

**BOROUGH OF WASHINGTON, WARREN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY  
WASHINGTON BOROUGH SPECIAL COUNCIL MINUTES – June 19, 2008  
JOINT MEETING WITH WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP  
REGARDING POLICE MERGER**

The Special Meeting of the Borough Council of Washington, Warren County, New Jersey was held at the Warren Hills Regional High School Auditorium 8:00 P.M.

Roll Call: Housel, Higgins, Woykowski, Van Deursen – Present  
Turner, Oakley, Cioni - Absent

Also Present: John Corica, Borough Manager  
Kristine Blanchard, RMC Borough Clerk  
Police Chief Cortellesi  
Mark Pfeiffer, Dept. of Community Affairs  
Assemblyman Michael Doherty

Mayor Van Deursen led everyone in the flag salute.

Mayor Van Deursen read the following Statement into the Record:

“The requirements of the ‘Open Public Meetings Law, 1975, Chapter 231 have been satisfied in that adequate notice of this meeting has been published in the Star Gazette and posted on the Bulletin Board of Borough Hall stating the time, place and purpose of the meeting as required by law.

**Mayors Welcome and Opening Comments**

Mayor Van Deursen and Mayor Dempski welcomed the members of the two governing bodies, the Police Departments, and the members of the public. She stated that this meeting is a culmination of the Shared Services Committee exploring various ways the two municipalities can increase efficiency and reduce costs.

**Introductions**

Members of the Washington Borough Council, Washington Township Committee, Borough and Township Police Departments, Assemblyman Doherty, and Marc Pfeiffer from the Division of Community Affairs.

**Police Presentation**

Washington Township Police Chief James McDonald gave a presentation explaining how the merger of the two police forces would work. He said a joint force would provide better service, save money, and provide much needed additional manpower. The newly formed department would be able to have four patrol officers, a supervisor and tactical officer on duty 24

hours a day. There would also be a detective on duty seven days a week. The new police department would consist of one chief, one captain, two lieutenants, four sergeants, and four detectives.

Currently, each police department has thirteen officers; the newly combined department will have twenty six officers. Overtime costs will be reduced; especially during domestic violence calls, where it is mandatory to have four officers respond. Additionally, Washington Township's new municipal building will be able to house both departments.

### **Marc Pfeiffer – Department of Community Affairs**

Mr. Pfeiffer offered his comments on the proposed police merger. He stated grant money is available to conduct the feasibility study and implementation of the merger. He stated he has been working closely with the two departments regarding the merger and support from both police departments was good.

Committee/Council members directed questions to Mr. Pfeiffer regarding Civil Service status and the fact that the Washington Township Police Department is not Civil Service and the Borough Police Department is. Mr. Pfeiffer explained that the state had addressed this issue. The Borough Police Department members would retain their current Civil Service status. Any new hires to the merged Police Department would not be Civil Service, nor would any Washington Township Police Officers. The State Department of Personnel would work closely with you regarding this.

### **Council/Committee Joint Discussion**

Washington Township Mayor Dempski asked how long it would take to do a feasibility study. Mr. Pfeiffer stated it could be a few months. Washington Borough Mayor asked if this grant is a matching grant and would it cost the municipalities any money. Mr. Pfeiffer stated the State would waive the matching requirements.

Members of the Council and Committee offered their thanks to the Shared Services Committee for working together and to the Police Departments for working very hard on moving this project along.

### **Public Comment**

Several members of the audience spoke in favor of the merger, saying that it made perfectly good sense to them that both police forces merge to become one.

Officer Christopher Jones spoke on behalf of the PBA and thanked both the Washington Borough Council and the Washington Township Committee for letting them take the lead on this. He reported that a poll taken of both police departments showed 16 – 3 in favor of the merger.

A motion was made by Councilman Housel, seconded by Councilwoman Woykowski to continue the feasibility study.

Ayes: 4, Nays: 0  
Motion Carried

The Washington Township Committee voted in favor of moving forward with the feasibility study as well.

Hearing no further business, motion made by Higgins, seconded by Housel to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 p.m.

Ayes: 4, Nays: 0  
Motion Carried

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Mayor Marianne Van Deursen

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Kristine Blanchard, RMC Borough Clerk