

## JOINT CITY COUNCIL MEETING

A special meeting of the Coleraine and Bovey City Councils was held on Tuesday, April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2022 at 4:00 p.m. in the Nyberg Community Center with Attorney, Scott Lepak, of Barna, Guzy, & Steffen, Ltd. Attending via TEAMS.

Mayor Nielsen called the meeting or order at 4:00 p.m. Members present from Coleraine Council were Mayor Nielsen, Councilpersons Sertich, Pollard, and T. Troumbly. Members present from Bovey Council were Councilperson Guyer and Councilperson Lawson arrived at 4:08 p.m. Attorney Dimich, not in an attorney capacity, was also present. Bovey Police Chief Hussman arrived at 4:09 p.m.

Discussion centered around two viable possibilities of combining the two police departments:

- 1) One city dissolving and purchasing services from the other. One group remains intact and the other operates under that contract. Pretty straight forward – one department reporting to one City Council with services being purchased by the other city. Transfer of inventory and equipment – impact to bargaining for other city; one Chief. Set up a contract between the two cities – consider who is the natural contender in that area and what would they charge.
- 2) Forming a Joint Powers Entity with a separate governing body to report to. Take existing departments and transfer all to a new one – consider structure, controls, by-laws, transfer of equipment. Who pays what for operating and maintenance expenditures would need to be worked out and could be done by population or size or some other measure. There would be an impact to bargaining as well because all become employees of the joint powers' entity – how do you transfer employees -- consider transferring of seniority, vacation accrual, health and insurance benefits, and things of that nature. Also, would require contracting of administrative staff and equipment to manage separate account to receive revenue, pay expenditures, bi-weekly payroll, etc.

In both cases, retirees would need to be considered.

When asked about which option seemed to be better, Mr. Lepak stated that well written Joint Powers Agreements had more success because they are harder to unbind and appeared to have a more efficient delivery model.

When asked about whether there might be any financial support, Mr. Lepak suggested reviewing MN Statute 471.59 (go to MN Revisor of Statutes).

Throughout the meeting there was much discussion.

In addition, Mr. Lepak indicated that he would be in Itasca County on May 27<sup>th</sup> with the Teamsters and would be available to have another discussion at that time should the Councils choose.

Mr. Lepak requested that Clerk Anderson send him the current labor agreements for both the Police Chief (Teamsters) and Patrol officers (AFSCME) and the current JPA for the Trout Lake Fire Department. He stated that though there would be many differences because the Fire Department is a volunteer organization, it would be a good place to start.

The meeting was adjourned after approximately one hour.



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Thomas Nielsen, Coleraine Mayor



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Briana Anderson, Coleraine Clerk-Treasurer