

MIDDLETOWN

Communication key for EMS panel, chairman says

By *CHRIS ENGLISH*
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Solid communication will be one of the big keys to the success of the new Middletown Emergency Services Ad Hoc Committee, the group's chairman said at its first meeting Wednesday night.

The advisory board was created by the supervisors at their May 12 meeting and is charged with drawing up a master plan on how emergency services can be improved in the township. One of the many specific items it will look at is the process for buying equipment for the four volunteer fire companies that serve Middletown and how that process can be improved.

Committee chairman Rich Schramm said members must constantly communicate with each other, emergency services agencies and the public.

"The rumor mill will kill us if we let it," he said. "If we all work together, we can make this a positive thing. We have to be willing to change to meet the needs of the 21st Century."

The new committee, like any township advisory board, will not have the power to make binding decisions and its master plan will have to be approved by the township supervisors to take effect.

While the supervisors would like to see a draft of the master plan by late summer or early fall, there are no deadlines written in stone, said Schramm and committee member Ryan Marte, also a member of the Langhorne-Middletown Fire Company.

"I think the board is looking for a good document, not a rushed document," Marte said.

"We will take our time and do it right," Schramm added.

The Emergency Services Committee will hold public meetings at 7:30 p.m. on the second Wednesday and fourth Thursday of every month at the township municipal center, 3 Municipal Way. However, it won't meet again in June. The next meeting will be on July 8.

Until then, committee members will gather information and get feedback from members of the volunteer fire companies and other emergency services, township officials and the public on how services can be improved.

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