

On Monday, March 25, 1996, the Council of the City of Centerville and the Board of Trustees of Washington Township met in **joint session** at Benham's Grove in the East Meeting Room of the Gerber House at 8:15 P.M. In attendance at this meeting were the following:

Centerville

Mayor	Sally D. Beals
Deputy Mayor	C. Mark Kingseed
Councilmembers	J.V. Stone
	Brooks Compton
	James Singer
	James Reppert
	Susan Lienesch
Staff Members	Marilyn McLaughlin
	Greg Horn

Washington Township

Trustee President	Roger Krass
Trustee V. President	Joyce Young
Trustee	Terry Blair
Clerk/Treasurer-elect	Jim Blakeney
Staff Member	Gary Huff

Darryl Kenning was in attendance to present the group with information on the Ohio Revised Code addressing annexation/merger. He also presented the final report of the City of Trotwood/Madison Township Merger Commission. Mr. Kenning stated he would not be able to answer all questions directed to him about merger and annexation but would explain some of the process based on the City of Trotwood and Madison Township merger.

The City of Trotwood and Madison Township started this process by putting together a committee including members from both communities and the school system and asked what do we want for our community and what will it look like in ten years? After much discussion, a consultant was hired to look at what they hoped to accomplish and the consultant believed that merger was the only answer.

Mr. Kenning gave some of the downsides of merger.

Very expensive - cost Trotwood/Madison Township 3½ mill on their real estate taxes for five years. There were things not thought of prior to actual merger. Recovering the expenses will take them approximately 3 to 5 years. The political changes were worked out by having all elected officials run for election or re-election prior to merger.

Every entity got some kind of representation.

Merger is a ten year fix, not a one year fix. There are feelings that the changes that come out in a merger probably if you qualify it, you'll have a hard time saying that it's worth doing unless you get some real gains for the community as a whole. Are we going to save money, are we going to have less overhead, are we going to have more political muscle as a community? Outside of more muscle, you are probably going to come up with more maybe's and no's.

Lots and lots of work involved. There are only a handful of communities that have done this in the state.

Mr. Krass asked about merger between two relatively equal communities and wouldn't the city charter be thrown out and everything started fresh? Mr. Kenning stated that that is what the merger commission decides and in the Trotwood merger it was decided to keep the city charter and make amendments to it. And there were some pretty serious changes.

The merger commission is elected and there are 5 representatives from each jurisdiction. In Trotwood the council members stood for election which was a big help. There was continuity that way.

What motivated the mergers? In both cases (Trotwood/Madison Township and the Mad River Township & Riverside) Dayton was moving through the communities annexing the high value properties and leaving the residential areas. In Trotwood the school was a big concern.

Mr. Krass stated the Township would have to have a good reason for a merger. The main reason appears to be the threat of other communities to take bordering properties.

Mayor Beals asked Mr. Kenning if the entity that is the most threatened is the school system? Mr. Kenning stated the answer is no. There are definitely issues in this regard but most times the annexed property goes to the annexing city's school system.

Mr. Reppert - Can you approach this thing from the standpoint of having a successful charter, annexation, etc? Is it possible that the annexation process be kept in the charter after a merger?

DK Basically, the charter stays largely intact with the exception of how people are elected. There is a charter review committee that has input to charter. The planning and zoning departments merged using the twp. zoning resolution and commitment to redo



all those documents over a 3 to 4 year period. Some issues were dealt with specifically like the discharge of fire arms in residential areas. The charter can pretty much be set up with your own parameters. A city can pass laws, where townships cannot.

Mr. Kenning was asked how comparable the Trotwood/Madison merger is to Centerville and Washington Township and he noted that the social and economic make-up of the two areas are different.

Merger would take approximately 3 years. The two governments have the issue of forming a merger study committee and an election for people on that committee. If passed in both voting districts, the committee starts their work and they have a certain amount of time to complete their report. The report (conditions of merger) goes to voters again. Then it has to be voted and passed and a date decided for merger. This needs to be done in as little time as possible. If the merger is voted down by either entity it does not take place and the issue cannot be put on the ballot for 3 more years.

Mr. Kenning stated it is his understanding that a merger consideration between Washington Township and Centerville would preclude Springboro from trying to annex land.

It was asked what services the City would have to pick up that the county provides the Township. Engineering & Planning, additional police, roads, some bridges, trash hauling. Mayor Beals stated the biggest problem she sees are the roads. The City has spent a lot of money recently to raise the standards of its streets and roads.

It was stated by Mr. Reppert and Mayor Beals that it seemed annexation of the entire unincorporated area would be easier all the way around compared to merger. The Charter could be amended prior to this annexation and the annexation would go to the voters. If approved by voters the annexation would take place.

## **SENIORS, INC.**

Greg Horn and Joyce Young sat in the board meeting when the executive committee met and the issue is settled.

## **ANNEXATION/MERGER DISCUSSION (After Mr. Kenning's departure)**

Mr. Krass asked for feelings, questions on Mr. Kenning's report. The Township would need to have the issue of the city's debt addressed. Mayor Beals stated the city's debt is not what it was rumored to be and a report can be drawn up for the township's perusal. Council feels the golf course should be a self sufficient operation and should not be an issue for the township, but the township trustees feel the debt issue has to be dealt

with before any additional annexation/merger talk can take place.

Mr. Singer said he doesn't want the city to be suprised with items the township has subsidized by the county. He would like the township to show an accounting of that monies.

Mr. Blakeney stated the county subsidies may amount to \$300,000.00 per year, not including the maintaining of county roads. Mr. Blakeney was asked what that does include and he stated some police, planning, building inspection, and partially some roads. Mayor Beals stated they had heard as much as \$600,000.00.

Mr. Blair reiterated there must be shared information and complete trust between the City and Township before any serious talk of merger/annexation is taken seriously. He would be willing to talk and keep things open for the good of the community.

It was felt everyone in attendance should review the Future Government Task Force report, the City's Inter-governmental Final Report and the merger document relating to Trotwood and Madison Township. This could be the topic for discussion of the next joint meeting.

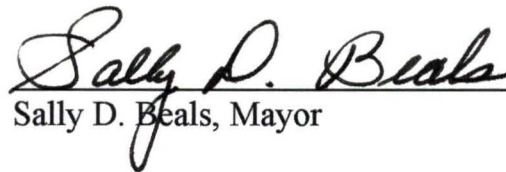
The minutes of the preceding joint meeting were approved with corrections.

These minutes were taken and transcribed by James E. Blakeney, Clerk/Treasurer, Washington Township.

**NEXT MEETING** - Monday, July 29, 1996 (tentative). The City of Centerville is in charge of set up.

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Roger Krass, President

  
Sally D. Beals, Mayor

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James E. Blakeney, Clerk/Treasurer

  
Marilyn J. McLaughlin, Clerk of Council

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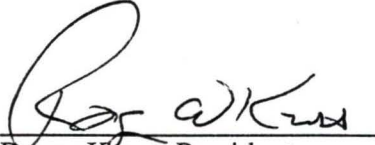
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James E. Blakeney, Clerk-elect

  
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