

**Regional Police Development Committee
North Cornwall Township & North Lebanon Township
February 22, 2024**

Call to Order:

The February 22, 2024, meeting of the Regional Police Development Committee was called to order by Mike Wahmann at 3:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. In attendance were Justin Thompson, NCT Manager; Chief Harry Ward, NCT Police Department; Mike Wahmann, NCT Supervisor, Ron Sell, NCT Supervisor; Lori Books, NLT Manager, Chief Timothy Knight, NLT Police Department, Arden Snook, NLT Supervisor and Gary Heisey, NLT Supervisor.

Others in attendance are listed on the sign-in sheet.

Discussion/Action:

Approval of Minutes from January 25, 2024, Mtg. – The Committee reviewed the meeting minutes from the November January 25, 2024, meeting. Mr. Heisey made a motion to approve the meeting minutes as written. Mr. Sell seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Charter Agreement:

Mr. Wahmann suggested a review of the changes made to the first Draft Charter Agreement from prior meetings to ensure all were in agreement and to discuss any more potential changes.

Article 1 – Definitions - There were no questions or concerns about Article 1.

Article 2 – Purpose - All members of the Committee agreed with Article 2.

Article 3 – Jurisdiction and Authority - All members of the Committee agreed with Article 3.

Article 4 – Police District Boundaries - No further changes requested and no questions regarding Article 4.

Article 5 – Regional Police Commission – All agreed with the previous changes made to this Article. There were no questions or concerns with Article 5.

Article 6 – Meetings – No further discussion regarding Article 6.

Article 7 – Apportionment Formula – Mr. Snook requested clarity on “The cost distribution may be reviewed, renegotiated if desired by both municipalities, or at any time any additional Charter Municipalities join the Regional Department”. He raised his concern that the municipality with the citizen at-large member could voice that the costs are not equal, and the other municipality should contribute more. Mr. Wahmann reiterated that the Charter states a change in the cost distribution must be agreed upon by both municipalities. Mr. Thompson suggested adding language to clarify. Discussion followed. No language will be added; however, the labor attorney will review.

Article 8 – Finance – Members of the Committee discussed if a late fee was a necessary addition

for a municipality who is late with their monthly funding to the Regional Police Dept. After discussion, it was agreed upon that a 1.5% late fee will be charged to a municipality who is past 10 days of the due date of their monthly funding to the Regional Police Department.

Article 9 – Capitalization – There were no questions or concerns about Article 9.

Article 10 – Pensions – There were no questions or concerns about Article 10.

Article 11 – Police Headquarters – There were no questions or concerns about Article 11.

Article 12 – Police Record System – This section was missing in the first Draft. It was added in the current Draft. There were no questions or concerns about Article 12.

Article 13 – Immunity and Claims – There were no questions or concerns about Article 13.

Article 14 – Joinder of Additional Municipalities – There were no questions or concerns about Article 14.

Article 15 – Withdrawal of Charter Municipality – Section E- Chief Knight led a brief discussion regarding when written notice of an intent to withdraw should be received. He suggested 24 months, rather than the proposed 15 months of any charter municipality desiring to withdraw from the Regional Department. All members agreed with the change.

Article 16 – Term and Dissolution – There were no questions or concerns about Article 16.

Mr. Heisey requested clarification on municipalities joining the charter, and the fees set forth from that. He thinks the fee set would depend on the municipality (size and population). Mr. Wahmann added other factors can be applicable, such as the number of full-time and part-time officers, and the call volume of that municipality.

Mr. Wahmann would like to start working on what the financials of a first-year budget will look like. He acknowledges there is currently a lot of speculation and misinformation regarding what the costs will be. He reminded those in attendance that the DCED study figures are not facts and are based on larger departments in a higher cost of living area.

Mr. Heisey requested how the assets would be divided. Mr. Wahmann explained the process. Mr. Heisey inquired further about how an inequality of capital contributions would be made up to the taxpayers. Mr. Wahmann responded that the equipment, etc., that they helped to pay for is still being utilized.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting is March 7, at 6:00 p.m. at the North Lebanon Township building, 725 Kimmerlings Road, Lebanon PA 17046.

Public Comment:

Todd Dissinger questioned the order of producing a draft charter before looking at financials. Mr. Wahmann said while there are a few unknowns, both NC and NL know their current budgets and essential costs. Mr. Dissinger voiced his opinion that grant money should not be included in the

financial section of the DCED study online. Members of the committee reminded Mr. Dissinger that it is a guide and is not NC and NL numbers. Mr. Dissinger requested actual budget numbers. Both municipalities have their current budgets available on their website. Dan Bost further explained the process of how the DCED Study is done and how it is used. Mr. Dissinger said he hopes the same appraiser is used for both municipality's inventories. Mr. Wahmann said that the same appraiser will be used for both.

Bruce Sattazahn asked the NL Supervisors on the committee if they have approached their labor attorney about this draft charter yet. Mr. Heisey said they wanted to get the agreement finalized before the attorney looked at it. Mr. Wahmann added that the labor attorney was contacted, and assistance will be given when needed. Mr. Sattazahn inquired if there was a conflict of interest with the labor attorney since he represents both municipalities. Mr. Wahmann said the labor attorney will be reviewing the agreement for legality of language only and there is no conflict because the agreement is a 50/50 split. Mr. Snook added that there is always the option of having another attorney look at the charter agreement. Mr. Thompson explained that the agreement is standard language and is based on several other charter agreements.

Mr. Dissinger inquired about the time limit for the competition of this charter. Several committee members responded that there is no time limit.

Mr. Wahmann dispelled rumors that certain police officers may be fired during the transition from the NL and NC police departments to the start of regional department. No one is being fired, and there is language within the agreement to support that. He also said the rumors of police officers losing ranks and elimination of positions are false.

Tammy Brensinger asked the committee if regionalization happens, and a Township board member on the committee does not get reelected, would they still stay on this committee? Mr. Wahmann said no, another board member would need to be appointed to the committee. Discussion followed.

Scott Artz shared his perspective. He does not understand North Lebanon Township giving up control of 50% of their budget. Mr. Heisey responded. Mr. Snook also responded that Chief Knight could explain the shortages in manpower and longer response times and the purpose of this regionalization, if it follows through, is to improve services. Discussion followed.

A discussion involving shift lengths occurred. Police officers present stated they preferred longer shifts. There is no shift schedule set currently.

Mike Webster has attended all the meetings to date. He expressed his support for regionalization, feeling it will be better for the Township.

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Adjournment: Mr. Sell motioned to adjourn at 4:15 pm. Mr. Heisey seconded. All were in favor.