition process, discuss transition learnings and recommendations and finally answer questions and make observations. Each one of the five students took on a subcommittee within the TTF umbrella (Facilities, Finance, Infrastructure & Operations, Personnel and Public Safety). Their research mythology included capturing data to the extent possible.

Mr. Clark indicated that CGR wrote the CGR report to document events and actions. The Woodrow Wilson students – different than CGR -- did a subjective analysis of the transition process. Their report does include some criticism, per Mr. Clark. He reiterated that they received no credit and conducted their research while carrying their school load, taking care of their families and traveling. Mr. Clark also noted the students were impressed with the TTF as well as the Consolidation Commission. Mr. Clark said that he knew that Consolidation in Princeton was attempted three times and failed. Many factors made this time different to include: Consolidation leadership, the TTF, the TTF subcommittees, the Governing Bodies and DCA.

Recommendations (by the students):

- (1) They question the structure and sequence for setting up the TTF. However, the municipal leaders overcame this and improvements were made. – Mr. Clark feels that some people were shut out who had a lot to bring to the table, for example the administrators had no voting rights.
- (2) Mr. Clark recommended a Hybrid Option Model, which would create a TTF composed of the Consolidation Study Commission & governing body and administrators from each municipality. Give votes and proper deference to professional administrators;
- (3) Define the Transition Scope of Work – There is no precedent in the State of NJ for establishing a TTF Resolution. It is recommended that a resolution establishing the TTF be clear on the parameters of its authority and also set jurisdictional boundaries. This should be communicated to the subcommittees as well.
- (4) Regarding money matters they should harmonize the budgets of both communities. They should also seek clarity on cost reimbursement for transition – especially getting clarity from the State on cost reimbursement.
- (5) In terms of transparency, there were concerns and confusion over disclosure requirements. Recommendation: Set Open Public Meeting Policy (OPMA) prior to the deliberations.

On the issue of communication to the public there could be greater understanding of the conflicting interests at play, for example maintaining service vs. the cost of service the TTF should take measures to ensure a balanced representation of the interests of achieving both. In order to balance the issues of service levels vs. savings – they recommend bring on outside consultants to help w/ deliverables. CGR was helpful.

Mr. Clark commented that Princeton has unique resources, especially human resources in the community and therefore many benefits to the community. Citizens initiate and provide a lot of municipal leadership. Due to the number of shared services prior to consolidation in some instances there was low cost and low benefit for Princeton.

Closing Remarks by Mr. Clark (Woodrow Wilson School):

The Princeton residents came together and were remarkable. Mr. Logan is privileged to take part in the process. He hopes that what Princeton accomplished, will help other municipalities.

Audience Questions for Mr. Logan Clark (Consolidation Commission and TTF members and the Public)

Ms. Golden (Consolidation Commission) asked if there was a survey sent out to TTF and subcommittees and how many responses were received. Mr. Clark was not certain. Chairman Lahnston stated that he thought responses were received from approximately half the members of the TTF. A total of 16 surveys went out and 8 were received. Mrs. Small (Consolidation Commission) remarked that the people came together and they had community outreach and she said that the Consolidation Commission worked very hard to get this message across to the residents of Princeton and that is mainly why Consolidation was a success after the fourth attempt.

Mr. Lilienthal (Consolidation Commission) said that regarding the different alternatives – have CGR have continuity because there was a gap in Project Management. He also feels that the hybrid model works better and that the turnover of community volunteers can be mitigated through continuity.

Mayor Goerner (Consolidation Commission and TTF) said that in the hybrid model – the potential of ‘burn-out’ exists. The Consolidation Commission put in the time and effort to get Consolidation passed. Then the process went to the TTF. He feels that the Consolidation Commission Committee members should have been asked if they wanted to serve on the TTF and then move forward to find others. Also, there would be more continuity with using consultants.

Ms. Berkhout (TTF) agrees with the fact there was a gap. They should have started with an outline and get the tasks. Also, she feels that the students’ report is inconsistent. The TTF had expertise in the fields, as was needed. Ms. Berkhout asked Mr. Clarke, “Who stays on to fill the gap that exists for the expertise that is needed on the TTF?” Mr. Clark remarked that he is mindful of the Commission’s time and expertise. Expertise is needed and therefore the TTF should engage new members with experience.

Ms. Butler (TTF and Borough Council Member) – feels that if there is a personality issue with a member on a committee, it may be hard to move forward with a TTF that consists of several existing commission members (example cited: Mr. Goldfarb served on the Consolidation Commission and was against consolidation). Therefore, it may good to have a new committee formed as was done with the TTF.

Mr. Lilienthal (Consolidation Commission) – In response feels that the TTF did the transition and to consolidate is policy oriented, and Mr Goldfarb could have assisted that work.

Mayor Goerner (Consolidation Commission and TTF) – agrees with the hybrid approach including expanding the skills of the TTF. Also, some of the subcommittees seem to overlap: Finance/Community Outreach.

Chairman Lahnston said that a resolution formed the TTF.

Mayor Goerner felt that it was not necessary or helpful. A balance issue is to provide flexibility. In a hybrid model, one does not need to have a resolution. Mayor Goerner said if a separate TTF is created, then a resolution needs to be created. There was continuity and leadership in both municipalities and therefore the setup needs to be defined more effectively..

Mr. McCarthy (Consolidation Commission & TTF) with respect to the statutory reference for a TTF – there is none. The current statute refers to the state committees.

Mr. Simon (Consolidation Commission) – stated that the TTF is a local creation of Princeton.

Mr. Singer (Public) – said that it what needs to be considered is the difference between transition vs. transformation. Is this transition or transformation?

Ms. Butler (TTF) – said that Consolidation passed even though there was strong opposition against it. Therefore it is good have another committee appointed and do the work of transition.

Mr. Lilienthal – (Consolidation Commission) – likes the hybrid model – he feels that the Consolidation Commission helped get the vote passed and that the commission added credibility and feels if they were not an advocacy group to the community, consolidation would not have passed.

Ms. Berkhout (TTF) – said that she did not understand what was meant about the tension between the Personnel Subcommittee and the Public Safety Subcommittee. She said that Chairman Freda (absent) had the committees look at everything and she feels there was no tension and the subcommittees reported their status at each TTF meeting. Mr. Clark replied that the students observed tension.

Mr. Levine (TTF) with respect to the OPMA, he feels that some of the subcommittee meetings should not have been open to the public to attend. Chairman Lahnston remarked that clarity needs to be received by the TTF from Council regarding OPMA. The TTF said it was okay to have meetings posted and announced to the public for attendance and were in favor of the OPMA.

At this time, Chairman Lahnston ‘thanked’ Mr. Logan Clark.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

No other business came before the Consolidation Commission or the TTF.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

No other business came before the Consolidation Commission or the TTF, therefore; a motion was made by Ms. Trelstad (Consolidation Commission) to adjourn and Vice Chair Sillars (TTF) seconded the motion at 8:24 p.m. All Consolidation Commission and TTF members were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Phyllis Persicketti, Board Secretary  
Consolidation Commission and TTF

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