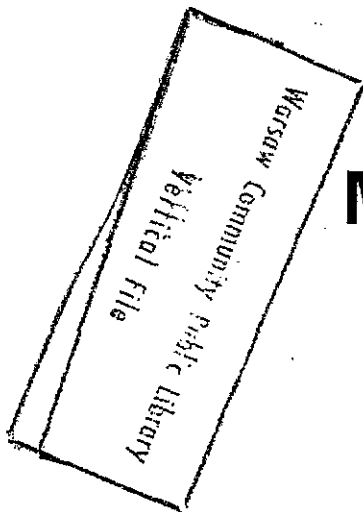


INVOLVEMENT IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT



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Claypool, IN**

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INVOLVEMENT IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Serving as a member of the town council in Claypool for a number of years, I feel that I have gained enough knowledge and experience to tell others about some of the aspects of being involved with a local government.

Actually, serving on a town council or on any other council or board does not require any special talents or skills. What it does take is a desire to get involved, and make changes if changes are needed. Most people do not realize just what is involved in running even a small town the size of Claypool, approximate population 411.

There are constantly changing rules, restrictions, and requirements being handed down from Federal and State agencies. With these changes being made it becomes increasingly hard to operate a town efficiently and still be able to offer the services the public demands and is entitled to receive.

A community leader does not always have all the answers for all the questions asked of them. Something that I have learned is that a person in a leadership role needs to associate and surround themselves with people who do have the answers. People that are trained to and work in specific areas of expertise can offer invaluable skills to those of us who just cannot do everything.

People who are able to offer skills and services to small communities are accountants, lawyers, engineers, and specialists in many other areas. There are also many agencies within Federal, State, and Local governments that are able to offer assistance and

services. With all the red tape involved when dealing with any government agency it more often than not takes someone with special skills to deal with these agencies.

Some of the problems facing small communities in our county today are the installation of sanitary sewers and water systems, repairs and updates to existing systems, also maintenance of streets and alleys and police protection. There are many day to day functions that are also carried out. To do all these things on the budgets that small towns have to deal with is no easy task.

Fortunately there are Federal and State moneys available in the form of grants for larger projects such as sewer and water systems. If a community is able to qualify for these grants it helps open up possibilities that many people can't realize at the time. By attracting new industries and home buyers to a community it helps to keep it a viable part of our county.

A proposal I would like to make is the organizing of an annual or biannual meeting of community leaders throughout the county.

The main purpose of bringing leaders from around the county together would be discussing the different ways that communities handle problems. By "comparing notes" with each other it would be possible to shed some light on the different aspects of running a small town.

Being exposed to new and different ways of doing things may enable community leaders to make better decisions when handling problems, which would maybe make things run a little smoother.

Kosciusko Leadership
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