



# YorkCounts to launch regional police study

**AMANDA DOLASINSKI** The York Dispatch

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Three years after the initial suggestion to study regional policing, a community coalition announced it has raised the \$78,000 necessary to complete a study.

YorkCounts, a community group that examines quality-of-life issues in the York area, has spearheaded a study of police department consolidation.

A researcher will hold an informational reception for local elected officials and township managers on Thursday, Oct. 18.

The Police Executive Research Forum, a national consultant on regional police studies, has been hired to complete the study. The group predicts the study will take about a year.

Half of the \$78,000 cost came from a state grant, while the remaining half was raised through donations from local businesses and nonprofits, said YorkCounts communications director Dan Fink.

YorkCounts officials say the results should give local elected officials data on whether police service can be provided more effectively through a regional department.

**Who's involved:** Nine municipalities and five police departments have signed on to participate in the study, Fink said.

Twenty-one municipalities were invited to the table for discussion, but many didn't want to participate, he said.

The nine municipalities are York City; Springettsbury, Spring Garden, Dover, Manchester and East Manchester townships; and West York, Mount Wolf and Manchester boroughs, Fink said. The five police departments are Northeastern Regional, York City, West York, Spring Garden Township and Springettsbury Township.

**Reaction:** West York Councilman Brian Wilson said he not only supports the study but believes all departments in the county eventually will switch to regional departments.

"I believe the future of our police officers here in York County is a future of regionalization," he said. West York "is one of the few that realistically has our own police department and paid fire department. But as time goes on here and costs keep going up, we're going to have to do something to regionalize our departments here in York."

Don Bishop, who serves on the Springettsbury



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Township board of supervisors, said he doesn't think a regional police department is necessarily better. He said he will, however, provide the consultant with any information requested.

"It's very difficult to get these municipalities to agree to consolidate," he said. "Elected officials lose the ability to ensure the citizens are getting the kind of service they want them to get."

-- Staff writer Christina Kauffman contributed to this report. Reach Amanda Dolasinski at 505-5434 or adolasinski@yorkdispatch.com.



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