

## COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING CITY OF REHOBOTH BEACH

October 25, 2013

The Communications Committee Meeting of the City of Rehoboth Beach was called to order at 9:12 a.m. by Chairman Stan Mills on Friday, October 25, 2013 in the Commissioners Room in City Hall, 229 Rehoboth Avenue, Rehoboth Beach, DE.

### ROLL CALL

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

Absent: Janet Anderson

Also Present: Max Hamby (IT Director), Karen Zakarian (Marketing Director – arrived at 9:35 a.m.)

### APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The Agenda was unanimously approved.

### CORRESPONDENCE

There was none.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes of the August 23, 2013 Communications Committee Meetings were distributed prior to the meeting.

Jimmy Horthy made a motion, seconded by Lorraine Zellers, to approve the August 23, 2013 Communications Committee Meeting minutes as written. Motion carried unanimously.

### OLD BUSINESS

#### **Update and discussion about ongoing City website projects with consideration of modifications to City Seal and City website overhaul including presentation of initial proposed options for the new website designs/layouts and for new City logos for use on the website.**

Stan Mills noted that Max Hamby had proposed as part of the website overhaul to look at the City Seal as well as developing a City Logo. Toni Sharp, Mayor Cooper, Stan and Max met in a subsequent meeting to the August 23, 2013 Committee Meeting and collectively decided that because the City Seal is so prolific around the City, it should be left alone but cleaned up and standardized. The colors should be identified, and the black/white version should be simplified. The City Logo is a good idea and should be moved forward initially for the City website. Max had indicated that sometime in the future he would be presenting different options for the website pages, and within the options there would be different alternatives for the City Logo to be used on the City website. Further advancement or pursuit of a new City Seal is mute.

Max Hamby, IT Director, said that at the last meeting he and the designer were asked to come back to the Committee with revisions of the existing seal as well as offer more contemporary options. They were reviewed at the group meeting. At that time, it was decided to forego the Seal. Max has a small budget devoted to this, but he is trying to reserve as much of the budget as he can for the creation of the website rather than trying to expand it into revising the City Seals and exploring that option. The proposed Seals were flattened and would be more usable in multiple situations. The Logo imagery from the August 23, 2013 Committee Meeting would be incorporated in less of a unified logo and placement of imagery would be on the website. It would enhance and play into how the entire website would be seen. Max was provided with a rough draft from Inclind, website design contractor, of which he provided criticisms with regard to the Logo. He provided the Committee with the second draft of the Logo for its review and feedback. A highlight of the new City website was provided for the Committee to review and comment on. As part of the content management system, it will have the ability to be completely managed in house. There will not be areas which cannot be accessed. A roles-based security system will be built into the content management system so the roles will be defined such as full administrator, emergency services, City Secretary privileges, etc., and people will be assigned to each role. Keeping track of visitors and where they go on the website can be found on Google Analytics. Tracking has occurred but part of the problem is that the current navigation is convoluted at this point, and it is hard to glean relevant information from it. There is no linear movement through the site. Links to the Chamber of Commerce and Main Street will be provided in the footer on the website which will appear on each webpage. There will be capability to

provide a slide show and splash images on the front page of the website. Hierarchies on the website need to be addressed. Providing sound would be too intrusive.

Suggestions made by Committee members were:

1. Provide an icon for the schedule of events in the Convention Center.
2. Our History – provide old photographs.
3. Update pages because it provides a ranking on mobile searches.
4. Condense the elements of the drop-downs.
5. Content on the website should be less stagnant.
6. Take under advisement with the designer to see if there is way to incorporate the idea of providing sound or video.

Max thought that sound would be too intrusive.

7. The format to provide organization into visitors, residents and businesses is good.
8. Coloring is flat. The color palette is not representative of the City.
9. Navigation is clean and direct.
10. Consider a page for the Convention Center.

Max suggested that the Convention Center should be placed in an advertising spot at the bottom of the webpage. The Convention Center has been identified as a major part of the City, and it will be grouped with the visitors, department, residents, etc.

Hoyte Decker, former member of the Committee, said that pages of interest should be identified and prioritized. The Convention Center should be placed in multiple areas. Max agreed.

Stan noted that a future topic for discussion is who will be managing the content for announcements, etc. The events and information for the Convention Center could be managed by those individuals involved with the Convention Center. Max said that his goal is to train people who will be responsible for the information to update that information. The people who have the information and know the information should be the ones who update the information.

Dottie Cirelli, former member of the Committee, said that navigation on the current website is the biggest issue. She suggested that there should be a key word search for the new city website and frequently asked questions.

Jimmy Horty suggested that one of the employees in the Administrative Office could provide a list of the top ten or fifteen frequently asked questions. This would alleviate phone calls to the City offices and could be posted on the website.

Max noted that the web design is at the point of production and taking the design and putting it into the actual website. The first third of the project is nearing completion. The next two-thirds will go pretty quickly because it is more technical work. Max said that he would like to think that the process would be complete by January 1, 2014, and the website could be taken live. Drawing out the process does not mean that more money is being spent on this project. He thought that the monies budgeted are adequate. Making changes to the new website will stretch the timeline out longer. Once the Committee approves the design, Inclind will use what has currently been done and create a tablet size and mobile size of the website which will not need to be approved by the Committee. The process involves design, production and client review and testing during production. At the end, the website will go live. Max estimated that production would take approximately two months. He will meet with Inclind to establish a timeline in moving forward.

Dottie suggested that the web designer establish milestones and deadlines so the Committee has something to aim for as opposed to letting the process float along.

Max thought that E-News is relied upon too much, and there should be more social media integration. Currently, the City does not have a Facebook page. It does have a Twitter account which has been reserved, but is not currently being used.

The consensus of the Committee was to move forward with the design of the new website.

The consensus of the Committee was to use the Bandstand as the logo on the new website. The City Seal is being retained.

**Discussion on implementing an online Support Document Program to access documents which support Commissioner agenda topics to include discussion on finalizing draft policy, process and timeline for inaugurating program including report and discussion on Sussex County's Support Document Program.**

Copies of the support document draft policy dated August 19, 2013 were distributed prior to the meeting.

Ann Womack shadowed a representative from Sussex County in September 2013 to learn how the support document program process is done there and reported back to the Committee on the process and timeframe for assembling the document. Copies of the Sussex County Support Document Packets were distributed. Ann had reviewed the draft policy and clarified the days when the .pdf documents would need to be submitted to her. She provided a template of the City's cover page to the Committee to provide them with an idea of what it would look like. Ann also developed a Support Document Log to show her time for each packet developed.

Stan suggested that a presentation to the Board of Commissioners should be made for inauguration of the program. The Committee's supporting document policy would become a support document and put into the packet to be distributed to the Board of Commissioners beforehand. It would also be presented to the public and the Board at that time. The timeframe would be based on Ann putting the first packet together.

The consensus of the Committee was to present the packet at the Board of Commissioners December Workshop Meeting. The program could be inaugurated through E-News or a Press Release. Prior to presenting the packet to the Commissioners, Ann will forward it to the Committee for its review.

**Follow-up discussion based feedback from the Commissioners regarding the Committee recommendations for Commissioner agenda language that clarifies whether or not the public can voice comments at Commissioners meetings.**

Stan had distributed sample agendas to the Committee prior to the meeting. The sample Board of Commissioners Workshop and Regular Meeting agendas were edited to match the feedback received from the Board. The majority of the Commissioners agreed that the audience should be aware of when it can speak. The language for public discussion was moved to the bottom of the sample agendas. Some of the language was changed from Public Discussion to Citizen Comment. Pages 4 through 6 incorporate the changes which were accepted and reflect the feedback.

The consensus of the Committee was to move forward with the changes that were made. The next step is to process a timeline for presenting this matter to the Commissioners again.

**Discussion about a potential program for the City to issue "Welcome" letters to residential property owners and business owners.**

The first version of the welcome letter to a resident was drafted by Toni Sharp on August 20, 2013, and the second version was drafted on August 26, 2013. Both letters were distributed prior to the meeting. The Committee was happy overall with the content of the letter that its purpose is mainly to welcome property owners to the city and to direct them to the website where they can retrieve more information.

Stan had asked Toni to secure an agreement in writing from Main Street which he has received that says Main Street is willing to participate in this program. At the last Committee meeting, the majority of the members agreed to put the packets together. The consensus of the Committee was this would be a Committee function for a while.

Toni said that in speaking with Sonja Decker of the Rehoboth Beach Homeowners' Association, there are approximately 160 new residents annually. Having this information will make it easier to have the packets ready to be put in the Main Street package. It would cost approximately \$80.00 annually for the envelopes. Inserts that are dated would be the City Newsletter, Museum letter, Senior Center Newsletter, etc. All of the documents would be prepackaged and taken to Main Street for distribution. Toni volunteered to be the point person to make sure to coordinate with Main Street how many packages are being sent out through Main Street. Toni will check with Main Street as to how often the packages are delivered to the realtors and will report back to the Committee on the frequency. Toni will obtain permission for any of the inserts for the packets other than the City generated information.

The first version of the welcome letter for the business owners was drafted by Lorraine Zellers. Copies were distributed to the Committee members. She tried to use Toni's letter as a background and a letter from Carmel by the Sea as a template. Lorraine read the letter. The City does not typically send out letters to new business owners. Building Inspector Terri Sullivan thought it would be good to send out the letter after a business license has been gotten by the new owner. This letter would accompany the business license. Lorraine

proposed to review commonly asked questions and general standards with Terri in order for her to provide bullet points. The consensus of the Committee was to only include contact information with the letter and refer the business owner to the website or Building & Licensing for questions about permits, etc. Toni will work with Lorraine to fine tune this letter. Lorraine noted that there are approximately eight new businesses annually. Terri thought that the welcome letter could be mailed with the business license certificate and parking passes.

With regard to a timeline to begin the process, the consensus of the Committee was to present both the letters to the Board of Commissioners at the January Workshop Meeting.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

There was none.

#### **DISCUSS AND PRIORITIZE ITEMS TO INCLUDE ON FUTURE AGENDAS.**

Items to be included on a future agenda are: 1. Discussion on how to manage the website. 2. Continued discussion on the status of the new website on November 22, 2013. 2. Continue discussion of the residential and business welcome packet on November 22, 2013.

#### **COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENT**

Toni commented that with a new City Manager coming onboard, she was unsure of how that person will react to the movement of the website this close the employment date and not being included in the process. If the website design needs more financial and human support than previously, those are different issues from having a facelift done to the website. She would hate for the Committee to be criticized for not being sensitive to the fact that a new managerial philosophy is not incorporated. Stan did not think the website will go live before a new City Manager is onboard. He hoped that there would be a full rollout of the website vs. a partial rollout. Stan will talk with Max about the timeline, etc. and will return to the Committee regarding the December meetings. Jimmy said that the key thing with regard to the new City Manager, that person will have to rely on the Committee to help that person to work well in their new position.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was none.

The next meeting of the Communications Committee will be held on November 22, 2013 at 9:00 a.m. Tentative dates for the meetings thereafter are December 6, 2013 and December 20, 2013 at 9:00 a.m.

There being no further business, Chair Mills adjourned the meeting at 11:40 a.m.

**Respectfully submitted,**

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**(Ann M. Womack, City Secretary)**

**MINUTES APPROVED ON  
APRIL 25, 2014**

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**(Stan Mills, Chairman)**