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Consolidation Kickoff

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Photo by Bonnie Schultz

On Tuesday, January 31st, the transition task force held a kickoff meeting that laid the groundwork to help bring Princeton one step closer to consolidation.

The meeting started with members of the team introducing themselves.

The team is comprised of

elected officials as well as six Princeton residents, three from the Borough and three from the Township, with a fourth resident from each municipality serving as alternate.

The members of the transition team are as follows: Dorothea Burkout, Linda Mather, Scott Sillars, Gary Patterson (alternate), Brad Middlekauff, Mark Freda, Hendricks Davis, Jim Levine (alternate), Mayor Chad Goerner, Township Administrator Jim Pascale, Borough Administrator Robert Bruschi, Mayor Yina Moore, Jo Butler and Liz Lempert, filling in for Bernie Miller. Eugene McCarthy, liaison from Department of Community Affairs (DCA), was also present.

Mark Freda, a lifelong Princeton resident who has been a member for over thirty years of the fire department and [Princeton First Aid & Rescue Squad](#), was on Borough council for thirteen years and is a member of many civic organizations in town. "I'm here to help process things as smoothly as possible," Freda says.

Thea Burkout, a resident of Princeton for ten years, is Associate Dean of the [Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers](#), where she is

in charge of all the administrative tasks at the school such as personnel, budget, and space.

Scott Sillars has been a resident of Princeton for thirteen years. “My background is in corporate finance for a number of medium-sized corporations across the country, mainly in controlling capital markets,” says Sillars. He has worked at Isles in Trenton and is also Chairman of the Systems Advisory Committee in the Township.

After the introductions, Borough Administrator Bruschi described the quorum, which consists of three voting members from each community, with a fourth member serving as an alternate and who can vote at appropriate times. “It worked well with the consolidation commission, and I think it will work well here,” says Bruschi. He also recommended the formation of subcommittees such as for police and public works, as with the consolidation commission, and explained that he and Township Administrator Pascale would be available to help staff these subcommittees and provide input.

“The important thing to remember is that we have, from this day, eleven months,” says Goerner, “and we need to prioritize the tasks that must be completed before the January 1st, 2013 reorganization of the new governing body.” He suggested starting with a priority outline and timeline in which those tasks need to be completed, a task that was assigned to the administrators.

Chad Goerner told the team that the consolidation commission will also be available as a resource in an advisory capacity.

Another order of business involved Township Administrator Pascale’s suggestion to hire an architect to “start putting bodies in the Township Hall, Borough Hall, and the Recreation complex” and recommended KSS Architects, who designed the Township building and has submitted a proposal to help with office planning. However, the team moved to table the proposal until they complete the organizational charts and know what office space is needed.

The team elected Mark Freda as chair of the transition team and Scott Sillars as vice chair. They also touched on the Early Retirement Incentive (ERI) program. Chad Goerner suggested the team look at all aspects of staffing reductions and made a formal request to the administrators to produce the budget numbers so that the team can evaluate the merits of the ERI. There are also plans to set up a website similar to what was available with the

consolidation commission.

The transition team will meet frequently at first; the next transition task force meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 8th, and eventually will be on alternate Wednesdays.

About the Author »



Bonnie Schultz

Bonnie Schultz has worked as a technology and marketing writer in the Boston area. She moved here in 1997 and is the mother of two boys. Since 2007, Bonnie has been blogging about food and community happenings in the Princeton area.

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