

PRESS RELEASE

January 24, 2017

As has been reported, Borough Council made a motion at its last council meeting on January 10th to formally authorize mediation through the Montgomery Bar Association's Center for Mediation and Arbitration with Pennsburg, not to exceed a cost of \$3,000. Other than the costs, Council put no condition on the mediation. At its meeting last week, Pennsburg made a motion to authorize mediation through the Center for Mediation and Arbitration, but only on the condition that East Greenville effectively move its withdraw date from the Upper Perk Police District back to December 2017. Pennsburg's conditional motion, in the eyes of this Council, is ultimately a rejection of its motion to mediate. Although both parties agreed to keep pre-mediation discussions confidential, Pennsburg's conditional motion is a rejection of East Greenville's offer of mediation as approved on January 10. As such, Borough Council believes its residents are entitled to be informed as to why Pennsburg's motion is a rejection of our desire to mediate.

Representatives of both boroughs met in two "pre-mediation" meetings to discuss the retention of a mediator. East Greenville made it clear that it has concerns about cost of police service, the inability to break voting ties, and the ongoing dispute over the Commission Solicitor. Additionally, the ordinances which created the regional department, bind both municipalities to the veto right of the other as to police costs, and prevents each borough from upholding its fiduciary obligations to its respective citizens regarding the costs of the department. Pennsburg's main concern has been to delay East Greenville's withdrawal from the Department and to delay meaningful mediation. This is evidenced by Pennsburg's most recent vote. The issue of East Greenville's withdrawal date should be an issue for the mediation not a bargaining chip to be played as a condition for mediation to even occur.

Even though Pennsburg has stated that it can fund just about the entire police department without East Greenville's contribution, East Greenville still believes that a third party mediator can assist with the preservation of the Upper Perk Police Department. If Pennsburg refuses to participate then East Greenville will pursue all its options to provide cost effective, professional police services to its residents. It is Borough Council's hope that Pennsburg reconsiders its motion and agrees to mediation with East Greenville; however, Pennsburg's recent motion suggests they do not want to mediate.