

Greenfield Township Supervisors Special Meeting – September 18, 2017

At the Freedom Township Firehall, a special meeting of the Board of Supervisors of Greenfield Township and the Board of Supervisors of Freedom Township was called to order by Chairman Benton at 10 a.m. The meeting opened with the pledge of allegiance.

Present: Ray Benton, Joe Claar, Vernon Walter, and Arlene Kuntz from Greenfield Township. Maureen Hamor, Daniel “Butch” Giarth, Ed Bender, Police Chief Terry Dellinger, and Lisa Edmundson from Freedom Township. Plus several residents from both townships (sign-in sheet attached). Majority of those who signed in are from Greenfield Township. The local media was present.

SPECIAL MEETING PURPOSE

After the introduction of those seated at the front tables, Chairman Ray Benton stated the purpose of the special meeting is only to discuss the interest in the possible consolidation of the two (2) police departments. No final decision will be made today. Current issues in law enforcement and possible solutions were discussed by the Supervisors and the Chief of Police. Some issues are a decrease in manpower, a decrease in coverage and retention of officers. Smaller municipalities have merged police departments to increase coverage and improve salaries. Chief Dellinger thought Freedom Township could provide police services and coverage to Greenfield Township instead of a merger.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

The meeting opened to public comments at 10:28 a.m.

(GT=Greenfield Township FT=Freedom Township)

Alton Ebersole (GT) said he is against the consolidation of police departments. The police departments were combined 20 years ago, and it did not work then. He questioned the reasons for the decline at the Greenfield Township Police Department for the past 1.5 – 2 years. With a larger population and more industries in Greenfield Township than Freedom Township, Greenfield Township should be able to fund their police department. When ABCD Corporation was considering an industrial park, part of the discussion where there is a viable police department. The local service tax alone will be able to fund the police department.

Regina Clay (FT) stated she has listened with an open mind and heard a police department in disarray and a police department very well funded. She asked Freedom Township Supervisors to remember where they were and where they are. She is against the consolidation.

Bill Lightner (GT) gave his experiences and said he has heard speculations and not facts and asked what is in it for East Freedom and urged the Freedom Township Supervisors, not to consolidation. He said they have a good department that is fully functional and fully funded. Greenfield Township's police department has become dysfunctional over the last two years. The townships tried it before, and for whatever reason, it did not work.

Grace Helsel (GT) stated she had been the tax collector, as well as worked at the township office and knows money is not the reason for the changes. She is sad to hear Greenfield Township police department is in disarray. Tax milage has stayed the same for over 20 years. She felt Mr. Benton's campaign was anti-police and after the election officers have left one by one. ABCD Corporation praised the police department when starting to bring businesses to the township. She is against the consolidation and suggested putting a referendum on the ballot.

Roger Lingenfelter (GT) is concerned with the duplication of coverage during slow periods and the slow response time with a larger area to cover. He felt coverage could happen without a merger.

Bill Sweet (GT) said he knows there is a shortage of personal and thought it could be done but suggested not to get into personality conflicts and do what is best for the residents.

Angie Ebersole (GT) questioned if the funding is similar why is Freedom Township not having hiring issues. She asked if Freedom Township was looking to hire officers.

Cathie Dibert (GT) asked why the merger did not work 20 years ago and is there a way to prevent the problems now.

Regina Clay (FT) stated she was very involved in the meetings during the prior merger. You can look at minutes for answers. There was very little information given to Freedom Township regarding the coverage and budget. She questioned why do you feel information would be given now. She feels a merger is not good for anyone. She suggested Greenfield Township do what Freedom Township – pull yourself together and grow your police department.

Liz Hoffman (GT) said she is part of the volunteer fire company. She is against the merger. We, Greenfield Township, had a great police department. Asked what happened and said we could build it back up.

Grace Helsel (GT) stated Greenfield Township has a lame duck board and will need to wait until January 2018 to make decisions. The merger needs to be tabled until new board. There needs to be more information such as figures and facts. There needs to be an element of respect.

Diane Hazenstaub (FT) shared she has worked with many police officers. Ray has been on all sides of the police and listed his law enforcement experience. Citizens need to be the priority. She worked for Judge Ormsby for five years and seen turnovers among the police departments. She has seen Ray's wife and daughter go into law enforcement. She felt the consolidation was a good idea considering there are not enough officers available.

Judy Ebersole (GT) thought there is not enough information from either township. Financial facts, coverage areas and response times need to be given before a decision.

Melvin Edmindstin (FT) agreed with comments. Train officers at the low wages then go elsewhere for more money.

Bill Sweet (GT) said it is a good thing to be here and the Supervisors have a rough job. He hopes the Supervisors come up with an ideal solution.

Diane Hazenstaub (FT) said officers do not only want higher wages but full-time status and benefits.

Grace Helsel (GT) asked what area do you poll for applicants and the Altoona Mirror should not be the only resource. Suggested advertising in a broader area. Look for a veteran officer and offer wages to retain.

Regina Clay (FT) stated work environment means a lot.

Angie Ebersole (GT) asked that meetings be scheduled in the evening when more people can attend and get more information out to the public.

Charles Ebersole (GT) said workers look for long-term employment and should consider offering more money.

At the October regular monthly meetings, both Township Board of Supervisors will discuss the matter and decide if interested in another joint meeting.

The special meeting adjourned at 11:07 a.m. with a unanimous vote on the motion by Ray Benton (2nd, Vernon Walter).

Respectfully submitted



Arlene Kuntz, Secretary/Treasurer

Special Meeting
 Greenfield Township Board of Supervisors
 At Freedom Township Municipal Building
 Monday, September 18, 2017

(Please print clearly)

Name	Address	Resident of Greenfield Twp	Resident of Freedom Twp
Billy Sweet	137 Sweet Cir Claysburg Pa 17025	X	
Gene L. Nebel	1012 Bedford St Po 102 Claysburg	X	
Ortha Heibel	1012 Bedford St Po 102 Claysburg	X	
Cashie Dibert	747 Buttermilk Hollow Rd, Claysburg PA 17025	X	
Rodney Dibert	747 Buttermilk Hollow Rd, Claysburg PA 17025	X	
BETANNY DIETH	7191 Buttermilk Hollow Rd Claysburg pa 17025	X	
Tyler Dieth	Claysburg pa 17025	X	
Roger Lingenfelter	1026 Bedford St Claysburg	X	
ALTON G. EBENRODE	P.O. Box 472 Claysburg Pa	X	
Bill Lightner	3668 Pine Hollow Rd Claysburg	X	
Regina Clay	430 Clay Rd Cass Freedom		X

Name	Address	Resident of	
		Greenfield Twp	Freedom Twp
ALLAN BASSLER	113 N. MARKET ST (MORRISONS MARTINSBURG PA (COVE HERLD))		
Judith Ebersol	417 Spruce PA 16625	✓	
John Repleck	128 Eichr Ln		✓
Vernon Waffler	123 SLATE DR. East Freedom	✓	
Sereny Flaugh	196 FEATHERS LN East Freedom		✓
Jordan C. Oldham	P.O. Box 385 Chy sbg, PA 16625	✓	
Matt Treon	419 Fern drive Claysburg PA 16605	✓	
led Paul	3508 ME merville R	✓	
Ann Kellr	Lebanon Twp #110	✓	
Angie Ebersole	242 Church St	✓	
Charles Ebersole Jr	242 Church St	✓	
Elizabeth Hoffman	170 Hoover Lane P.O. Box 522 Claysburg	✓	
Evan Biesing	236 Bedford St Claysburg	✓	

**Agenda – Special Meeting
Greenfield Township Board of Supervisors
At Freedom Township municipal building
Monday, September 18, 2017**

Public comment is both welcome and invited. The Chairman of the Board will set time limits for comments. Please state your name before speaking. We request that all residents be respectful when addressing the Board.

The meeting will be tape recorded for the sole purpose to transcribe meeting minutes.

Call Meeting to Order

Pledge of Allegiance

NEW BUSINESS

- **Discuss possible consolidation of Greenfield Township & Freedom Township police departments**

Comments from Residents – General

Adjournment