

**COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING
CITY OF REHOBOTH BEACH**

August 25, 2011

The Communications Committee Meeting of the City of Rehoboth Beach was called to order at 1:00 p.m. by Chairman Stan Mills on Thursday, August 25, 2011 in the Commissioners Room in City Hall, 229 Rehoboth Avenue, Rehoboth Beach, DE.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chairman Stan Mills, Dottie Cirelli, Hoyte Decker

Audience: Dick Cleveland, Dewey Beach Webmaster

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The Agenda was unanimously approved.

CORRESPONDENCE

Stan had shared correspondence with Committee members and the City Manager, and also distributed support documents to Committee members prior to the meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Dottie Cirelli made a motion, seconded by Hoyte Decker, to approve the July 20, 2011 Communications Committee Meeting minutes as written. Motion carried unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

Review and discussion of City's recently implemented E-News program.

The E-News program was first implemented by July 20, 2011. There are two formats depending on the type of information being transmitted. One format includes cutting and pasting information which works for simple documents, and the other format includes a link for complex formatted documents. The desire for E-News is to insert a word document into the body of the message and have it appear automatically. So far no one has been able to find a way to do this, but it is still being investigated.

Review and discussion of City website including but not limited to:

Recent changes such as to Pet page information.

Information to pet owners has been removed from the website because the City cannot do commercial advertising. The distinction is that the webpage this information was located on is a City page. A link can be made to the Chamber of Commerce and Main Street websites in order to provide that information through those organizations. A disclaimer with noted language might be passed on to the City Manager for consideration. The information absent the pet supply and grooming companies is acceptable to the City Manager.

Proposed changes such as to the City meeting information and "Rehoboth in the News"

The Committee had previously recommended to restore "Rehoboth in the News". A question came up about where to insert it on the website. One of the considerations needed to be taken into account is to give attribute to the organization which prints the article. The easiest way would be to highlight a summary which would be linked to where the full article can be found on the originator's website. A suggestion was made for the Committee to start with two articles. One would be on the Boardwalk being in the top ten and the other would be on the Super Beaches. Stan could be the gatekeeper's chair; and if the Committee sees something that comes up, it could be forwarded to Stan and then on to Dave Henderson, IT Director. The Committee would write the summary and send it to Dave. To get a finished product, Greg would authorize whether the summary would be placed on the website. If the Committee starts writing or does anything with the website, there is a danger of it taking on a lot more than what the Committee is afforded to do. The consensus of the Committee was that the informal policy would be for the Committee to take care of "Rehoboth in the News", get this particular formatting online with the Boardwalk being in the top ten and Super Beaches, manage or monitor it, make suggestions for future changes, and rank and rotate the articles.

Two different webpage formats were considered for the calendar items. Option A is the existing method being used, and Option B is the proposed method to be used. At the last meeting, the Committee had recommended that the checkbox with all the commissions, boards and committees be removed from the calendar of events webpage. The calendar listings are to be reversed chronologically. The consensus of the Committee was to change the calendar of events title to the name of the commissions, boards or committees, and to eliminate the name of the commissions, board or committees under the links to individual meeting pages because it is repetitive. For a future meeting webpage when the date of the meeting has been determined, the page should not be blank but state that the agenda or further details are pending. For future meetings, the times of the meetings would be listed but preferably removed for past meetings. A disclaimer should also be placed on this webpage. "Back to calendar" should be renamed to go back to the specific meeting calendar, and the link should be changed to go back to the previous page. The sequencing should be standardized on the webpage with the agenda, supporting documents, audio and minutes. Links on the home page are to be changed: 1. "City Meeting Schedules & Records" is to be inserted under City Government Administration. 2. "City Government Department" is to be removed under City Government Administration. The "Calendar of Events" webpage should be renamed to reflect a comprehensive list of all meetings and records in reverse chronological order. By inserting this, there would be two methods to get to the individual meeting page. Reasons for making these changes are that it is more flexible and user-friendly, and it gives people the ability to search based on how they like to look up information. These recommendations will be submitted to the City Manager and IT Department.

Discussion of making additional recommendations for website maintenance and updates.

In regard to suggestions made at the October 2010 meeting, Dave Henderson indicated that these changes were forwarded to Delaware.net, but the Committee has not seen any action. The Committee needs to resubmit the changes in its own language to be able to monitor these things. One alternative would be to send another memo forward with the minutes attached to verify that the requested changes have been made. A memo was sent to Dave from Stan stating that the Committee wants to be able to search with keywords within documents. He wants Dave to go through Delaware.net to either come back to the Committee to implement that program or to come back with options on how to do it. A timeframe needs to be set by the next meeting. Stan has asked Dave to send the Committee to send links and references as to websites where it can look at different styles, etc. regarding Google maps with multi-points to identify restaurants, park locations, restrooms, etc.

In regard to yard waste, Stan is working with the City Manager to redo the refuse, recycling and yard waste pages on the website because all of that information has changed. In regard to City forms and filling them out online, John McKeon of Delaware.net had said that the City could buy a program in order to fill out forms online. Dottie volunteered to take the lead on this item and contact all the departments to see about moving forward, and make a comprehensive list of all the forms that could be submitted online. Stan will check with the City Manager and the IT Department to see if the City has that kind of software on hand and if not, how much it costs and if the City Manager would be amenable to implementing such a program where more forms can be filled out online for the purpose of user-friendliness. In regard to the doing business in Rehoboth webpage, Hoyte volunteered to take the lead on contacting a business person to find out what that page should be about. Currently, there is no information about contesting a ticket. A suggestion was made to redo the parking meter map. Placement of the beach wheels should also be located in the beach section. In the visitor information section, there is a broken link to the traffic cam. Parks and recreation can be expanded to include bike trail information. Stan will follow-up on the missing information regarding restaurants, accommodations, etc. under the visitor information section. He will propose to the City Manager to provide information to links or a master page to get to the Chamber's website. A list of business license holders should be made available on the website. Stan will be working providing information about the mobi-mats.

The consensus of the Committee in regard to easy items to address was that Stan would go ahead and just do them. There are broken links regarding parking information, beach and Boardwalk information. Stan suggested having information regarding Bobby Edmonds in the doing business in Rehoboth section. The water quality reports need to be removed from the location where they are listed. Provide maps of the local hospitals and walk-in centers in the emergency information section. Rehoboth Beach Patrol should have its full name listed. Repair the link to City Administration and doing business in Rehoboth. Fix the bottom navigation panel because some of the language is out of the box. Regarding the Email signup, the language and formatting needs to be added in order to access the City newsletter and E-News. In regard to the Chamber of Commerce, the link is broken and accesses beach and Boardwalk information. The Historical Society and Main Street links are broken. There is no access to get back to the home page in visitor information. The parking meter language should be removed from the beach and Boardwalk information. Other area information should show the Chamber and Main Street, not Rehoboth.com. Redo the Board of Adjustment page because it has

non-standard information. There is too much information about the process, and it does not follow the template of other committees/boards/commissions. Stan will forward a template to Dottie who will then forward it to Tom Evans, Chairman of the Board of Adjustment. Streets & Transportation Committee and Streets & Light Committee should be combined. The old water quality reports can be listed under the Water Department. The link for paying utility bills does not work under online payments.

NEW BUSINESS

Discuss procedures for making Committee recommendations to the Board of Commissioners and City Manager.

The Committee is advisory to the Board of Commissioners. Recommendations can be sent to the Board by asking it for items to be placed on the agenda. The Committee needs to rally through the City Manager for things to be forwarded to the IT Department. Stan reiterated his desire for a thorough review, documentation and monitoring of changes that are made on the website.

Discuss updates relative to putting Committee information online.

Specific to the Committee with regard to putting supporting documents and draft minutes online, the City Manager has advised that the Board of Commissioners do not put draft minutes online. This policy has been extended to the rest of the committees. The audio policy has been applied differently than the resolution which states that audios of all boards, commissions and committees will be placed on the website for set amounts of time. For awhile this was not being done due to the website capacity. The City Manager had forwarded a memo stating that the issue of capacity has been resolved, and the audios will be placed on the website if the chair desires. Stan said that he will be putting this item on the September Board of Commissioners agenda for discussion.

Call to increase membership on Committee.

The Committee had previously discussed increasing membership to five vs. seven. Commissioner Lorraine Zellers and Thomas McGlone had expressed interest in becoming members.

Discuss items for future agendas.

The Committee should consider as another agenda item, the broader issue of who will be responsible for marketing and keeping the website viable. In regard to the Convention Center, it was suggested that Karen Zacharian should be in attendance at a future Committee meeting to discuss better utilization of the website regarding venues.

Set the next meeting.

The next meeting date and time is to be determined. A suggestion was made that it would be useful for the City Manager to attend the next meeting.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

There being no further business, Dottie Cirelli made a motion, seconded by Hoyte Decker to adjourn the meeting at 2:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

(Ann M. Womack, City Secretary)

**MINUTES APPROVED ON
DECEMBER 19, 2011**

(Stan Mills, Chairman)