

## Somers Incorporation Committee Meeting

### Minutes

February 4, 2014

**Present:** Karl Ostby, Chairman, David Barnes, Al Brokmeier, Mary Ann Cardinali, John Donaubaauer, Joe Huck, Dave Geertsen, Shirley Mandernack, Peter Schwalbe, Judy Summers, Jackie Nelson, Committee Members.

**Also Present:** Ben Harbach Town Chairman, Michael Deluca, Judy Schantek Gregg Sinnen, Town Board Supervisors, William Morris, Town Administrator, Timothy Kitzman, Town Clerk Treasurer, Janet Cushing, Accountant, and Ann Brumback, Town Staff. Robert Sabath, Consultant.

1. **Call to order:** The meeting was called to order at 4:00 pm by Chairman Karl Ostby.
2. **Introduction of Committee Members:** Self introductions were made by committee members.
3. **Introduction of Town Board Members, Present:** Town Board introduced themselves.
4. **Opening statement of purpose of meeting by Chairman, Karl Ostby:** Karl thanked all committee members for their time and shared interest in the growth and future of Somers and turned the meeting over to Bob Sabath.
5. **Introduction of Bob Sabath, Consultants:** Bob explained who he was and his background in Somers and in the Incorporation Process.
6. **Consultants Agenda:** "From Here to there".
  - a. **Schedule: Critical dates and activities** – Discussion followed each topic.
    - **February 4, 2014** - Committee Meeting
    - **March 1, 2014** - *Petitions are complete and signers are educated* - Discussion followed with information on who can sign the petition; (Mobile home owners are not eligible, No renters, Must be 18 years old, Must own property in proposed Village and be on deed to property) Please see handout for more guidelines.
    - **March 4, 2014** – Town files with Kenosha County Circuit Court (once Town files you cannot add more signatures) to petition.
    - **March 31, 2014** - Town will seek ruling from the court to file with State (State has up to 6 months to complete review).
    - **April 2, 2014** - Following the April 1, 2014 election the staff and remaining Town Board members shall share information with new supervisors to help educate them on where the Town is to date on the Incorporation process.
    - **April & May** – Complete communications media, educating the Public on the Incorporation Process.
    - **June and July** – Open Houses.
    - **June 2, 2014** – Filing date for compliance of meeting the required 70 days for Somers Incorporation Vote to be placed on August Referendum Ballot.
    - **August 12, 2014** – State wide Primary Date.
  - b. **Principal issues and concerns:** Discussion followed each.
    - **What is incorporation?** History states that townships were formed and divided into land for farming and as needed provide land to Villages and Cities through annexation.
    - **Will taxes go up?** Towns and Villages have the same tax base. Cities are higher. Tax rates stay flat up to @ \$20,000 and over \$20,000 in the community and then tend go up.

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- **Why can't we incorporate the whole town at once?** This is based on state rules regarding density and population of the area's to be incorporated and how land is developed.
- **Will safety and services cost more?** Services such as police the Village will contract out.
- **Will we lose our rural personality?** Discussion followed with all agreeing that the possible incorporation of the community provides for better self-control and thus the ability to maintain the personality.
- *Why can't we just vote on it?*
- *Do I lose my voice?*
- *What does all this cost?* The budget for 2014 is \$70,000.

#### c. Why Do It

- *Home rule* – When you become a Village or City you manage your own municipality, Townships have to follow County and State regulations.
- *Control our future* – Growth through Developments, Zoning.
- *Manage the inevitable but unknown changes.*
- *Manage our development – or restrict our development* – Village or City controls zoning and development.
- *Grant eligibility* – More grant money is available for Villages or Cities.
- *Protect our boundaries* – On current Town of Somers website under development (somers.org).
- *Can annex adjacent unincorporated areas* – After Incorporation we annex the remnant Town. The "B" area will remain the Town of Somers until 2035 when it becomes part of the City of Kenosha.
- *Have the option to greatly increase tax base* – by supporting development within the Community.

#### d. What's been done so far?

- *Annual meeting votes in favor* – 2008, 2010, 2011.
- *Extensive research and analysis* – Committee formed in 2009 did the research at no charge to Town.
- *Many public meetings, open discussions* – were held to inform the community.
- *Unbiased committee with thorough evaluation.*

Before adjourning Committee Member David Barnes asked if all committee members opinion if they were in favor of incorporation. All members stated they were in favor.

- 7. Recommendation from Town Attorney:** The decision is up to the citizens of Somers. Do you want to control your own destiny or do you want someone else to. If you want control then Incorporation is the answer.
  - a. Discussion Circulation of Petitions & Public Education:** Went over guidelines attached and restated who could sign the petition.
- 8. Adjourn:** The meeting adjourned at approximately 6:00 pm.

**These minutes are not official until approved by the Incorporation Committee.**

Submitted by Ann Brumback, Administrative Assistant