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Public gets update on regional fire district study

By Danielle Toth

WESTSHORE

Although the study of a potential regional fire district is not yet completed, officials from Emergency Services Consulting International, the firm conducting the study, hosted public meetings last week to inform the public about its progress.

They also answered questions from the approximately 35 people in attendance, ranging from firefighters and fire chiefs to area mayors and local residents.

"We scheduled the public meetings at a strategic point in the study," Phil Kouwe, project manager for ESCI, said. "The purpose of the meetings is really two-fold. We feel that during the planning process, we really should have a public input opportunity. We want the public to learn what's going on and have the opportunity to submit feedback. We also want to provide an update on our analysis."

While the study has not yet determined if a regional fire district or authority would be feasible for

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Protester Richard Monaco, of North Ridgeville, left, argues with Police Chief Richard Walling during a protest at Westlake City Hall March 10. More than 100 animal rights activists criticized a patrolman who fatally shot a pet dog while responding to a home burglary alarm March 6. (West Life photo by Larry Bennet)

Protesters want officer fired

By Kevin Kelley

WESTLAKE

With shouts of "We're showing our teeth," more than 100 animal rights activists gathered at Westlake City Hall March 10 to protest the shooting by a police officer of a pet dog four days earlier. Many called for the officer to be fired.

Police were responding to a burglary alarm at a Glenbrook Lane home around 4:30 p.m. March 6. According to police, Patrolman Mark Morales found an open door at the back of the house where he encountered three dogs. Two dogs charged at the officer, according to police.

"One of the dogs executed a full aggressive charge at one of the officers, presenting an imminent threat of physi-

cal harm," the police report stated. The dog, a yellow labrador named Callaway, was shot once by the officer and had to be later euthanized at West Park Animal Hospital.

Westlake Police said an investigation of the incident is underway.

Protesters passed out yellow flowers

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North Olmsted, firefighters reach agreement

By Jeff Gallatin

NORTH OLMSTED

City Council was expected to approve a new three-year contract with the city firefighters last night after negotiators for the city and union reached an agreement last week.

"We're happy to have an agreement with the firefighters and are ready to move forward," Mayor Kevin Kennedy said.

"We don't think the city negotiated with us as fairly as possible, but that being said; it's an agreement and we want to go forward," Dave Boatman, president of the firefighters union, said.

Members of the union ratified the new pact which includes a wage freeze and concessions Thursday night after the negotiators had met and reached the agreement earlier in the day. A formal agreement means the city would avoid having to go to binding conciliation - meaning it would have to abide by the results unless the firefighters chose to

take it to court. The firefighters sought the conciliation after the city received a delayed fact-finders report in February.

Both the administration and firefighters felt the fact-finders report favored the administration, which led the fire-

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