

Exeter Township/Borough of St. Lawrence Consolidation Committee

Mission Statement

To reduce duplication of services, increase purchasing power, spread expenses among a larger population, and explore alternative governance models to the laws currently governing the municipalities that will improve flexibility, accountability, and local control; the mission of the Exeter Township/Borough of St. Lawrence Consolidation Committee is to review and analyze all relevant facts, figures, cost savings, redundancies of services, community sentiment, and other factors and, if warranted, recommend to the elected governing bodies of each municipality placing on the ballot a referendum for a proposed consolidation of Exeter Township and the Borough of St. Lawrence that, if adopted by a majority of the voters of each community, would bring the two communities back into one.

Action Steps

In order to accomplish this difficult task the following areas and questions will require thorough examination:

- Are both communities on stable financial ground? What liabilities does each municipality bring?
- Will there be potential for greater expense reduction; thus delaying or reducing future municipal tax burdens?
- What are the different services currently provided in the municipalities? How will the consolidated community handle things such as trash collection, current contracts for service (police and municipal trash in St. Lawrence) and streetlights?
- What would be the best form of government for a consolidated community and how would the governing body be structured?
- What is the best way to provide for long term protection for the Borough's watershed property?

Upon conclusion of the Consolidation Committee's fact finding analysis, a recommendation will be made to both the Borough Council and the Board of Supervisors who will then decide if the consolidation issue should be placed on the ballot.

The citizens of both the Borough of St. Lawrence and Exeter Township will ultimately decide if the consolidation is in the best interest of the communities, by a referendum vote.

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Community Information

Fact: St. Lawrence was part of Exeter Township and known as the Town of St. Lawrence, also known as Esterly until it was incorporated as a Borough on April 23, 1927. (As recorded in the Berks County deeds registrar under CHARTER, Instrument Number: CHAR-0010-0296, Book 0010, Page 0296)

Fact: Exeter Township invited the Borough of St. Lawrence to investigate a consolidation for the following reasons.

- Consolidation of redundant services e.g. Solicitors, Engineering firms, Zoning & planning costs, Tax Collector expenses, etc.

Fact: Consolidation Committee meetings are scheduled for 6 pm on the first Thursday of each month except August 2016, the final meeting being scheduled for January 5, 2017. Meeting minutes and videos will be posted on the Exeter Township website <http://www.exetertownship.com>.

Fact: Exeter Township and the Borough of St. Lawrence are the Exeter School District.

Fact: The Borough of St. Lawrence is connected to the Exeter Sewer System and is a financial partner in that system.

Fact: The Borough of St. Lawrence is currently in the first year of a five year contract with Central Berks Police Dept.

Fact: The Borough of St. Lawrence contracts for municipal trash, recycling, and large item pickup.

Fact: The Borough of St. Lawrence is a financial partner in Exeter Township's Trout Run Recycling facility.

Fact: In order for Exeter police to patrol the Township they must travel through the Borough.

Fact: Consolidation affords residents with a municipal office that is able to provide services on a daily, full time basis.

Fact: The citizens of both Exeter Township and the Borough of St. Lawrence will ultimately decide if a consolidation is in the best interest of the communities, by a referendum vote. This vote must pass by a majority in both municipalities.

Fact: If this vote does not pass, it will be five years before it will be permitted on the ballot again.