Board thinking about regional police force

Upper Makefield wants to begin discussions with Newtown Township officials about a possible regionalized police force.

Upper Makefield supervisors Conrad Baldwin, Tom Cino, Dan Rattigan, Mary Ryan and Dave Kulig unanimously voted on Wednesday to authorize Baldwin, the board’s chairman, to reach out to Newtown Township supervisors Chairman Rob Ciervo.

Newtown Township police currently handles its own township, as well as adjacent Wrightstown.

The move comes as Upper Makefield, which operates on a $10.7 million total budget, is looking to cut its spending due to a difficult financial situation in which the township has seen declining key revenue sources over the past few years. Upper Makefield has a 16-member police force with a $1.9 million budget.

“I would like to speak with Newtown Township in regards to opening this discussion since they handle Wrightstown and Newtown Township,” Baldwin said.

Upper Makefield police Chief Mark Schmidt said one benefit of a regional police force is that it could give his officers a chance for career growth. Regional departments allow officers to become more specialized police officers, such as K-9 officers or other specialties not available working in a smaller department.

Several municipalities in Bucks County have discussed police regionalization recently.

Currently, Doylestown, Doylestown Township, New Britain and Warwick are considering a regional police force.


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