

**Law Enforcement Consolidation
1994**

League of Women Voters of Appleton
Law Enforcement Study 1993-94
 Final Report

The local study for the League of Women Voters of Appleton this year focussed on the timely and important issues surrounding Fox Cities' law enforcement. Even as communities within the Fox Cities explored the possibility of regional consolidation, our local LWV study committee read background articles, conducted interviews with top level local law enforcement officials, and designed, administered and interpreted surveys of elected officials, law enforcement personnel, judges, prosecutors and the public.

In October 1993, Ed Krueger, Director of FVTC's Police Science Division, addressed the general membership of the LWV-Appleton on the past, present and future challenges facing the Fox Cities in the area of public safety. On March 2,3 and 9, 1994, the study committee presented its background research and led discussion on the comparable benefits of 1) the status quo 2) consolidation of major services 3) regional consolidation, and 4) the establishment of a Fox Cities metropolitan police force. Twenty-three League members were involved in establishing consensus at the March meetings.

As a result of this member study, discussion and consensus, the LWV-Appleton Board of Directors adopted the following support positions:

Criteria to judge good consolidation or cooperative law enforcement efforts should be:

- Fair cost sharing; tax equity
- Good response time and consistent investigative follow-through
- "Neighborhood" policing (because it increases officers' morale and knowledge of their part of the community and better aids in crime prevention)
- Consistency across jurisdictional boundaries
- Accountability
- Cost effectiveness
- Keeping crime under control
- Level of service should be equal to the best unit - bringing other service levels "up" without bringing anyone's service "down"

These law enforcement services, shared under any system:

- Anything that benefits an entire region, but is not used regularly by every department (eg. equipment, specialized personnel)
- E911, SWAT, Investigations, Recordkeeping, Emergency Response Teams
- Communication and control: (a communication system that can be used consistently throughout the region, that is functionally accessible and user-friendly)
- MEG: Drug Investigation & Enforcement
- Mutual Aid Pacts
- Community Outreach and Prevention

The ideal law enforcement system for the Fox Cities should include:

- Regional consolidation of law enforcement jurisdictions which share similar communities of interest, with strong emphasis on consolidation of major services.
- Rural areas policed by sheriff's departments.
- Boundaries that are not be rigid. As rural units become more urban they should be encouraged to join urban police forces.
- Any further consolidation measures should be influenced by our experience with regional and major service consolidation. If regional and major service consolidation is successful, a full Fox Cities metropolitan law enforcement system should be considered.

In order to move toward this preferred system, communities should:

- Encourage current consolidation efforts between/among local police forces.
- Monitor the efforts of public officials in this area.
- Keep these issues in the public eye. Educate the community on the longterm benefits: avoids duplication, increases cost effectiveness, eliminates "gaps" in service, etc. Emphasize how life styles in the Fox Cities constantly cross boundaries to home, work, recreation, shopping, etc.
- Make it an election issue.

Respectfully submitted,

LWV-Appleton 1993-94 Law Enforcement Committee: Chairs: Jan Quinlan and Sharon Tornes, Beth English, Helen Nagler, Cheryl Barnes, Karen Kuhn, Gretchen Wilcox

LWV-Appleton Proposed Discussion & Consensus Questions
Law Enforcement Study - March 1994

Discussion Questions:

1. What impact would full consolidation of Fox Cities' police forces have?
2. What impact would regional consolidation have (ie. Heart of the Valley communities)?
3. What impact would consolidation of certain major public safety services have?
4. What would be the political implications of each of these consolidations on
 - a. individual municipalities?
 - b. sheriff's services?
 - c. cost-sharing?

Consensus Questions:

In Fox Cities' law enforcement/public safety:

1. How can these barriers to consolidation/cooperation be addressed?
 - a) loss of community autonomy
 - b) loss of community identity
 - c) different training requirements between communities
 - d) varying local ordinances/municipal courts
 - e) cost-sharing
 - f) operational details. ie. uniforms, vehicles, logos, rules
 - g) political and turf boundaries, eg. power and control
2. What services should be shared under any system?
3. What criteria should be used to judge good consolidation or cooperative efforts?
4. What would be the ideal system for the Fox Cities? Why? Are there other preferred systems? Why or why not?
5. What would be the steps to get to these preferred systems?
6. What would be the appropriate oversight for these systems?

*Weigh the
costs of
autonomy*