

Town of Somerset - Somerset Government Efficiency Committee

Minutes of the May 23, 2009 meeting
Meeting # 10
Held at the Town Hall

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Meeting attended by: Supervisor: Richard Meyers, Councilman: Randy Wayner,
Councilman: Daniel Engert.

Town resident attendees: Steve Yousey, Brian Carmer, and Cindy Jex

Meeting called to order at 8:10 am by Supervisor Meyers.

Agenda Topic:

An analysis of the expense incurred for health insurance coverage of part time elected officials only.

Discussion:

Supervisor Meyers has requested information from all of the Towns in Niagara County regarding their policy on healthcare coverage for part time elected officials. So far, six Towns have responded (Lewiston, Hartland, Lockport, Porter, Cambria, and Pendleton).

Porter, Lewiston, Hartland, and Pendleton offer zero coverage for part time elected officials. Cambria employs a co-pay % format while The Town of Lockport does provide coverage with no co-pay, except for retirees where a length of service sliding scale co-pay policy is in place.

Steve Yousey suggested that we should look into the possibility of securing coverage through a group environment such as a local Chamber of Commerce. A discussion ensued about how the Town carefully shops for coverage and has consistently achieved high quality coverage at costs below what other Towns pay. It was however, determined that Steve's suggestion warranted further investigation.

Next Steps:

As a Committee, we agreed that it would be worthwhile to continue our analysis of the Town's policy relative to this benefit, and its effect on the Town's taxpayers and part time elected officials. Our analysis will range from doing away all together with health insurance for all part time elected officials, to incorporating a mandatory buy out policy when an official has coverage outside of the Town's plan, to the establishment of a mandatory co-pay % as it relates to the overall annual cost of coverage. We will also look at the cost incurred by retired part time elected officials, who currently receive lifetime coverage, without co-pay.

Assignments:

Supervisor Meyers will continue to seek information from the non-respondent Towns. He will also secure information covering what options exist to empower the Town Board to address health insurance coverage for part time elected officials only.

Councilman Engert will look into the possibility of the Town utilizing a local Chamber of Commerce or other such group to secure a more cost efficient provider of health insurance services.

Councilman Wayner will research buy out options, the "how and why" of this approach will be determined.

Next meeting: Saturday, June 6th. At 8:00 am at the Somerset Town Hall.

Meeting adjourned at 9:15 am

Respectfully submitted,
Councilman: Randall Wayner
SGEC Secretary