

**COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING
CITY OF REHOBOTH BEACH**

August 23, 2013

The Communications Committee Meeting of the City of Rehoboth Beach was called to order at 9:03 a.m. by Chairman Stan Mills on Friday, August 23, 2013 in the Commissioners Room in City Hall, 229 Rehoboth Avenue, Rehoboth Beach, DE.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chairman Stan Mills, Toni Sharp, Janet Anderson, Lorraine Zellers, Jim Horty III
Audience: Patrick Gossett, Max Hamby, Amy (Logo Branding Service Mark design group), Annmarie Westerfield (Main Street), Carol Everhart (Rehoboth Beach/Dewey Beach Chamber of Commerce), Mayor Sam Cooper

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The Agenda was unanimously approved.

CORRESPONDENCE

There was none.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes of the July 26, 2013 Communications Committee Meetings were distributed prior to the meeting.

Lorraine Zellers made a motion, seconded by Janet Anderson, to approve the July 26, 2013 Communications Committee Meeting minutes as written. Motion carried unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

Update on City website overhaul status by Max Hamby, IT Department supervisor.

Max Hamby, IT Department Supervisor, reported that the City website overhaul is still in Phase 1 which is the overall guiding structure for the look and feel of the website. He has spoken with Inclind as to what the next steps are. The framework of the site is being put together which will be customized as to how the City operates and what will be seen as an end result. He has identified several goals from a technological standpoint with regard to the City website: 1. Simplify and streamline site navigation. 2. Remove dependence on one provider. 3. Remove any player from the field and still be able to continue on. 4. Move to a standardized platform. 5. More accessibility by in-house or an independent contractor. 6. Provide better support for the website. 7. Take advantage of any free existing platforms or code plugins. 8. Incorporate social media such as Facebook, Twitter, etc. Social media needs to be used to the City's advantage to distribute messages such as public announcements, etc. This media would not replace E-News, but would compliment it.

Discuss with Max Hamby, IT Department Supervisor, utilization of a service mark for the City including a critique of proposed design drafts.

Max Hamby had distributed proposed draft designs with service marks prior to the meeting. A group consisting of Max, Stan Mills, Toni Sharp and Patrick Gossett met to get a feel of how Rehoboth sees itself, communication and translation to people, who the target audience is, graphic restrictions and color palette for a unified theme to the City. Utilization of a service mark builds trust and helps to push the idea of identity. The City Seal has been used as somewhat of a logo, although it is a mark that denotes a document being official. The City Seal does not necessarily build trust or a relationship with the viewer of the website. An idea is trying to be established as to how to market the City and translating it to people. Max had suggested as part of the website project to come up with a design guide for a service mark/logo. Amy, branding designer of Inclind has been interviewing multiple people and getting feedback with regard to this matter. She has taken that information and has come up proposed first-drafts for the iconography.

Amy reviewed the proposed draft designs with the Committee. The common theme with what represents the City is the beach, Bandstand and Boardwalk. Many of the people who were interviewed leaned towards a retro feel for the service mark. Four concepts were designed. Overall, the Bandstand was used as a focal point element. Styles of the images will be used to create icons as wayfinders throughout the website. Fonts and colors will also be used to get the look and feel into that platform. A brand could be created from it.

Lorraine Zellers was not sure why this was being done. This is a City website. It should be more official looking and perhaps be updated. She was not sure why the City would be branding itself. Carol Everhart noted that the current image on the City Seal is not easily replicated. Janet Anderson said that the opportunity to get rid of a staid image on the website, even though it is official, can look a lot more attractive. The lighthouse is on the City Seal and is the object when coming into the City. It would be foolish to not connect with what is already there. The simplicity and design of the concepts are nice, but a circular mark could be done which would include an asymmetrical lighthouse along with the word Rehoboth. Lorraine agreed. She would like to see a more stylized design and some variations. Annmarie Westerfield said that most of the municipalities in the State have been rebranding themselves which includes their websites. Their website just takes on the look that all signage just compliments together. This would be the initial step to eventually doing something like that. She suggested that style should also be discussed. Jim Harty III has recently been involved with three companies updating the image of their websites with what people perceive of them. What these companies have done is to leave the old, but bring in different updated pictures. The key is to stick with the stability the City has. To be able to have flexibility with the website, the City could stay with what has worked in the past 100 years with the stability of the seal, but also keep it fresh by showing different pictures, events, etc. Key things can be incorporated along with social media.

Max said that the service mark was never intended to supplant the City Seal. The Seal denotes an official document. There has to be an easily recognizable mark for the public. He did not feel that the logo and City Seal are the same thing.

Toni Sharp said that there is an opportunity to do the service mark. It is about image, not about marketing. This could be a building block for the future. She thought that the Committee should take the opportunity to work this in fully noting that the Seal will never be replaced for the government business. Stan Mills noted the various things which have the City Seal on them such as letterhead, parking map, website, etc. Other images have been put on City vehicles, water tower, etc. He would be interested, at some time, to consider a package that all of these would change. With regard to the website, Stan was not unhappy with what the City currently has. The City colors, although not formalized, are a derivative of the City Seal. He did not like the logos at the bottom of the front page that say visitor information, etc.

Amy suggested that she could take the existing seal and modify it so it will reproduce well in various sizes and colors. It could be placed in an official file when anyone would need to use it and would be seen everywhere. Lorraine thought that this is needed.

Janet thought that the Committee should look at designs that are based on modifications of the lighthouse. The existing seal and the lighthouse are essential. Stan noted that this project has emanated from Max, not the Communications Committee. The intent was for the Communications Committee to provide feedback. He asked Max if he would want to use the Communications Committee in the next steps to evaluate something different. It would be helpful to come up with one name as to the service mark/logo/branding mark.

Amy will provide an option of the seal that is modified along with defined colors and fonts. Different versions of the lighthouse will also be provided. She will also look into incorporating the changing of the seasons into the website. Stan was satisfied with the current seal. An updated seal could be used on the website.

Lorraine thought that it would be good to have one City seal to be utilized, but she was not much for making changes to it. Patrick Gossett said that this is a subtle tool at the Communications Committee's disposal to create the images and the concept of the feeling of the City.

The Committee suggested that Max explore other options with regard to the lighthouse as the icon. It also recommended that the existing seal be modified for better print options, create one electronic file for all the artwork to include standardized designs, use a logo to augment the City Seal, utilize the Seal and the logo on the website and the preferred logo was the retro design focused on the Bandstand.

Amy will move forward with the logo and the draft concepts for the website. The website design would begin by the next Committee meeting in September 2013. Mayor Cooper noted that a professional has been hired, and he would put it largely in their hands to move forward with the log and draft concepts for the website. At a future date, a broad outline could be presented to the Committee.

The target date for the website to go live at the end of September 2013 is not feasible. Max said that a schedule will not be discussed until there are concepts in hand. In moving forward, Max will present the concepts to the group consisting of Stan, Toni, Patrick and himself for approval.

Continued discussion about a potential program for the City to issue "Welcome" letter with regard to residential property owners and business owners.

Toni Sharp distributed a draft welcome letter to the Committee members for their review and approval. This draft letter will be forwarded electronically to Stan for distribution to the members so any edits or wordsmithing can be done. The welcome letter would be signed by the City Manager. Toni also presented a welcome bag which is distributed to new residents and businesses by Main Street. The draft welcome letter could be inserted into this bag along with additional items which could be included with it such as the courtesy notice, City newsletter, walking guide, parking guide, recycling, rain gardens, etc. The Committee should make sure it is connected with the Chamber, Main Street, Historical Society and Senior Center for them to provide information to be put in the packet. Toni was not sure if the Committee would want to take the opportunity to do something with regard to trees and the lakes from a standpoint of what can be done as a resident to be aware. Toni would be willing to work with Annmarie Westerfield of Main Street to make sure that the packets from the City would be in stock and ready to be placed in the bags from Main Street. The infrastructure would be in place to get it done. Toni, Janet and Lorraine volunteered to assemble the packets. The consensus of the Committee was to pursue this idea and get approval from the Board of Main Street. Stan will check with the City Manager and the Mayor on how to proceed with this project. Patrick suggested that the homeowners' association could be made aware that these packets are available to new homeowners.

Lorraine Zellers had contacted Terri Sullivan, Building Inspector, on September 20, 2013 about how Building & Licensing conveys information to new businesses. Currently, the City does not provide information to the businesses. Terri thought that the Committee's idea of providing information to the businesses was a good idea. Copies of various applications and forms which Building & Licensing provides to new business owners, was distributed to the Committee members. When a certificate and parking pass are issued to the new business owners, a welcome packet could be included. The packet could include the welcome letter, trash pickup and regulations, signs, flags, blinking lights, noise regulations, sidewalk cleaning, building permit, contact information, fire and police information, etc. To date, Lorraine has not drafted a welcome letter.

Stan said that this is intended to be a welcome letter after an owner is approved to do business in the City. A cover letter may also need to be considered for someone who is trying to decide whether or not to do business in the City. The current website has a section called Doing Business in Rehoboth Beach which tries to describe introduction to the City. The proposed website design will have information regarding starting a business in the City. The Committee may want to review the welcome letters in conjunction with the proposed website so they both marry at some point. Toni will work with Lorraine on a welcome letter. Lorraine will get more information from Terri.

Toni will work on a prototype for discussion at the next meeting. There may be a benefit to using a unique packaging so it gains the attention of the reader and also can be stored.

Update on implementing an online program to access documents which support Commissioner agenda topics including discussion on edits to a draft policy for implementing the online Support Documents Program.

Stan noted that since there had been numerous edits to the Support Documents Program, he decided to bring this document back to the Committee for its review. The document will not be finalized until Ann Womack, City Secretary, met with and shadowed one of the Sussex County representatives who compiles this type of agenda packet. Ann will not be able to meet with the representative until September 2013. It is anticipated that at the Committee's meeting in September 2013 that she will give a report; and hopefully at that point in time, this document will be finalized so the Committee can proceed with scheduling a presentation in front of the Commissioners to introduce and inaugurate the program. A red-lined version and an accepted version of the document were forwarded to the Committee members prior to the meeting for their review.

The consensus of the Committee was for lines 43 & 44 to remain as is. The City Manager is considered the agenda topic sponsor" of certain topics including but not limited to restaurant permit of compliance applications, appeals, etc.

Since the last meeting, Stan added the City Seal on the header page for the compilation, and he changed some of the language which includes the intent of the Committee's discussion at the last meeting. Ann will also check the wording. There was discussion at the last meeting about the timing to facilitate including support document(s). When seven days prior to a meeting is a holiday, then the agenda requests have to be made the day prior which would put it at eight days. Lines 76 to 90 reflect the Committee's discussions about the evaluation period such as monitoring time for the monitor and City staff, etc.

Continued discussion on Committee recommendation to the Commissioners to better identify on meeting agendas opportunities for the public to talk during Commissioners' meetings.

Stan had forwarded a support document on this topic to the Committee members prior to the meeting. What was forwarded to the Commissioners had been reformatted into a memo. There had been consensus of the Committee members at the last meeting to add the language for public comment on agenda topics to the Commissioners' meeting agendas. The Committee members were in agreement to allow public comment on non-agenda topics at the Commissioners' workshop meetings. The Committee members were in agreement with adding "Citizen Comment" to workshop agendas and clarifying as to the type of comment desired. With regard to citizen comment on non-agenda topics during a meeting, the Committee members were in agreement to extend the language for public comment on agenda topics to include "Non-agenda topics will be heard during Citizen Comment". There was consensus that timing of citizen comment on non-agenda topics during a meeting should not be included with these recommendations to the Commissioners at this time. The Committee members were in agreement that a process for citizen comment would not be addressed and included with these recommendations at this time. A process could be pursued for signing in at a meeting for public comment, but the Committee members declined to move forward with it at this time. Stan will rewrite the recommendations, and Janet will help with wordsmithing. A final version written as a memo and examples will be forwarded to the Commissioners at a workshop meeting for their review.

Stan provided a copy of how to run a good meeting from the American Planners Association to the Committee members.

NEW BUSINESS

There was none.

DISCUSSION AND PRIORITIZE ITEMS TO INCLUDE ON FUTURE AGENDAS.

Continued discussion on the website status, review the support document policy and follow-up with Ann shadowing the Sussex County representative, and continue discussion of the welcome packet including residential and commercial.

COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENT

There was none.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was none.

The next meeting of the Communications Committee will be held on September 27, 2013 at 9:00 a.m.

There being no further business, Chair Stan Mills adjourned the meeting at 11:28 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

(Ann M. Womack, CMC, City Secretary)

**MINUTES APPROVED ON
OCTOBER 25, 2013**

(Stan Mills, Chairman)