

[Home](#)

Consolidation Document Finalized

ARTICLE | JUNE 23, 2011 - 10:15PM | BY BONNIE SCHULTZ



After a long, arduous process of discussion and edits by Princeton Borough and Township officials, the issue of consolidation is one step closer to being on the ballot. A Wednesday evening meeting hammered out the details of a final recommendation

to the governing bodies by the [Consolidation Commission](#). On July 25th, another joint meeting at Princeton Township Hall will discuss whether to put the consolidation question to a vote in November.

While members of both the Township and Borough agreed that the commission's final recommendations represented a thorough analysis of the effects of combining the two municipalities, Borough Councilman David Goldfarb objected to the "marketing tone" of the document's foreword. He said "There are reasons why consolidation is good for the community, but we shouldn't start off by selling it."

Borough Mayor Mildred Trotman did not disagree, but pointed out that this was consistent with the Consolidation Commission's 9 to 1 vote last month in favor of consolidation (Goldfarb cast the single dissenting vote). Township Mayor Chad Goerner reminded Goldfarb that the foreword had incorporated a lot of the concerns that Goldfarb had raised in earlier meetings.

Councilman Goldfarb complained that the document dismissed all the disadvantages of consolidation. However he said that if everyone was happy

with it, he would vote against it, and then they could move on.

Mayor Goerner expressed frustration with Councilman Goldfarb, exclaiming that he was tired of the whole committee being held hostage by one person, comparing it to a “filibuster”. Goerner did suggest editing the cover letter to say the committees are “proud of the analysis” in support of the recommendations made, as opposed to saying they are proud of the recommendations, and Goldfarb agreed to sign it.

Other topics discussed were issues such as reduction of police staffing through consolidation. Clarification was recommended to reassure the public that Princeton wouldn't tolerate a disruption in service, and that the reduction in the police force would most likely occur through attrition and retirements.

On the financial front, the meeting agreed on the need to clearly state Princeton's AAA bond rating because of the combined tax base and the excellent credit ratings of both the Borough and the Township. DCA (Department of Community Affairs) member Eugene McCarthy said that the improvement in bond ratings, which consolidation can only help, needs to be clearly explained to the community.

The annual tax savings by average homeowners have been computed as roughly \$442 in Princeton Borough and \$248 in Princeton Township. These figures are computed as annual savings without the equalization rate. Borough Councilman Patrick Simon said that it should be clearly articulated to the public that these are annual tax savings and not a one-time benefit.

Other financial considerations of the Consolidation Document involved the 2012 reassessment to take effect in the 2013 tax year. Mayor Goerner expressed the importance of making it clear this would be a reassessment done by the Tax Assessor's Office and not a revaluation. The other members agreed that the language needed to clarify that the impact would be much smaller than what Princeton experienced during the 2010 revaluation of properties, which was a costly, contentious, and difficult process.

At the conclusion of the meeting Marvin Reed, from LUARCC (Local Unit Alignment, Reorganization and Consolidation Commission), described as “amazing” the amount of work by the CGR (Committee of Governmental Research) and DCA (Department of Community Affairs). LUARCC is a state panel established in 2007 to examine realigning New Jersey's local governments and the services they provide.

Reed said what happened in Princeton regarding consolidation efforts made it clear that analysis alone doesn't work unless the governing bodies work together to reduce the cost of government in the municipality. He feels that once the public hears about the Princeton report, "they will not look at consolidation as such a bad thing."

Attachment	Size
Foreword - APPROVED JUNE 22 2011.pdf	89.78 KB
Official Recommendations - APPROVED JUNE 22 2011.pdf	248.07 KB
Other Financial Considerations - APPROVED JUNE 22 2011.pdf	157.63 KB
Princeton Consolidation DCA Fiscal Report with Appendix.pdf	2.24 MB

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, through her blog "[The Blog That Ate New Jersey](#)".

RELATED TERMS: Consolidation Borough Princeton Borough Princeton Township Township Princeton Township Hall Chad Goerner Councilman David Goldfarb Marvin Reed mayor Mildred Trotman New Jersey Princeton, New Jersey

Comments

ADD NEW
COMMENT

Post new comment »

Your name:

E-mail:

The content of this field is kept private and will not be shown publicly.

Homepage:

Subject:

Comment: *

- Web page addresses and e-mail addresses turn into links automatically.
- Allowed HTML tags: <a> <cite> <code> <dl> <dt> <dd> <div> <object> <embed>
- Lines and paragraphs break automatically.
- You may use <swf file="song.mp3"> to display Flash files inline

More information about formatting options

Notifications

Do not send notifications for this update.

CAPTCHA

This question is for testing whether you are a human visitor and to prevent automated spam submissions.



What code is in the image?: *

Enter the characters shown in the image.

PREVIEW

Google Videos Like This »



powered by

[Borough Chad Goerner Councilman David Goldfarb mayor New Jersey Princeton Borough Princeton Township Princeton, New Jersey Township](#)

[LATEST NEWS](#) | [TOWN TALK](#) | [RESOURCES](#) | [EVENTS](#) |

[Advertise](#) [About Us](#) [Terms of Use](#) [Privacy Policy](#)

Powered by