

**COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING
CITY OF REHOBOTH BEACH**

September 26, 2014

The Communications Committee Meeting of the City of Rehoboth Beach was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Chairman Stan Mills on Friday, September 26, 2014 in the Commissioners Room in City Hall, 229 Rehoboth Avenue, Rehoboth Beach, DE.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chairman Stan Mills, Toni Sharp, Jimmy Horty III
Absent: Lorraine Zellers, Janet Anderson
Also Absent: Sharon Lynn (City Manager)

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The Agenda, as amended with the deletion of the June 27, 2014 and August 22, 2014 Communications Committee Meeting Minutes, was unanimously approved.

CORRESPONDENCE

There was none.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

No minutes were available for approval.

OLD BUSINESS

Report and discussion on status of website overhaul.

A memorandum was provided by City Manager Sharon Lynn to the Communications Committee noting that the effort to input the content into the website platform is continuing. Currently, Beau Jackett is approximately 85-90% complete on putting the content into the new site. He expects to be 100% complete on that phase by the beginning of next week. News and event items have been migrated to the new site. A few minor display rendering items were identified that were resolved as well as a few changes that may require changes to the template done by Inclind. After the content phase, Beau will move into developing the programmatic assets such as interactive mapping, site contact form and mailchim.com template. The lack of photography/graphics needs to be addressed. Sharon will speak with the Chamber, Main Street, etc. about any photographs they may have, but it may be a good idea to hire a professional photographer to photograph a predefined list of shots for the website and future use. This can be discussed in greater detail. Inclind's proposal has been accepted to integrate the Police Department's site into the new City website. Before beginning the design phase, the Police Department was tasked with putting together a team to develop the content that will be placed into their section of the site. The team was given two weeks to review existing content and other websites, and put together a series of documents which will provide Inclind with a functionality complete set of information. These documents will be forwarded to Inclind by September 26, 2014 at which point Inclind will begin the project.

Toni Sharp said that she would like four areas to be elaborated on: 1. Timeline in reference to City website. 2. How the 85-90% completion was assessed, what content has been eliminated from the website and what new features have been added to it.

Jimmy Horty added that once the City Manager has made the determination that everything is complete, then the Committee should review the website. Toni noted that user testing is a routine phase prior to a launch. She would like clarify on what that phase will entail. Stan thought that the Committee should internally review the new website, and then have an outside group evaluate it.

Patrick Gossett suggested that when the Committee critiques the website, it should give direction as to what it is looking for and have Beau on a conference call so he would be able to make the changes while on the call.

This item will be placed on the agenda for the October meeting.

Review status of Committee recommendations to City Manager including but not limited to:

Implementation of a program for the City to issue “Welcome” letters to residential property owners and to business owners.

Toni provided a status report on the welcome letter to new residents. Approximately 50-75 packets are assembled and ready to go. There has been a snag in the distribution process in that the packets will not be distributed by Main Street. Toni met with the City Manager to consider that the packets would be sent out from City Hall through the mail. The City Manager does not have a problem with that. Toni will be working directly with Donna Moore, possibly beginning next week or the week of October 6th. When she gets the new resident information, Toni will periodically assemble the packets to get them ready to be mailed. Toni was tasked with editing the welcome letter program for the next Committee Meeting to reflect the different distribution program and include any changes anywhere in the document such as anticipated costs, benefits, etc.

Lorraine Zellers was not in attendance at the meeting to provide an update. Stan thought that her program has been implemented. If not, it is imminent that the letters to be distributed to the business owners will be distributed through the City administrative offices.

Seek implementation of methods to optimize communications with members of the public at meetings.

Stan noted that the City Manager has been receptive to all the recommendations that the Committee has made. Some of the methods may be better for the new building. The Committee had recommended focusing on the need for addressing the recommendations for audio enhancements in the Commissioners Room on an expedited basis.

Patrick Gossett said that Sharon has reached out to two people for proposals on doing something with the audio in the short term.

Expand the Support Document Program to other commissions, boards and committees.

Stan noted that the Support Document Program has been expanded to other commissions, boards and committees. Sharon will be forwarding a memorandum to them articulating what the rules are. All the rules will be the same as the Board of Commissioners. The packets will be compiled by the City Secretary as time permits.

Expand the webpage “Ongoing Business of the Commissioners” to include reports to the Commissioners from other commissions, committees and boards.

Stan noted that “Ongoing Business” will be expanded to include reports to the Commissioners from other commissions, committees and boards.

Facilitate the inclusion of “Ongoing Business” links for individual committees, commissions and boards.

Stan noted that Sharon was responsive to this recommendation.

Expand the content of the Commissioners’ support document packet as is feasible, by example giving consideration of including Permit of Compliance submittals; committee reports, etc.

Stan noted that all these recommendations were made by the Committee and sent to the City Manager. Sharon is favorable to all the recommendations. These recommendations will be implemented over time.

Discuss updating the Committee mission statement.

Stan noted that at the last meeting, Janet Anderson and Jimmy Harty were tasked with wordsmithing of the mission statement. No recommendations had been made. A red-lined version of the mission statement was provided to the Committee for its review. The Communications Committee makes recommendations on optimizing two-way communications between city government and its residents, property owners, business owners and the public through utilization of varied media sources including but not limited to city newsletters, the city website and the city email system. In particular, the Committee is continually working to maintain the City’s website as one of the main portals of communications.

Toni said that the mission of the Committee does not focus on how it decides what to work on. The mission could be that this Committee is responsible for surfacing the issues that are the most important to the community. Toni would like to review this item and develop her concept more and will provide feedback at the next meeting.

Karen Zakarian had commented that information is not easily available for the Convention Center on the website, events are not shown on the website and signage regarding the sidewalk project by DeIDOT. Stan noted that the website is a government site, and local businesses are not advertised on it. The sidewalk project should be

conveyed to the City Manager.

Patrick Gossett thought that the Committee should work more towards strategic planning and how the City website should be represented as opposed to doing.

Report on Committee activities reported to the Commissioners at their Workshop Meeting on September 19, 2014 including but not limited to:

Review and analysis of the Board of Commissioners' Support Document Program.

Recommendations to expand accessibility of commission, committee and board documents on the City website.

Recommendations to optimize communication with members of the public at meetings.

Stan noted that there had been no response from the Commissioners in regard to these topics.

Discuss Committee's long term objectives.

Long term objectives are the capability of surveying the public, developing a program for video streaming of meetings, the possibility of implementing a social media program.

NEW BUSINESS

There was none.

DISCUSS AND PRIORIZE ITEMS TO INCLUDE ON FUTURE AGENDAS.

There were none.

SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING.

The next meeting is scheduled for October 24, 2014 at 9:00 a.m. The meetings for November and December are tentatively scheduled for November 21, 2014 and December 19, 2014.

COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENT

There was none.

CITIZEN COMMENT

There was none.

There being no further discussion, Chairman Mills adjourned the meeting at 10:12 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

(Ann M. Womack, City Secretary)

**MINUTES APPROVED ON
OCTOBER 24, 2014**

(Stan Mills, Chairman)