

Benefits Focus Group Minutes

(04/06/05)

(In attendance, alphabetically listed)

Note: Names listed are BFG members; non-members may attend but are not always listed.

<u>Regular Members</u>	<u>Alternate Members</u>	<u>Staff Advisors</u>	<u>Recorder</u>
John Agen	Nancy Meskimen	Robert Blinch-Edwards	Diane Vanderwest
Cleo Ammons	William Tatum	Kurt Hoverter	
Cindy Cumbie		Linda McKinney	
Gil Fernandez			
Dolly Gamble			
John Glanden			
Jim Godshall	Also present: Al Woodle		
Pat Horan			
Dick Minster			
Stacey Monroe			
Benita Saldutti			
Louise Van Pelt			
Ed Whitehead			

Call to Order

John Agen called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m., Wednesday, April 6, 2005 and asked for roll call.

Roll Call

Diane Vanderwest called the roll and recorded today. We welcomed Cindy Cumbie from General Services as a new member of the group.

Approval of Minutes

John Agen called for approval of the minutes from the last meeting of March 2, 2005. The final minutes were approved as presented.

Comparison of Services for AHH & WEB TPA – Robert Blinch-Edwards

Robert Blinch-Edwards will bring information to the next meeting comparing the services for AHH and WEB TPA.

County Nurse/Urgent care update – Linda McKinney

Sarasota County budgets about \$200,000/yr for the availability of on-site medical assistance, but is looking into the possibility of internally hired personnel instead of contractual third-party. The County currently contracts two nurses @ \$45,000/yr and a supervisory medical head @ \$59,000/yr through Bon Secours Hospital of Venice Healthcare Corp. The medical head is responsible for the standing orders of the nurses and may or may not be present, but is available by phone.

There are several options available to the City in the endeavor of having on-site medical assistance. We could contract with the County and use their facilities for X-amount of cost during the day only and, only for

active *employees*. Or, we could contract with the same people that do our Worker's Compensation and use a nurse, part-time. Any legalities or legal liabilities would need greater in-depth research before presenting any ideas on this endeavor to C/M McNees.

Linda also talked about the idea of SMH allowing clinic rates for urgent care through the emergency room for after hours for our plan members. The rate would be lower than the current \$75 ER cost. This will be discussed further with the hospital planning committee.

Blood Borne Pathogen Guidelines – Ed Whitehead and Gil Fernandez

D/C Whitehead presented information from copies of SPD General Order #307, *Infectious Diseases* and draft of General Order #805, *Personal Protection Equipment Program*. He discussed portions of the procedures of the policies that a police officer is currently responsible for, which could be taken over by a City sponsored nurse, before being turned over to the Sarasota County Health Department for further evaluation.

Gil Fernandez advised that Public Works uses personal protection equipment and respirators, etc. as well. These units require testing, monitoring and health questionnaires, which could possibly be done with the help of an on-site nurse.

D/C Whitehead also mentioned an article on wellness in this month's American City and County Magazine entitled, "Wellness programs lighten health care costs." The article reviews obesity, smoking and sedentary lifestyle as leading, preventable causes of bad health. You can view the article at www.americancityandcounty.com and then click on March 2005 Issue. One copy is printable for personal use.

Modification to the BFG Meeting Schedule – Kurt Hoverter

Kurt made a recommendation to have the BFG meet every other month, instead of every month. After today, the BFG would meet on alternating months of June, August, October and December, through the end of the year. This will free up time to have the VEBA Sub-Committee meet on the alternating months of May, July, September and November, through the end of the year.

The VEBA Sub-Committee volunteer members are: Benita Saldutti, Stacey Monroe, Pat Horan, Ed Whitehead and Jim Godshall. A motion was presented and passed to have Al Woodle added to this Sub-Committee and also to the BFG as a regular member.

The Sub-Committee will set the framework on researching options for post retirement medical funding. This group will need to build a detailed understanding of the options available to us under current tax laws in order to effectively make recommendations on a City VEBA plan(s).

Minutes of the VEBA Sub-Committee meetings and any recommendations will become part of the review of the following month's BFG meeting on the bi-monthly schedule.

Kurt reviewed the responsibilities of the BFG members, including attendance and the importance of communicating with personnel within the representative's department to gather information and give feedback to the group.

The BFG will focus on wellness, while the sub-committee will focus on VEBA options. The HR Budget will include a request for \$88,000 again this year to be set aside for wellness initiatives, as last year.

Further information on an agenda and handouts for the first VEBA Sub-Committee meeting on May 4 will be made available prior to the meeting date. VEBA Sub-Committee meetings will be taped; motion minutes will be taken for review with the BFG.

Monthly Cost Review – Linda McKinney

Linda reviewed the month of December total cost charts including the pharmacy cost chart. The claims paid through December totaled below the \$700,000 mark, but higher than a year ago for the same period. The pharmacy costs were up slightly from last month at under \$140,000 for December, and well below the cost for a year ago for the same period. In 2004, the City paid a total of \$8,260,062 for medical claims, including Varsity Health.

Caremark will be here in a couple weeks to do a trend report. Trend reports show percentage of prescription drugs usage vs. the national average, etc. These reports will be brought back to the BFG for review in June and are also available in the HR department anytime.

Other Business

The Sarasota Spirit now has a wellness insert entitled, “To Your Health”, courtesy of the BFG.

Linda thanked the two volunteers, Nancy Meskimen and Louise VanPelt for the trail-testing the pedometers. The pedometer was durable, accurate and easy to use when worn on waistband or belt, not clipped on a pocket or loose-fitting clothing. The test pedometer was a good tool and was recommended, but it may not be for everyone. The City’s cost per pedometer is \$2.35.

Information on the Pedometer program could be placed in the next newsletter and on the website. If you want to obtain a pedometer for use in the program, and an order form could be developed and given out with the paychecks. When completed, Linda will give pedometer order forms to Dick Minster for him to mail out to retirees. Newsletters and wellness inserts are not currently being mailed out to retirees.

Kurt mentioned information on a Spanish speaking Cancer support group that meets the 3rd Monday, monthly 5-6:30 pm. Cindy and Nancy received copies of this information.

Robert will check into an EMI problem with claim checks being mailed inadvertently to the patient instead of the lab.

Health risk assessment will be available this year during the Health Fair. Last year’s Health Fair date was geared to the open enrollment period. This year’s date will be determined later. Retirees will be informed of the Health risk assessment and Health Fair. Linda advised the importance of health risk assessments is to provide data points and to get an overview of issues regarding our City’s participants (covered members.)

Robert advised that HCS with WEB TPA will arrange for any pre-diabetic to receive a blood sugar monitor with HCS covering the cost.

There were discussions again on the portable blood pressure machine. Robert will report back on the leasing information of a portable wrist unit that will not have to be re-calibrated if moved from one department to another.

Robert advised that Acupuncture has a maximum cost per year of \$600.

Adjournment and Next Meeting

John Agen adjourned the meeting at 2:15 p.m. The next BFG meeting is scheduled to be **Wednesday, June 1, 2005**, 1:00-3:00 p.m. in Room #100 of the Federal Building. Future BFG meetings will be every other month, the even number months. The VEBA subcommittee meetings will begin May 4, 2005.

/dv

Minutes Approved: _____

John Agen, Chairperson, or
Benita Saldutti, Vice-Chairperson