

**COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING
CITY OF REHOBOTH BEACH**

October 24, 2014

The Communications Committee Meeting of the City of Rehoboth Beach was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Chairman Stan Mills on Friday, October 24, 2014 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

Absent: Jimmy Horthy III

Also Present: Sharon Lynn (City Manager), Max Hamby (IT Director)

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The Agenda was unanimously approved.

CORRESPONDENCE

There was none.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes of the June 22, 2014, August 22, 2014 and September 26, 2014 Communications Committee Meetings were distributed prior to the meeting.

Lorraine Zellers made a motion, seconded by Toni Sharp, to approve the June 22, 2014 Communications Committee Meeting Minutes as written. Motion carried unanimously.

Lorraine Zellers made a motion, seconded by Toni Sharp, to approve the August 22, 2014 Communications Committee Meeting Minutes as written. Motion carried unanimously.

Toni Sharp made a motion, seconded by Stan Mills, to approve the September 26, 2014 Communications Committee Meeting Minutes as written. (Sharp – aye, Mills – aye, Zellers – abstain, Anderson – abstain.) Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

Discussion on status of and processes involving website overhaul.

City Manager Sharon Lynn addressed the questions and comments that had been sent to her in a memorandum from the Committee on October 13, 2014. The website is very close to completion. Expectations have been met with completion of the website except for photography to be done by Chuck Snyder and the graphics. She hoped to send a memorandum to the Commissioners, asking them to dress up at the next Workshop Meeting. Photographs will be taken of departments and department heads. Every department will have contact information, and everyone has a link to an email address. Beau Jackett was tasked with getting the content into the site, and that part of the project is complete. The Rehoboth Beach Police Department website is up and running, and it is linked within the City website. With regard to fillable forms, more forms are needed and fine-tuned. City Manager Lynn noted that with just a few tweaks, the website is manageable. The website is ready to be up and running. Some of the content is old, but new content will be uploaded after Commissioner approval. The Police Department content is still being written by Police Chief Keith Banks, and it will be ready by October 27, 2014.

Stan noted that there will be an opportunity for the Committee to review the website.

Max Hamby, IT Director, provided a demonstration of the new website. With regard to the meetings and agendas, minutes and audios, there may be a better solution to provide a separate page that shows all the meetings and agendas or provide a table of the last six months of meetings with the meeting date which could link back to the actual event page. Inside the table would be the agenda, audio, minutes, etc. It would put all six months at one spot. City Manager Lynn said that on the Commissioners' page, a subgrouping could be provided for meetings, minutes, agendas, audios. Max said that there should be one page for minutes, agendas and audios with subheadings for each commission, board and committees. Other websites are moving to an organized location to see everything for six months at a glance with regard to meetings.

City Manager Lynn suggested that the Committee members should individually review the website and provide their recommendations and feedback to her for Max to fix.

Stan thought that for the agendas, minutes, etc. the organization on the current website has worked fine. With regarding to Ongoing Business, he noted that it is vital to have a table of contents on that page for the individual categories. City Manager Lynn said that the table of contents will be incorporated into the new website. Max noted that it is easy to add pages. The benefit of the new website is that there is a level of flexibility which with the current website there really is not any. The changes can be made quickly, given the resources and depending on the scope of work.

Max provided a brief overview of the latest news section of the new website and the fillable forms. City Manager Lynn noted that more fillable forms are needed, and the capability to submit forms electronically is needed such as building permits, etc. Max said that there are processes which are preventing electronic distribution.

City Manager Lynn said that she would like to have the major issues looked at by the Committee members and fixed before launching the new website, such as updating the Commissioners' page, putting the minutes where the Committee would like to see them and in what fashion for them to be seen and getting pictures on the new website. She thought the website could be launched by November 13, 2014.

Max said that everything on the website will need a review. City Manager Lynn said that she will be reviewing the website, and suggested that maybe each member would be interested in reviewing it also.

Janet Anderson suggested that five to six individuals should be brought in with their own equipment to test the website, have two observers watching them trying to navigate it and have a discussion period about general impressions regarding the interface and their experience.

Stan suggested that by November 10, 2014, each member of the Committee should individually review the website and send their comments to Stan who will compile and forward them to City Manager Lynn. She would determine the level of priority or relevance for each comment. The user testing could wait until after the website is live.

City Manager Lynn will notify the department heads to look at their individual pages and have them provide their comments by November 10, 2014.

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:

(1) Implementation of a program for the City to issue "Welcome" letters to residential property owners and to business owners.

Toni was not able to update the process letter at this point to reflect the change in distribution. Donna Moore has provided her with the information she needs to send out the letters. Barbara Bunting has gotten the envelopes for the letters. Toni will begin sending the welcome letters to residential property owners on October 27, 2014. The letter will also be distributed to the Committee at that time.

Lorraine noted that as the new business licenses are mailed, the welcome letter will be included in the mailing. Both Lorraine and Toni will notify Stan when the mailings have been done so he can report to the Commissioners that this program has been implemented.

(2) Optimizing communications with the public during meetings.

City Manager Lynn reported that upgrades will be made to the audio system. The equipment has been ordered, and it is anticipated that the equipment will be installed by the end of 2014. There will be a microphone for the audience. The upgrade will provide for the capability of having the entire room hear the meetings.

Max has looked into the cost of a smart board. The estimated cost would be \$8,000.00. Stan will meet with Max on this matter.

Discuss updating the Committee mission statement.

Toni thought that the Committee may want to transition to a thinking group vs. an implementing or doing group. She asked the Committee members to think about ways they would like the Committee to be in the future. Toni tried to create a new mission statement. 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. The Communications Committee is advisory to the Board of Commissioners and City Manager. Membership is by appointment by the Board of Commissioners. Eligible members include property and business owners, residents. Terms of office are indefinite. The Committee meetings are scheduled on the fourth Friday of each month at 9:00 a.m. on an "as needed" basis at City Hall in the Commissioners Room. Changes to the meeting schedule and location are noticed. Toni suggested that there should be discussion at the next meeting.

Janet will critique the mission statement. She thought that the Committee is advisory, It makes recommendations and does not create policy

This item will be placed on the agenda for the November 21, 2014 meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Introductory discussion on use of audio visual technologies for municipal meetings.

Stan asked the Committee members to provide any feedback with regard to the outline for methods of communication outside/inside meeting rooms, and to provide contact information of any municipalities that use audio/visual technologies.

Max noted that a smart board is a white board which has a projector attached to it so it can project images onto the white board that can interact with the projection and the computer.

Janet said that an evaluation should be done of whether it is truly needed.

Stan thought that interactive white boards and video conferencing are important to move forward on. They may not be viable for the City. FOIA controls Commissioners not being able to be on conference calls or video conferencing. Other municipalities that allow conference calls have policies. This matter will be added to the video conferencing discussion.

Max thought that placing powerpoints of City Commissioners meetings could be placed UTube in order to get a lot of functionality out of the system. Stan said that this topic would be added to the broadcast methods of the outline.

This item will be placed on the agenda for the December 2014 meeting.

DISCUSS AND PRIORITIZE ITEMS TO INCLUDE ON FUTURE AGENDAS.

There were none.

SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING.

The next meetings are scheduled for November 21, 2014 and December 19, 2014 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 11:16 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

(Ann M. Womack, City Secretary)

**MINUTES APPROVED ON
SEPTEMBER 25, 2015**

(Stan Mills, Chairman)