

Town of Somerset - Somerset Government Efficiency Committee

Minutes of the February 8, 2010 meeting
Meeting # 13 - Held at the Town Hall

(Page 1 of 2)

Meeting attended by: Councilman: Daniel Engert, Councilman: Randy Wayner, Councilman: Gary Alt and Town Water / Sewer Dept. Foreman: Doug Lewis.
Town resident attendees: Mel Denny, Richard Meyers, Jesse Green and Michael Caleb.

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 pm by Committee Chairman - Randy Wayner.

Agenda Topic:

- Addition of the word “internal” to the SGEC Mission Statement.

Councilman Wayner suggested that we add the word ‘internal’ to the Mission Statement as shown below in bold font. The purpose of this addition is to make the Mission more inclusive of all areas of Town government.

This suggestion was unanimously adopted without reservation.

Our Mission Statement is as follows: *The purpose and intent of the Somerset Government Efficiency Committee is to explore some specific **internal**, shared service, and consolidation opportunities that provide for a more efficient local government. The process will be transparent and comprehensive. Recommendations will be based on quantified data that will demonstrate a clear and direct benefit to the residents of the Town of Somerset.*

Agenda Topic:

- Having Part Time Active and Retired Elected Officials pay a percentage of their Town Health Insurance premiums.

Councilman Wayner opened the conversation by sharing a working draft recommendation document. This draft was introduced as a vehicle to initiate dialog, solicit points of view, and reach consensus surrounding this topic. Councilman Engert commenced by suggesting that the limited savings that could be realized by requiring our two pre-Medicare aged, retired part time officials did not seem to warrant them paying any percentage of their premiums. Councilman Wayner agreed and stated that we need to be mindful that the few years remaining between their current age, and the age of Medicare eligibility greatly reduce the impact upon the overall cost savings that the Town would realize. Councilman Alt expressed his opinion that no part time elected officials, either active or inactive should be eligible for any coverage, and that we should recommend dropping all health insurance for all active and retired part time elected officials. Councilman Wayner disagreed, and expressed his opinion that it would be far too sweeping of a change to implement so suddenly. Councilman Engert articulated a similar point of view while steering the dialog to a more conciliatory plateau.

More discussion ensued, and it was decided that health insurance coverage would remain in effect and that both active and retired officials would be required to contribute to the cost of the premiums. The SGEC calculated the annual premium expenditures and determined the various levels of savings that would result by applying different contributory percentages.

During this lengthy discussion, Foreman Lewis and the attendee members of the community expressing their opinions and added significantly to the decision making process.

The final formal recommendation to the Town Board will contain the agreed upon percentages of contribution, the timeline of implementing this initiative, and the overall savings to the Town's taxpayers should this recommendation be adopted.

Next Steps:

Councilmen Wayner and Engert will plug the numbers mentioned above into the working draft and will author the rationale portion of the formal recommendation. Upon completion of this second draft, it will be shared with the members of the SGEC for final approval. Upon receiving this approval, it will be forwarded to the Town Board for their consideration. We hope to have this formal recommendation to them before the March 9th Board meeting.

Next meeting:

To be announced.

Meeting adjourned at approx. 9:10 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Councilman: Randall Wayner