

## Special Council

April 29

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The Special Meeting of the Waterville Council was called to order by Mayor Lori Brodie at 7:00 p.m. in the Whitehouse Village Hall.

Present at roll call were Mr. Bruno, Mrs. Bruno, Mr. Frey, Mayor Brodie, Mr. Rozic, Mr. Pedro and Mrs. Duncan.

Also present from the City staff were Jim Bagdonas and Acting Fire Chief Doug Meyer.

### Others Present:

Whitehouse Mayor and Council, Waterville Township Trustee Brett Warner and Fiscal Officer Jennifer Bingham, a number of members of the Waterville and Whitehouse Fire Departments, and several citizens.

### Discussion with Whitehouse Village Council and Waterville Township Trustees

- A. Possible Formation of a Joint Fire and EMS District for the City of Waterville, Waterville Township, and the Village of Whitehouse

Whitehouse Mayor Atkinson welcomed those in attendance to the joint meeting.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Whitehouse Village Administrator Jordan Daugherty introduced the subject and stated that the recently prepared Feasibility Study concluded that a Joint Fire and EMS District would be feasible for the three jurisdictions.

Whitehouse Fire Chief Josh Hartbarger recommended that a focus group to include the Fire Chiefs, a Council Member, and the Administrators from the municipalities and a representative from the Township be formed to continue research into both a District and the continued operation of two separate Fire Departments. Waterville Acting Fire Chief Doug Meyer concurred with Chief Hartbarger's recommendation.

There was considerable discussion by the elected officials and staff present concerning the formation of a District, the continued operation of two separate Fire Departments, funding scenarios, current and future staffing needs, and response times. Mr. Pedro reported that the Waterville Public Safety Committee had discussed this subject at a meeting last week and similar issues were part of that discussion.

Several citizens in the audience made comments and asked questions about the provision of Fire and EMS services in the area. One suggestion was made to possibly form an EMS-only District and maintain the two Fire Departments for fire services.

Many of the elected officials praised the current Fire and EMS services and their staff. They stated that the investigation of a District is being considered in an attempt to continue the high quality of services into the future in view of staffing and cost issues and should not in any way be viewed as dissatisfaction with the current staff or the performance of their duties.

The consensus of the elected officials present was to continue to explore the formation of a Fire and EMS District consisting of the City, the Village, and the Township, to investigate the future needs if two separate Fire Departments are maintained, and to examine other possible configurations for the delivery of Fire and EMS services in the area. A Committee of ten individuals (four each from the City and the Village and two from the Township) will be formed and assigned this task. The Committee will be asked to work in an expedient manner, but without a specific deadline. The Committee members will be expected to report periodically to their respective elected officials.

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The City, the Village, and the Township will separately appoint their representatives on the Committee. A first meeting date for the Committee was not set.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before Council, Mayor Brodie made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 p.m. Mr. Rozic seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous voice vote.

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Jon D. Gochenour, Clerk of Council

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Lori Brodie, Mayor