

VILLAGE OF WALWORTH
VILLAGE OF FONTANA
Ad Hoc Joint Services Committee
January 15, 2008
1:00 P.M.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Matt Long at 1:00 p.m. Present: Micki O'Connell, Pete Petersen, George Spadoni, LeRoy Nordmeyer, Rich Simonson and Matt Long.

The November 14 and December 17, 2007, minutes were approved on an O'Connell/Simonson motion without negative vote.

Business: Discussion, Consideration and Action on the following:

1. Educate Department Heads Regarding Scope of Endeavor
Long wants open communication with all department heads to keep them in the loop with what this committee is doing. He explained to the dept. heads present that, in the early stage, they are gathering information and had met with a consultant last month who recommended that dept heads. be involved as soon as possible. Simonson is interested in any comments or concerns from dept. heads present. Fontana Public Works Director noted that their dept. and Walworth's Public Works already cooperate in many areas. Long agrees that functional consolidation is in place already; it's just not formalized and that's what they want to do if it makes sense and will save money along the way. Spadoni invited dept. heads to extend an invitation to employees to give ideas, make comments and be aware of what's happening so everyone is involved and informed.
2. Brad Poltermann, Bloomfield/Genoa City Fire Chief
These two communities merged on their own about five years ago. They first started in 1998, but there was really no progress until 2000. On January 1, 2003, the consolidation was formalized. The goal was to improve services with an overall cost savings. The service has drastically improved, especially the EMS service. They are staffed 24/7 with EMS and Fire personnel. The 10 year plan estimated an annual 4% increase in costs. Five years later, the cost is within \$15,000 of the original estimate. The challenges have been in personnel and, right now, a new fire station. Initially they kept both stations—one new station would save on equipment. One of the savings they have realized is getting rid of equipment by attrition. They didn't sell anything to begin with; they just didn't replace it as repairs became costly. Long asked if there was a significant loss of personnel. No, per Poltermann, two who were near retirement took it, but most stayed. Before the consolidation, they had a private service for ambulance transport. Afterwards, they created a billing service which helped to fund the combined departments. About 80-85% of their calls are EMS. O'Connell asked who made the decision about who would be in charge. The original committee consisted of

the Village president and Town Board Chair, the heads of both safety departments and a citizen member chosen by the committee. This committee then established a commission to oversee the consolidated fire/rescue department. An expense allocation was set up that was based 1/3 on population, 1/3 on equalized assessed valuation and 1/3 on call volume. Nordmeyer asked what caused them to get serious in 2000. Per Poltermann, the politicians and environment were right in 2000 and it moved very quickly then. Their plan was modeled after one done by seven communities in the North Shore area of Milwaukee. Each municipality was responsible for their own attorney costs, but there was very little legal expense until the very end when a joint attorney was hired and the expense shared equally. Poltermann will send their structure and copies of their budget. Spadoni asked how they are staffed. They have two people during the day who are hired through a contract service. This cost them \$125,000 in 2007 and includes two positions at 50 hours/week, all benefits and turnout gear. Most part time positions are filled with their people. They had an independent appraiser come in to appraise the equipment. The Village then paid the Town to bring the costs even. The original agreement contains a plan on how to disband. Simonson asked if they did anything that turned out to be a bad decision. Poltermann said they would have done some things slightly different, but nothing major. Long thinks this may be doable without a consultant and high cost attorney fees, especially with a model document. Petersen noted that the document McGrath did for Pleasant Prairie is available on the internet. Long will talk to political entities in Bloomfield and Genoa City to get their viewpoints. Nordmeyer's main goal is improvement of services and it sounds like it got better for Bloomfield and Genoa City at a very reasonable cost. Kelly Hayden, Fontana Administrator, will contact Genoa City and Bloomfield board members for their perception of the end product, information on costs and a copy of the agreement and service structure.

3. Create list of possible services to consolidate and prioritize list
All members of the committee agreed on consolidation of the municipal court as the first priority. Schut will check with City of Lake Geneva who consolidated and later disbanded the consolidation. Second and third will be Fire/Rescue and Police Dept. respectively. No particular order was chosen for Public Works, Library or General Government. Long believes it's important to experience success with what's done. A check will be made into "dissolving" courts vs. the election date for municipal judges.

The next meeting will be March 24th at 4:00 in the Fontana Village Hall.

O'Connell/Nordmeyer motion to adjourn carried by ayes.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Schut, Clerk