

**Benefits Focus Group Minutes
(6/4/03)**

Committee members, alternates and staff advisors present:

John Agen
Benita Saldutti
John Glanden
Robert Blinch-Edwards
Pat Horan
Veda Mahadi
Janice Cox
Andy St. John
Rick Winters
Stacey Monroe
Kurt Hoverter
Casey Humpert
Joyce Dolan
Ed Whitehead
Marquett Becker
Linda McKinney
April Bryan

John Agen called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m., June 4, 2003.

Steve Marcinko, Benefits & Wellness Manager, Sarasota County gave a presentation on the County's Wellness Program. Big dollar savings and cost stabilization are going to be realized in wellness and prevention programs. Angela Deam, Wellness Development Advisor from the County was also present. She gave an overview of the County's approach to those programs.

Ms. Saldutti said that although the group has been talking about the wellness program for a year, nothing has been instituted except for the health screenings & blood tests. She asked what the City could do to start on a wellness program. Linda McKinney said the City also does also hand out a Healthwise booklet to new employees and that the screenings have been done two years in a row so there is a baseline with a second year follow-up. There have also been some classes on nutrition and heart health.

John Glanden asked about the possibility of making screenings and attendance at some of the classes mandatory. Mr. Marcinko suggested that it might be more effective to encourage participation through education and the networking process in order to get people interested and involved in a wellness program.

Discussion followed about putting a person in charge of coordinating the wellness program and services and getting the information out to the employees and retirees. Ms. Saldutti asked Kurt Hoverter if he felt that the Human Resources department could create a new position and hire someone to perform this function. Mr. Hoverter said it is not in the requested budget for the next year. He asked if the Group was recommending

that the City hire someone. Joyce Dolan asked if the person should be someone with a medical background or a publicity person. Mr. Marcinko said if the City could find a common ground between the two that might be the best way to start rather than jump right into a clinical situation with a medical staff person. The cost to the County for their wellness program is currently about \$100/employee/year.

Ms. Saldutti expressed her frustration with discussing this subject for more than a year with no real progress. Robert Blinch-Edwards suggested starting the program on a small scale and then expanding it.

It was suggested that health screenings could be held at the next retirees' meeting to be held in July. John Agen will advise Human Resources after he has scheduled the date for the meeting.

There was discussion about not waiting for a person to be hired before the City proceeds with their wellness program. At the very least, an information flyer on a disease or condition could be sent with paychecks monthly.

Mr. Hoverter said a communication plan would be helpful in order to use current City resources to do a better job of getting information out to people. Maybe a RN program, on a part-time basis, could be considered together with communication plan. The Group needs to decide what the goal is and how it is going to be communicated. Someone needs to be designated to be in charge.

Ms. Saldutti asked if a person could be put in the budget for Human Resources. Mr. Hoverter said the Group should use other resources besides just Human Resources – anyone in the City who has mass communication capabilities such as the Public Information Officer or IS with the Intranet. Perhaps someone could spend some time with the County to see how they do things.

Joyce Dolan asked about the possibility of having a hotline with an on call nurse available. Mr. Blinch-Edwards said that service is available (Carewatch), but the cost is \$1.95/employee/month. John Agen asked if HR could designate someone in their department that would coordinate all communication and be the contact for everyone. Mr. Hoverter suggested using a quality tool called decision theme matrix to determine the main topics the group needs to focus on. He suggested a special meeting be scheduled to discuss and prioritize topics and make a plan for going forward. John Glanden made the motion to have the meeting within two weeks for discussion of the wellness program in order to produce the direction for the group. Ms. Dolan seconded. Motion passed. Meeting will be scheduled for June 18, 10:00 am – noon – location to be determined.

Linda McKinney told the group of a presentation she had seen at the Healthcare Sarasota meeting that day. She would like to arrange for the presenter; Dr. Burns to come to the next regularly scheduled meeting to give about a 20-minute presentation if the Group agrees.

Rx initiatives were next topic for discussion. The City's drug costs increased over 20% in the past year due to increased prices. Mr. Blinch-Edwards asked the Group if there

were any suggestions on implementation of the initiatives. New biotech drugs are going to be on the market soon and are very expensive. Now is the time to set precedence as to the amount of coverage that will be provided.

Ms. Saldutti asked Mr. Hoverter to talk to the City Manager and find out if the Group was expected to make any design changes in the plan in the future. If answer is yes, then the Group should start working on the Rx issue first.

Mr. Blinch-Edwards passed out an information flyer on skin cancer. These will be passed out with the paychecks to current employees.

Meeting adjourned at 2:55 pm.

Next meeting is June 18, 2003, 10:00 a.m.

Minutes Approved: September 3, 2003

John Agen, Chairperson