

Fairfax Town Council Minutes  
Special Joint Meeting with San Anselmo Town Council  
Fairfax Women's Club, 46 Park Road  
June 23, 2007

**FAIRFAX COUNCILMEMBERS PRESENT:** Larry Bragman  
Susan Brandborg  
Lew Tremaine  
David Weinsoff

**FAIRFAX COUNCILMEMBERS ABSENT:** Mary Ann Maggiore

**SAN ANSELMO COUNCILMEMBERS PRESENT:** Wayne Cooper  
Peter Breen  
Ted Freeman  
Judy House  
Barbara Thornton

**FAIRFAX STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:** Linda Kelly, Town Manager  
Ken Hughes, Chief of Police  
Judy Anderson, Town Clerk  
Chris Morin, Police Sergeant

**SAN ANSELMO STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:** Debra Stutsman, Town Manager  
Chuck Maynard, Chief of Police  
Jim Providenza, Police Captain

**ALSO PRESENT:** Mike Garvey, Facilitator

Call to Order

Fairfax Mayor Bragman called the meeting to order at 9:12 a.m.

Open Time

Councilmember Brandborg presented a proclamation in honor of the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday of the Town of San Anselmo.

Agenda and Affidavit of Posting

M/S, Tremaine/Breen, Motion to approve the agenda and the affidavit of posting.

AYES: All

Introduction

Mike Garvey, facilitator for the meeting, introduced himself and set the ground rules for the discussion. He reviewed the conclusions of the POST study that had provided a road map to go forward with the discussion of police consolidation. He noted that the current meeting was to decide whether or not to go forward as recommended.

### Identification of the Three Most Important Issues

Facilitator Garvey requested that the Councils form three groups and that each group list the most important issues regarding potential consolidation of services in priority order.

The three groups met separately and formed the following lists.

Group One:

1. Saving money
2. Improve services/efficiency of operations
2. Logical continuation of Ross Valley areas of cooperation with fire, schools, recreation, JPA membership and mutual aid
3. Similar cultures, joint interest in community policing

Group Two:

1. Long term financial impact
2. All of the areas where the towns could work together to save money, talk about "cooperation" not "consolidation"
3. No deterioration of services, may be possible to improve services; need buy-in from all departments
4. No loss in salary or benefits for employees, maintain status in both towns

Group Three:

1. Saving money; lack of economies of scale, larger department could increase costs
2. Continuity and responsiveness of service
3. Morale and comfort of the officers and harmony between the departments
4. Adequacy of facilities for a joint department
5. Public support from both communities
6. Jeopardize COPS/Federal grants to each department

Facilitator Garvey worked with the Councils to produce a shared list of the three most important issues:

1. Long-term financial effects
2. Maintain/improve the quality of service
3. Buy-in from stakeholders including staff, community and Town Councils

Mayor Bragman opened the discussion to the audience.

Cindy Ross, Lansdale Ave., Fairfax, stated that she lived on the border of San Anselmo and Fairfax; that she was a temporary employee of San Anselmo working at White Hill School during the summer; that it was the third meeting that she had attended on the issue; that only a handful of community members were present; that nine different Council members were present with different perspectives on the issue; expressed concern that there didn't seem to be clarity for the purpose of the meeting; stated that it sounded like consolidation would be more costly; and that she would like to see efforts to share services.

Frank Berto, member of Sleepy Hollow Fire Board and the Ross Valley Paramedic Board for half

a century, stated that response time and dispatch services were his concerns; that there were efficient police departments with very inefficient dispatch services; and that the current dispatch was overly expensive and inefficient.

Jo Carson, Fairfax resident, stated that she supported a local police department with salaries determined by the Town Council. She also stated that she was in favor of keeping the individual local officers who already knew the local kids as much as possible.

Frank Egger, 13 Meadow Way, stated that there were 478 cities in California with only one successful police consolidation in the state, the Twin Cities Police Department. He questioned whether that consolidation could actually be considered successful since it was very expensive and resulted in the closure of the Corte Madera police station. He further stated that the only way to save money with a police consolidation was to close a police station; that the Fairfax police dispatchers handled the public counter and also performed police department clerical work; that nightlife in Fairfax was much different than San Anselmo; that it was important to Fairfax residents to maintain the 24-hour dispatch at the Fairfax station; that the trend for cities in California to contract out police services to County Sheriff's departments had been reversed in the recent past with towns like Truckee establishing their own police departments; that retiree benefits, health and pension costs were great; that individual communities wanted to maintain their identities; and that consolidation would require the establishment of an oversight committee because the individual councils wouldn't control the police department.

Mayor Bragman adjourned the meeting for a break from 11:00 to 11:15 a.m.

#### Discussion and Compilation of a List of Components of Consolidation/Joint Cost Saving Effort

Facilitator Garvey worked with the Councils to create a list of the components a consolidation must have to be successful:

1. Save money and not cost more money
2. Equal to or better than current service– If more costly, then must be self-supporting, and with an identified revenue source
3. Maintain 24/7 facility in each Town
4. Maintain/preserve community policing
5. Must maintain common goals and beliefs
6. Allow local control by each Town
7. Have the support of staff
8. Fairfax Measure "F" due diligence to explore money saving options
9. Analysis of the current ordinances and policies of each Town for conformity/differences
10. Analysis to include cost distribution

Facilitator Garvey worked with the Councils to create a list of the components a consolidation must not have to be successful:

1. It must not cost more money
2. It must not result in layoffs

#### Discussion of shared goals, areas of mutual agreement and overlap, common concerns, significant hurdles, issues to be resolved

Fairfax Councilmember Tremaine stated that he thought they should be looking at the two

communities and how they could work together to save money, not just with police services, and that there should be a broader discussion about potential cooperation in all areas. He stated that he didn't believe the police consolidation was "doable" at the present time and suggested that the conversation should be about other areas of potential cost savings.

San Anselmo Councilmember Breen stated that the two towns had the same fire danger, that they already shared fire service, schools, boundaries, paramedic services, a boom truck, as well as shared disasters, and agreed with Councilmember Tremaine that examining sharing the police could be just the first part of the process.

Fairfax Councilmember Brandborg stated that the police department represented the largest part of the budgets of both towns and that the Fairfax Council promised the voters to look at all possible sources of cost savings in the campaign to pass Measure "F."

San Anselmo Councilmember Cooper stated that the councils were meeting to analyze police consolidation and suggested that, if it didn't work out, they could then explore other potential cost savings.

Fairfax Councilmember Weinsoff stated that all possible areas for cost sharing should be explored; that the cost of the police department represented a large share of the Fairfax budget; that they should go forward with an economic study of the possible sharing of police services; that, if the study indicated that money could be saved with total consolidation, that the issue should then be taken to a vote of the people; and that they needed to get the numbers before moving forward.

San Anselmo Councilmember Thornton suggested that they look at "shared services" rather than "consolidation," and that she would like the fourth most important issue to be that they were looking at more than consolidation.

Fairfax Mayor Bragman stated that it was important to Fairfax to maintain their own facility open 24/7 and that the effective delivery of service to Fairfax residents and the financial viability of such a merger were essential considerations. He stated that any study done had to be comprehensive.

San Anselmo Councilmember House stated that they all wanted to save money and share services, but that they were meeting about going forward with the study of the potential for sharing police services. She further stated that the amount of money offered provided only enough to study the police departments but that it could be used as a model to evaluate other areas and that they should decide how to best spend the money.

Mayor Bragman opened the discussion to the audience.

Jo Carson, Fairfax resident, requested that the councils include green principles and sustainability in whatever they decided to do.

Cindy Ross, Fairfax resident, requested assurance that the 24/7 facility would be continued in Fairfax and that the personal relationships developed with the police officers would be maintained.

Frank Egger, Fairfax resident, stated that the Marin Independent Journal had reported that a police consolidation would save \$340,000 a year; that the councils needed to clearly define what savings would be realized with specific numbers; asked when the matter would go before the

voters; and noted that the community had voted on the school consolidation, but not the fire consolidation.

### Next Steps

There was a discussion about how to proceed. It was agreed that financial information about the police departments was needed, that the motivation to proceed would come from the potential for financial savings with different configurations of the delivery of the services provided. It was agreed that the offer of \$35,000 from Supervisor Hal Brown to conduct a study should be used to hire a consultant. A subcommittee with two members of each Council, San Anselmo Councilmembers Ted Freeman and Peter Breen and Fairfax Councilmembers Lew Tremaine and Susan Brandborg, was appointed to work with the Town Managers to prepare a Request for Proposals to secure a qualified consultant to conduct a study. It was agreed that the subcommittee members would report to their respective Councils at noticed public meetings to make any related decisions, and, if problems were to arise, another joint meeting could be scheduled.

Mayor Bragman opened the discussion to the public.

Frank Egger, Fairfax resident, asked when the public would vote on the issue.

Councilmember Tremaine responded that he would support a vote of the people if a wholesale consolidation of police services was contemplated.

John Barrett, Fairfax resident, thanked the councils for spending their Saturday morning discussing the issue and noted that, even if decisions made were unpopular, that the councils needed to look at the common good.

Cindy Ross, Fairfax resident, stated that she was confused, asked if there were any other issues other than financial savings that would be going into the Request for Proposals, and expressed hope that it wouldn't just be an exercise in futility.

Mayor Bragman stated that the discussion of the Request for Proposals would be done at open public meetings.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Anderson, Fairfax Town Clerk