

**COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING
CITY OF REHOBOTH BEACH**

September 25, 2015

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 25, 2015 in the Commissioners Room in City Hall, 229 Rehoboth Avenue, Rehoboth Beach, DE.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chairman Stan Mills, Toni Sharp, Lorraine Zellers, Janet Anderson, Jimmy Horthy III (left meeting at 10:36 a.m.)

Also Present: Sharon Lynn (City Manager) (left meeting at 10:36 a.m.)

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Lorraine Zellers made a motion, seconded by Jimmy Horthy, to approve the agenda as written. Motion carried unanimously.

CORRESPONDENCE

There was none.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes of the October 24, 2014 Communications Committee Meeting were distributed prior to the meeting.

Lorraine Zellers made a motion, seconded by Toni Sharp, to approve the October 24, 2014 Communications Committee Meeting Minutes as written. Motion carried unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

Status and discussion on audio-visual programs in the Commissioners Room (current room and new room in new building).

The Communications Committee, over the years, has made recommendations that a better microphone system is needed. Currently, the City Manager has had four new gooseneck microphones including on the podium and handheld microphones for the audience. When the meetings are moved, the recording system will be moved from the Commissioners Room to the Fire Company in the interim when the new City Hall is being built. A new sound system will be installed in the new Commissioners Room at that time. Mayor Sam Cooper, City Manager Sharon Lynn and Chairman Stan Mills as well as the audio/video engineer and a few vendors met to flush out the specifications for the recording system in the new Commissioners Room. They've also looked at the entire new City Hall for connectivity and access to the internet, videotaping of meetings and a security system. A 3-D layout of the proposed Commissioners Room was presented to the Committee. Chairman Mills and City Manager Lynn met with representatives from the Town of Ocean City, MD to review its video recording system. At the November 2015, Chairman Mills will be giving a presentation of the video system, cameras, how the meetings are recorded, capital costs, maintenance costs, review of the recordation policy, access to recorded meetings, ADA compliance, etc. Discussion ensued that the purpose of a video recording system would be to better serve the residents. The majority of the Committee thought that there should be multiple cameras, and the video recordings should not be livestreamed. The video would be uploaded to the City website or a U-Tube channel. City Manager Lynn, Chairman Mills and City Secretary Ann Womack are working on the issues of staffing, the operator system, accessibility online, etc. With regard to compliance with the Disabilities Act, the video included in the record of the meeting will need to have a text version of what is happening in the clip to be compliant. In order to protect the City, a disclosure statement should be made at the beginning of a video or audio recording that the City maintains legal ownership and rights to it.

There was consensus of the Committee to move forward with making a statement to the Commissioners at their Workshop Meeting in November 2015 regarding a new audio and video system.

NEW BUSINESS

Discuss City website, components and policies, including but not limited to:

- 1. Support document program**

This program was initiated by the Committee and is currently being used by the Commissioners. It was noted that it is in the purview of the presenter whether or not documents are available prior to a meeting. A suggestion was made that a memo should be forwarded to the Commissioners as a reminder that support documents are due to City Secretary Ann Womack a few days before the meeting in order to develop a packet.

2. Ongoing Business (of the Commissioners)

Ongoing Business is located on the City website. Currently, the layout for this page has a table of contents current topics and one for archives. Chairman Mills, IT Director Max Hamby and City Secretary Ann Womack developed a new format system that the table of contents is combined. Further on, break-out pages will be displayed when clicking on the individual items. Each individual page will have a synopsis and resources. The consensus of the Committee was that there should be more prominence displayed to big issues. There should also be better direction from the home page of the website to the big issues on the Ongoing Business page. Also suggested was that there should be a discussion with the Commissioners that a communications lead should be uploading important information to the website. It would be a structural shift in acknowledging that the City needs the competencies of a communications professional to create and disseminate information in the ways people receive it now.

3. Committee's current website review policy

The Committee developed the original website and a policy that in every three months, it would review the website. Over time, the Committee has reviewed the website every six months. There was consensus that the current policy should be suspended; and as issues arise, the Committee will forward them to the appropriate person(s).

4. Overall status of site

Comments were made that the current website does not work as a municipal site, and it is difficult to locate items. Ultimately, it is the City Manager's responsibility for the overall status of the site. In moving forward to try to get the site improved, it would be a function of the IT Department, City Manager and staff in the City Manager's office. A suggestion was made to invest money to create an entirely new site which would be opened concurrently with the new City Hall.

Review status of program to distribute "Welcome" letters for new residential property owners and for new business.

With regard to the residential welcome letters, a hiatus was taken during the summer months of 2015 due to staffing issues. This program is back on track with the assistance of Sharon Sherwood. The annual newsletter has been updated. Toni Sharp has been assembling and sending out the packets. The City has printed extra newsletters for this program.

With regard to the business welcome letters, this program has not been implemented to date. This program will be moving forward in the near future. City administration is responsible for distributing the letters.

Discuss the role social media can play in municipal governments and how the City might utilize it.

An introductory look was taken at the potential use of the various types of social media by the City. The City should consider using social media tools such as Twitter and Facebook in addition to the City's website to reach a broader audience in a more timely and efficient manner. All social media postings would be subject to approval by the City Manager and/or a communications director. The website would remain the City's primary and predominant internet presence. Content posted to social media sites would also be available on the main website, and it should contain links directing users back to the City's official website for in-depth information, forms, documents or online services necessary to conduct business with the City. Departmental information technology staff will be responsible for the content and upkeep of any social media sites. Twitter and Facebook postings would not allow comments posted by the public. The City would reserve the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed in violation of this social media policy or any applicable law. A suggestion was made that the Communications Committee should have a united statement about the way in moving forward with social media and that there has to be appropriate underpinnings in order to make things happen.

Discuss potential changes to Committee's mission statement.

With regard to the mission statement, a member suggested that "[T]he Committee was formed to ensure that property owners are kept informed of important issues that face the City of Rehoboth Beach" should be stricken, and

the mission statement should be refined. The consensus of the Committee was to refine the mission statement.

Introductory discussion on the use of surveys by municipal governments.

The consensus of the Committee was to drop this subject at this point in time.

DISCUSS AND PRIORITIZE ITEMS TO INCLUDE ON FUTURE AGENDAS.

There were none.

SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING.

The next meeting is scheduled for October 23, 2015 at 9:00 a.m.

COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENT

There was none.

CITIZEN COMMENT

There was none.

There being no further discussion, Chairman Mills adjourned the meeting at 10:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

(Ann M. Womack, City Secretary)

**MINUTES APPROVED ON
JULY 22, 2016**

(Stan Mills, Chairman)