

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING CITY OF REHOBOTH BEACH

December 6, 2013

The Communications Committee Meeting of the City of Rehoboth Beach was called to order at 11:00 a.m. by Chairman Stan Mills on Friday, December 6, 2013 in the Commissioners Room in City Hall, 229 Rehoboth Avenue, Rehoboth Beach, DE.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chairman Stan Mills, Janet Anderson, Toni Sharp, Lorraine Zellers, Jimmy Horthy III

Also Present: Max Hamby (IT Director), Karen Zakarian (Convention Center)

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The Agenda, as amended with the deletion of the October 25, 2013 Minutes, was unanimously approved.

CORRESPONDENCE

There was none.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes of the October 25, 2013 Communications Committee Meeting were not available for approval.

OLD BUSINESS

Update and discussion about ongoing City website overhaul with Max Hamby, IT Department Supervisor.

- 1. Presentation on new website layout design and features.**
- 2. Discussion about new website to include comments, recommendations and process and timeline to advance including going live.**

Stan Mills reiterated that the first website was developed using guidance, recommendations, review and feedback by the original Communications Committee. His expectation was that the same will happen with the overhauled website. The Committee's original intent was to review the website from December 2nd to 5th if it has advanced to a certain point to where the Committee could critique it and provide feedback. This has been postponed to a later date.

Max Hamby has basically received a schedule since the last meeting of when the Committee would overview the website and provide feedback, but the schedule has been modified due to staffing issues with Inclind. The development staging site can be viewed by the Committee, but currently it may not be responsive to the size of the screen that it is rendered on. As the screen is modified, the website will conform to a desktop, tablet and mobile devices. The next two weeks of Inclind's schedule is to move the static block content from the current website into the new website. It is anticipated that the Committee will start reviewing the website on December 20th. At that point, the content will be more complete in order to go through pages, sequence, where things are placed, etc. The Committee will be expected to look throughout the website at that point. As the Committee creates its notes, they should be forwarded to Stan to be formulated into one list and copied to Max also. If the Committee should see something that it thinks is important, this should be forwarded to Max so he can prioritize it. Due to the holidays and vacations, it is anticipated that Inclind's scope of work should be primarily completed. This is not to say that the website will be live at that point, but a decision will need to be made of what else is needed to be done.

Karen Zakarian had provided Max with scans of the Convention Center, but no floor plans. The scanned sketches are 95% hand-drawn and cannot be used in a mini Convention Center website. Karen will provide the sketches to Max, and she will spearhead getting the layouts for the Convention Center. Stan noted that the first the Committee asked for floor plans and information was one year and nine months ago and subsequently after that. The Committee was to get layouts of floor plans for the auditorium area. Authorization was received from City Manager Greg Ferrese to take the rough drawings and forward them to the architect involved with the City Hall Complex to produce drawings that show the tables inserted, where the breakout rooms are, etc. The Committee is waiting for a mini Convention Center website within the City website. Max had met with Mike Wigley of Davis, Bowen & Friedel in November 2013 and requested the existing Autocad files. Max has not received the sketches and existing building drawings to date. After receiving them, he will be able to create the requested drawings. It was suggested that six examples of the layouts would be placed on the website.

Stan thought that the focus with the IT Department should be to take information that is ready to go and move forward. Extra tasks should not be delegated to the IT Department because the overhauled website is behind in launching. He suggested that two copies should be made of the layouts, one each for Stan and Max. At some point, it should be determined who will do the drawings. Stan was more focused on having Mike Wigley produce the drawings. Karen and Stan will work together through the end of the year on the layouts. At some point, the Committee will need to make a decision on whether or not the Convention Center will be included in the website. The Convention Center details could be added at a later date.

Stan noted that at the last meeting, the question was resolved by City Manager Greg Ferrese that fillable forms is an IT Department project. Any electronic forms would be converted into a fillable form format. The Committee had requested monies which were put in the budget in previous years to buy software and for the labor to perform this. Stan was hesitant about the website going live until the forms are incorporated in it. Max's recollection of the discussion was that forms can be created where people can type on them, but they will not be able to save them. A lifecycle server would be needed to be running either hosted or internally, and that product cost is outside of the City price range. Max said that the City should have standardized .pdf forms which can be filled out, internally as well as for the public. The issue is that there is no standardized form in the City for anything. It was suggested that all the forms used by each department in the City should be forwarded to Max, and he should look at what the common denominators are on each form and what specific information each department needs. Stan noted that a packet was given to the IT Department months ago that has all of the hard copies of the forms. The next point should have been to contact each department for electronic versions of the forms and forward them back to Max. Max noted that at this point it is outside of his purview as IT Director to start initiating this. He has received forms from the Building & Licensing Department, but no one can put their hands on any electronic copies. Stan suggested that the Committee should figure out how to move forward on this matter.

Toni Sharp did not want to bring up a website that looks different to the community, but it does not do anything differently. The Committee needs to think about where it is in this project with the website, what the reality is of where it is in the whole process and that a new City Manager will be onboard on January 6, 2014. The Committee needs to think about how the form project will move forward.

Stan, Max and the new City Manager will be meeting to see how to move the website project forward and who would be assigned to take responsibility and work with Max and his department. The consensus of the Committee was that the website review should be done prior to the meeting on January 24, 2014. The Committee would also review the website prior to the meeting on February 28, 2014, and the website could possibly go live in March 2014.

A suggestion was made by Janet Anderson that the search function should work on the new City website. The new City Manager will also need to be coherent about what will be improved and what will not be improved. The new City Manager will play an important role in relationship building, project management and oversight.

Max noted that the web designer's scope of work is to move static things such as blocks of text into the content management system. Max and the web designer do not have access to the structured content such as events that are application specific and are in a database. Calendar applications, news postings, etc. that are database driven will be transferred by the City.

Max will provide the link to the new City website on January 1, 2014. The Committee will provide comments back to Max and Stan by January 10, 2014.

NEW BUSINESS

Discussion on maintenance of content on the City website to include discussion about personnel and budgeting considerations.

Stan noted that the City Manager is currently developing the budget. In the past, the Committee has made recommendations for certain monies to go toward maintenance of the website, software, etc. Stan has prepared a statement from the Committee to the City Manager, Mayor and Commissioners as to what the value of the website is, the quality of maintenance of the website and the desire for more money to be put in the budget specific to maintaining the website. The Committee recognizes that: 1. A quality website is always a work in progress and never should be considered finished. 2. The existing website is not well maintained and has out-of-date information that requires updating. 3. The new website will incorporate new features of support packets, Home Page news, etc. that will require systematic and regular/timely review of the website content and updates to be made promptly and on a weekly schedule. 4. Thus there will need to be a review of who is accountable for maintaining each bit of web content. 5. There could likely be a need for additional personnel (and thus monies) to perform as noted. 6. There is sufficient value in maintaining a first class city website such that additional personnel and monies should be allotted within the 2014-15 budget to cover the additional personnel requirements as well as any additional software needs

etc. Toni and Lorraine will work on the language for the list which will be reported on at the Workshop Meeting on December 9, 2013.

Max said that he has more than enough work for another person. He has mentioned it to the current City Manager and will be mentioning it to the new City Manager.

OLD BUSINESS

Discussion on implementing an online Support Documents Program to access documents which support Commissioner agenda topics to include review of a sample meeting packet developed in-house.

Stan noted that Ann Womack, City Secretary, had shadowed a representative from Sussex County and learned the software program in order to develop the Support Documents Packet. It was her recommendation to present a sample packet to the Committee for its review. The disclaimer page is specific to the Committee's meeting. The Board of Commissioners has approved this process, and guidelines have been developed. The Committee's goal is to approve the packet, guidelines and disclaimer, and make a presentation to the Commissioners at a future date. Ann gave a brief synopsis of what was involved with developing the packet. The consensus of Committee was to present the guidelines and the sample Support Documents Packet of the Communications Committee to the Commissioners at their Workshop Meeting in January 2014. The program for the Commissioners would begin at their Regular Meeting in January 2014.

Follow-up regarding the Committee recommendations for Commission agenda language that clarifies whether or not the public can voice comments at Commissioners meetings.

This recommendation has been accomplished. The agenda for the Mayor and Commissioners Workshop Meeting on December 9, 2013 has specific language on it reflecting that the public can voice comments. The agenda for the Mayor and Commissioners Regular Meeting will have language reflecting the same, but it will be specific to that agenda.

Discussion about a potential program for the City to issue "Welcome" letters:

- 1. To residential property owners.**
- 2. To business owners.**

Toni provided an update to the Committee regarding the draft letter to residential property owners. The Historical Society will be happy to have its information available for inclusion. The Cape Henlopen Senior Center Newsletter is published quarterly. The newsletter would be included manually on a quarterly basis. Main Street would like its information included with the welcome letters. Toni will monitor this program. Before presenting this idea to the Commissioners, the Committee will need to update all its confirmations with the Senior Center, Museum and Main Street. This item will be presented at the January or February 2014 meeting in order to give time for the new City Manager to come onboard and give her feedback before presenting it to the Commissioners.

Lorraine had forwarded a copy of the welcome letter to business owners to Terri Sullivan for her review. This letter could be sent out with the packet sent out by Building & Licensing. The Committee had also reviewed the letter and made minor changes. The Committee suggested that the new City Manager also review this letter to business owners. The same timeline will be followed as the letters to residential property owners.

NEW BUSINESS

Review of standing committee policy to monitor the website.

- 1. Consideration of modifying time schedule.**
- 2. Consideration of desired monitoring criteria.**

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

DISCUSS AND PRIORITIZE ITEMS TO INCLUDE ON FUTURE AGENDAS.

Items to include on future agendas are: 1. Website review. 2. Welcome letters. 3. Process for monitoring the new website.

SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING.

The next meeting of the Communications Committee will be held on January 24, 2014 at 9:00 a.m.

COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENT

There was none.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was none.

There being no further business, Chair Stan Mills adjourned the meeting at 1:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

(Ann M. Womack, CMC, City Secretary)

**MINUTES APPROVED ON
FEBRUARY 28, 2014**

(Stan Mills, Chairman)