

Bellbrook-Sugarcreek Merger Commission Meeting Minutes January 7, 2009

- 1) The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Joan Gallagher, Co-Chairperson of the Merger Commission.
- 2) Mrs. Gallagher called the roll with Commission Members Tom Frantz, Christine Tieman, Bill Berry, Mike Shank, Joan Gallagher, Donna Hellmann, Charles Schwegman, Linda Hummel and Howard Ackerman present. Ron Folkerth was not present.
- 3) Others present were Barry Tiffany, Denny Bennett, Mark Schlagheck, Bill Schieman, Harold Rogers, Jenifer Easter, Tony Rubel, Randy Pavlak, Jeremy Kelly, Jim Tharp and Bill Wiseman.
- 4) The Minutes of the December 4th meeting had been circulated and were presented for approval. Mr. Shank moved that they be approved and Linda Hummel seconded the motion. The motion passed with Mr. Ackerman and Mrs. Tieman abstaining since they had not attended the meeting. Approval of the Minutes of the December 11th meeting was postponed since they had not been previously circulated.
- 5) All had been asked to suggest someone to take Minutes of subsequent meetings. Mrs. Gallagher has requested Brittany Boedeker take Minutes of the January, February and March meetings. Mrs. Gallagher was also given the name of Julie Loper who is interested and she will talk to her. Mr. Berry suggested Jackelin Tipton for the position or as an alternate. Mrs. Gallagher said another possible alternate is Bill Schieman. Compensation for the position should be \$25 per meeting hour or any part thereof as agreed to by Mrs. Gallagher and Mr. Tiffany. The cost is to be apportioned according to population with an invoice going to Bellbrook for 51.4% and Sugarcreek for 48.6%. Minutes are to be emailed to:

Joan Gallagher	jsgallagher@clearwire.net
Bellbrook	m.schlagheck@cityofbellbrook.org
Sugarcreek	btiffany@sugarcreektownship.com
Denny Bennett	dbenn60279@aol.com

Mr. Bennett suggested that the cost be shared on a 50%-50% basis but Mr. Tiffany stated that the statute would not allow that to occur. Mrs. Hummel moved and Mrs. Tieman seconded the contract provisions be as described and the motion was unanimously approved.

- 6) Mrs. Gallagher stated that in the search for a group to perform the Merger Study Report, the intent was to ask Dr. Hugh Hinton from Toledo University to speak at tonight's meeting. Unfortunately, Dr. Hinton unexpectedly passed away on December 17, 2008. Dr. Mark Denham of Toledo U. was to get back with Bill Schieman but the University is still on winter break. Mrs. Gallagher will contact Mr. Denham to see if he is willing to take the lead and work with Jack Dustin from Wright State U. on the Study. Mr. Dustin would handle the financial part of the Study and be a local contact with the Commission. Mr. Dustin had previously worked with Dr. Henton on merger studies.
- 7) As recommended in the last meeting, Mr. Sam Staley who is local and has been involved in consolidation of governmental services for the last 20 years was contacted. He is not willing to take the lead in the Study but is willing to talk to the Commission about his experiences in the field. He has also recommended Douglas Harnish of GEN Public Services and John Blair, a Professor of Economics who works with Jack Dustin at Wright State.
- 8) Donna Hellmann looked at six different merger studies involving local groups to determine how they had handled the procedure. She recommended that the Commission contact multiple groups that might be willing to pursue the Study. She felt that if the Commission contacts only one group and that falls through, you would have to start over from the beginning. Mrs. Gallagher stated that she intends to contact each of the people previously mentioned early next week. A group from Miami University is not interested in heading up the study. Mrs. Gallagher asked Mr. Schlagheck why the Toledo group had taken so long on the Washington Twp. – Centerville study. He stated that they did not have a Study Commission in place initially and then each entity conducted separate studies. Mrs. Hellmann suggested that they also contact the Mercer Group out of Atlanta who had done a study for a Miami Twp., Miamisburg and West Carrollton merger. Mr. Schwegman suggested they might use the Mercer Group with the Wright State Group as a sub-contractor for financial and local personnel contact purposes. He also suggested that each group be asked for a statement of the scope of work they expected to furnish. Mrs. Hellmann suggested that there should be clear objectives for the Study before anyone is called and that other Universities in Ohio be contacted. It was decided that Mrs. Hellmann be the sole contact person for information gathering. Mr. Shank agreed that at this point it would not be necessary to have someone from the City involved in information gathering.

9) Mrs. Gallagher asked Mr. Schieman to discuss his work leading up to the Study. Mr. Schieman had extensive contact with Dr. Hinton prior to the Study Commission being organized. In a letter dated November 10, 2008 from Dr. Hinton to Mr. Ted Hodson, he proposed 5 points to be covered in a study.

- Financial analysis including but not limited to additional costs for services currently received from County or State governments.
- Provide strategies for dealing with employees from both jurisdictions including pay scales and morale.
- Recommendations for reconciling differences in zoning codes of each jurisdiction.
- Recommendations for developing a Charter that would consider different life styles of each jurisdiction.
- A survey of affected residents that the Commission could address.

Charlie Schwegman suggested that a sixth point should be the affect of future annexation if a merger is not approved..

10) Mr. Shank stated that since the scope of work had not been discussed earlier, the City needed more time to study the subject. Mrs. Hellmann suggested an additional special meeting to discuss the scope of work. Mrs. Hummel stated that smaller groups might be more appropriate to determine the scope. Such meetings would have to be open and advertised. Mr. Schwegman suggested that all Commissioners read the copies of previous studies. Electronic copies will be made and distributed to the Commissioners. Mr. Ackerman requested that Mrs. Hellman ask the communities or companies in the previous studies for the scope of work from each. Mrs. Hellmann stated she would attempt to find out. Mr. Tiffany suggested that Mrs. Hellmann, Mr. Schlagheck and possibly one other person from the City meet with him to discuss the scope of work. In the meantime, the other Commissioners would familiarize themselves with the other studies. Mrs. Hellman said that the small group could then suggest a scope of work and bring it to the full Commission to be finalized. Mrs. Gallagher said that each of the communities in the previous studies had unique issues and that by this procedure, the local unique issues could be addressed. Mrs. Gallagher asked if someone from the City side would be willing to meet with the other three. Mrs. Hummel volunteered. Mr. Tiffany suggested two meetings before conferring with the Commissioners at the February 4th meeting. By that time, the University of Toledo should have contacted either Mrs. Gallagher or Mr. Schlagheck. Mrs. Hellman will contact the Mercer Group before that meeting.

- 11) Mr. Berry asked if they intend to invite the Toledo and Mercer groups to the February 4th meeting. Mr. Frantz suggested they should have a firm scope of work before the groups were invited. Mrs. Hellmann suggested that the scope of work should be finalized at the February meeting and that the groups would be invited to make a presentation at the March meeting. Mr. Schwegman stated that he agreed with Mr. Berry that the groups should be invited to the February meeting so the Commission could meet the people they might be dealing with as soon as possible. Mr. Tiffany stated that it might be necessary to advertise thirty days before groups could be brought in to make a presentation. Under normal circumstances, the Township is required by the Ohio Revised Code to advertise 30 days prior to issuing a Request for Purchase. It may not be the same for the City. Mr. Tiffany will check on January 8th. In further discussion with Mr. Berry, Mr. Tiffany stated that if you submit a request to three or more groups you are covered.

- 12) Mrs. Gallagher asked for a plan of action at this point. Mrs. Hellmann stated that she would contact the cities and townships who have done studies in the past to see how they arrived at their objectives. She is going to contact someone at Mercer to see if they are interested in bidding on the project. Electronic copies will be made of all the previous study reports and be made available to the Commissioners. Mrs. Hellmann, Mrs. Hummel, Mark Schlagheck and Mr. Tiffany will meet to discuss the points of the scope of work and report back to the Commission on February 4th. If possible, the groups will be asked to make a presentation at that meeting or at least at the March meeting. Presentations will be limited to no more than one-half hour. Mr. Shank suggested that after reading the other studies each Commissioner might add to the list of possible objectives. He further suggested that the Commission be flexible as to meeting dates and times to accommodate the purveyors.

- 13) There was a discussion of how boring the studies can be to read. They range in size from 9 pages to 195 pages. Much of the History of the communities is irrelevant. The executive summaries are important. Lifestyle issues such as burning leaves and shooting guns will be important.

- 14) Mr. Schwegman asked why the City voted heavily for the study? Mrs. Gallagher said "to keep Centerville out". Mr. Shank said that quite simply people think of the area as a community and not as a city and township. Mr. Bennett agreed. Mr. Ackerman asked why people did not vote for the Study? He said we need to know that answer. Mr. Shank said that one of the bullet points in the scope of work was a survey and that should provide the answer. Mrs. Gallagher suggested it would come out schools, zoning and the five acre controversy.

- 15) Bill Schieman has agreed to lease the web site to the Commission for \$1.00 for a period of two years starting January 7, 2009 and ending January 7, 2011. The lease agreement shall be made a part of the meeting minutes. There was a motion to approve the agreement by Howard Ackerman and seconded by Tom Frantz. The motion passed unanimously.
- 16) Mrs. Gallagher stated that for any meeting, there had to be a quorum on the City side and a quorum on the Township side and that any vote had to pass by a majority on the City side and on the Township side.
- 17) Mrs. Gallagher asked who would be conducting the February 4th meeting. Mr. Shank said he assumed that he and Mrs. Gallagher would alternate. Mr. Shank will conduct the next meeting and will prepare the agenda for that meeting. Mrs. Gallagher requested that the Commission set the meeting schedule for April, May and June. Mr. Berry suggested that they all look at their calendars and set those schedules at the February meeting.
- 18) Mrs. Hellmann moved to adjourn the meeting and Mrs. Hummel seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously at 8:21 P.M.