

---

# Judge Strikes Cost Statement From Sea Isle Ballot Question

By NICK COLIN

SEA ISLE CITY — When residents enter the voting booth Nov. 7 to decide whether or not they want to change the form of city government, there will be no tax implications printed next to a “yes” vote.

Superior Court Judge Valerie Armstrong ruled Sept. 22 that all references to potential costs be removed from the ballot.

According to John Fee, leader of the petition committee, a “yes” vote will now mean that the voter is opting for an elected mayor, five council members, and a business administrator.

“The judge ruled completely in our favor. We’re very pleased with the outcome,” said Fee.

Paul Baldini, city solicitor, drafted an interpretative statement, citing the potential costs that could come from voting “yes” and it was to be placed on the ballot.

The petition committee took issue with the statement claiming that there

would be costs, but that it wouldn’t necessarily lead to a tax increase.

A day after the decision, the committee held an informational meeting at the community lodge during the afternoon.

About 125 people were in attendance.

Andrew Bednarek, Avalon’s business administrator and a Sea Isle City resident, was a guest speaker at the meeting.

He informed the public as to the functions of a business administrator, gave examples of cost savings, and talked about what can be accomplished by having someone in office with full-time responsibility.

“From the feedback I received, it was a very good meeting and people learned something,” said Fee.

Fee and Bednarek fielded questions from those in attendance.

“There were questions like what would happen if we don’t vote yes? There weren’t many negative questions,” said Fee.

One question addressed a rumor going around town that petition committee

members have personal agendas that include changing ordinances.

“Our only agenda is to get the form of government approved. Specific issues are for the candidates who run for office,” explained Fee.

More informational meetings are in the works, including one planned for Oct. 28 at 1:30 p.m. at the community lodge and possibly another one before that, Oct. 21.

According to Fee, the Sea Isle City Taxpayers’ Association is inviting city officials as well as members of the petition committee to come to its next meeting so that both sides can be heard.

That meeting is scheduled for Oct. 14 at 1:30 p.m. at the community lodge.

More information regarding a change of government and what it entails as well as other cost related issues in the city can be obtained at: [www.slcta.org](http://www.slcta.org).

Contact Colin at: (609) 886-8600 ext. 35 or [ncolin@cmherald.com](mailto:ncolin@cmherald.com)