

## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** December 21, 2009

**TO:** Allegany County Commissioners  
Mayor & Commissioners of Westernport

**FROM:** David A. Eberly  
Acting County Administrator

Pam Smith, CPA  
Allegany County Department of Finance

J. Robert Dick, Chief  
Allegany County Bureau of Police

**RE:** Westernport/Allegany County Police Merger

As a follow-up to the County's December 10, 2009 public meeting, staff from Allegany County and representatives from Westernport met to discuss the potential merger of the Westernport Municipal Police Department with the Allegany County Bureau of Police. Bureau Chief Bobby Dick, Pam Smith, a CPA in the Department of Finance, and David Eberly, Acting County Administrator, represented the County. Representing the Town of Westernport was Matt Gilmore, Attorney for the Town. At the direction of the Commissioners and Westernport Mayor and Commissioners, the group evaluated the feasibility of an eventual merger of the two agencies. The objective of the work group was to assess current Town and County resources that could be leveraged to provide an enhanced level of police services within the incorporated limits of the Town of Westernport.

The group evaluated the Town's budget with respect to the Police Department's operations and compared current budgeted items with anticipated budget figures for the BOP operations and anticipated merger expenses. At this time, the Town of Westernport enjoys the services of two certified police officers. A third officer employed by the Town

recently resigned to take a position with the State of Maryland. The Town has indicated that it will be able to underwrite the cost associated with the merger for the remainder of the current fiscal year at approximately the same cost required to support the current number of employees. The Town has also expressed an interest in providing for a limited increase in funds in fiscal year 2011 to accommodate the hire of one additional officer.

The work group identified the actual expenses of a potential merger to include personnel costs, insurance benefits, equipment and training for the remainder of the current fiscal year. At the request of both the Mayor & Town Commissioners and the Board of County Commissioners, the work group operated on the basic premise that the two current officers in place would apply and subsequently be hired by the Bureau upon satisfying the requirements of the Maryland State Police Training Commission. The projected budget for the balance of this fiscal year for the two officers to join the Bureau is represented as follows.

Salary	\$30,160.00
SSI	2,414.00
Life	90.00
Health	6,450.00
Wk Comp	700.00
Retirement	<u>2,286.00</u>
	\$42,100.00
Equipment	2,900.00
Body Armor	2,000.00
Uniform	1,400.00
Training/Cert	800.00
Computer	
Phone	<u>400.00</u>
	\$7,500.00
Vehicle Maint	1,000.00
Fuel	1,500.00
Insurance	<u>900.00</u>
	\$3,400.00
Total	\$53,000.00

The work group has recommended that the current vehicle and equipment assets owned by the Town be transferred to the Allegany County Bureau of Police. These assets include an assortment of firearms, munitions, two vehicles and patrol radios. It is also recommended that the town permit the County to utilize rent free the municipal building as may be needed to support the general operations of the Bureau in Westernport, and that said location should be recognized as either a sub-station or precinct of the County's operation.

In light of the available resources it is recommended that the Town and Allegany County enter into a formal agreement to provide enhanced services to the Town of Westernport with the following financial commitment to be provided by the Town. At the end of fiscal year 2015, it is recommended that Allegany County Government support the entire cost associated with staffing of personnel at the Westernport "Precinct". Beyond 2015 it is recommended that the Town continue to provide a location which is suitable for use by the Bureau.

FY 2010	\$53,000
FY 2011	\$116,000
FY 2012	\$ 94,000
FY 2013	\$ 85,000
FY 2014	\$ 76,000
<u>FY 2015</u>	<u>\$ 68,000</u>
	\$492,000

In light of the Town's financial commitment to support an enhanced police presence in Westernport through the end of fiscal 2015, the Work Group recommends that both the Town and the County secure the services of additional personnel in partnership with neighboring municipalities.

It is also recommended that the Town of Westernport continue to realize the benefit of the Towns tax differential related to police protection in direct proportion to the funds that will be provided in support of the enhanced service. 100% of the differential for police will remain in effect for the 2011 tax year, and decrease proportionately by 10% until FY 2015, after which, no differential for police will be applied.

Additional items for future discussion are:

**Liability Issues** - Upon the successful merger of both agencies, Allegany County Government will assume total law enforcement liability. The Town's exposure to liability will be eliminated.

**Command Structure**- Upon the merger of both agencies, Allegany County will provide to the Town an experienced command structure to administer all applicable state and local laws, and will schedule resources for maximum police coverage.

**Available Personnel** – It is recommended that the County provide for a mix of qualified and experienced personnel within the incorporated limits of the Town

**Public Safety Advisory Council;** It is recommended that as future partners agree to join the operation, that a representative(s) from the funding entities meet on a regular

Allegany County Commissioners  
Mayor and Commissioners of Westernport  
December 21, 2009  
Page 4

basis to discuss operational issues relative to public safety matters in their respective communities.

**Police Commissioner Role:** The Police Commissioner for the Town of Westernport should serve as the Town's primary contact on operational matters between the Town and County.

**Monthly Reporting:** The Allegany County Bureau of Police will provide a monthly report of Bureau activities within the Town in a format that is suitable for public dissemination.

**Public Meetings:** Allegany County will participate in monthly public meetings as desired by the Mayor and Town Commissioners.