

Communications Committee Meeting Minutes
February 10, 2012

1. Call to Order: Meeting started at 2:00 pm.
2. Roll Call: Attending: Stan Mills, Chair; Commissioner Lorraine Zellers, Dottie Cirelli, Hoyte Decker, and Janet Anderson, Members. Tom McGlone, Public
3. Approval of Agenda: Approved by consensus.
4. Correspondence: None
5. Approval of Minutes – December 19, 2011 Meeting: Approved by consensus.

6. Old Business

A. Review of Committee Mission Statement and history of Committee Issues: No new Statements proposed, other than Chair's suggestion. To be addressed at a future meeting. Tom McGlone offered comments:

- a. Ask the community what it wants, especially with 2/3 of property owners non-residents,
- b. Moving from Website-dependent communication to more social media oriented options, and
- c. Maximizing the number of property owner email addresses on file.

Member Cirelli said the Committee should consider Mr. McGlone's comments in an effort to establish how best to communicate with citizens; the Chair said it might be appropriate for future Mission Statement consideration.

B. Follow-up on Committee recommendations to the city manager regarding budget considerations for maintaining the city website: Chair has spoken to City Manager. \$6,000 has been budgeted for use for website enhancement. Also, additional funds have been set aside to hire a part time helper whose job functions would include website responsibilities. The role of Delaware.net has been reduced; it will provide support of the website, including a facelift of the current website.

C. Discussion of status of City website changes initiated by the Committee: Member Cirelli expressed frustration about this process, saying the web should be managed by a web master, not micromanaged by a committee. Member Decker agreed. After some discussion the consensus seemed to be to place more responsibility on Delaware.net based on the recommendations already identified by the Committee. Member Cirelli summed it up, everything we have to date will be given to Delaware.net and they will be instructed to start. We'll meet with them periodically to give suggestions.

D. Discussion and consideration of additional recommendations for website maintenance and updates:

1. Access to and submittal of forms online (Dottie Cirelli) – Presented report with recommendations including, uniform logo, font; they need to be dated—both created, approved, and revised. They should also be reviewed periodically to ensure they are updated. Users should be able to complete all forms online with the option to download and mail or submit electronically—if permitted by the City department. This will ensure legibility among other advantages. There should be a separate link on the website to access all forms as well as going through the departmental link. The Dare County, NC website was cited as a good example. See attached report for further details and recommendations.

2. New Google maps (Dottie Cirelli and Stan Mills) – Discussion centered around the quantity of individual “pinpoint” map locators. It was also suggested that a comprehensive map be available. Decisions will be made on what individual and what group locators will be created, including icons and legends. Member Cirelli and the Chair will continue that work.
3. New photo array on home page (Janet Anderson) – With the goal of obtaining more dynamic photos, for each season as well, Janet suggested we use a group of interested professional photographers; Tom McGlone suggested that the public be invited to submit pictures with possible incentives for their work. The committee could make selections for the website. The Chair said it would be useful to promote the City. Further work will be done; Member Cirelli offered to assist in this effort.
4. Facilitating a bulletin board for alert-type messages (Stan Mills) – The committee discussed a number of examples where this system could be employed. The concept will be added to the list of items for website design by Delawre.net.
5. Calendar listing headers (Stan Mills) – This will be folded into the entire “revamp” of the calendaring system that will be undertaken by Delawre.net.
6. “Do Business in Rehoboth Beach” (Hoyte Decker) – A suggested substitute blurb was distributed to the committee. It was accepted with one minor change.
7. Visitor Information page modifications (Stan Mills). The chair suggested the addition of two “boxes”/links:
 - 1) “Weddings.” Dave Henderson of the IT Department had indicated to Stan that the #1 question his department receives is relative to conducting wedding ceremonies. The committee thought this box should be titled “Weddings & Civil Unions.”
 - 2) “Local Links.” The chair suggested this would be for links only to local organizations, not businesses, with the policy set by the city manager. The Committee agreed.
8. Adding other new features or pages – This addresses correspondence from Tom McGlone previously submitted to the committee about adding a web page to communicate Rehoboth Beach’s large and gay community and including a map of Poodle Beach. Member Cirelli indicated a preference to utilize “Local Links” to send the user to other organizations that tout that information. She surveyed a number of community websites, especially cities that have significant gay constituencies. She did not find any municipal sites specifically addressing their local gay community. She thought that if we did so then we probably would have to address other special interest groups - thus best to utilize “Local Links.” The Chair added that he found that Community websites usually had broad-based promotional links, not group specific references. Member Decker alluded to the references that appear in travel guidebooks like *Fodor’s*, *Lonely Planet*, etc., which invariably contain a section on gay traveler information. Member Anderson indicated that the use of community links would satisfy this consideration. Member Zellers suggested that when community links, such as Camp Rehoboth, are added there will probably be feedback and further consideration may be warranted then.

7. New Business

- A. Items are available to City officials and the public in advance of a meeting (Hoyte Decker): A brief review was provided, including distribution of the Member Decker 2009 memo and a summary of the Board of Commissioners’ discussion at a July 16, 2010 Regular meeting. The Chair then presented a method used by Bethany Beach for its supporting document use. He also went on to say that he supports the concept in general. However, he said through first hand experience—he cited an example—he realized it was not very satisfying to send them out ahead of time, because he wanted to make that initial presentation (oral) to everyone. While the

documents might be circulated to the other Commissioners or committee members, not necessarily to the public. The Chair referenced a past situation in which information was disseminated to certain people, who in turn filed comments with the Board of Commissioners before most of them had even been made aware of the information. Several “Next Steps” were identified, which Member Decker will pursue. They include: optimize the model [Communications Committee procedure], single compilations (?)—perfecting the committee’s methodology for doing support documents, the importance of timeliness, developing the discipline to get the documents ready, standardizing the format and uniformity of record keeping, establishing a policy—what should and should not be included. Member Decker will prepare a list of discussion points which the committee can address at the next meeting.

- B. Introduce agenda reformatting concepts that clarify the objective of specific agenda items and clarify when the public is allowed to speak (Stan Mills): Member Decker said that because this issue is parallel and overlaps the supporting document issue, he will take responsibility for its advancement.

8. Set next meeting: Friday, March 9, 2012, 2:00 pm.

9. Public Comment: No further comments.

10. Adjournment: 4:06 pm.

Minutes approved by the Communications Committee on May 24, 2012