

## **Communications Advisory Committee**

### **Minutes**

**January 12, 2021, 9:00 am**

### **ZOOM Meeting**

Attendees: Connor Barry, Martha McEntee, Lindsay Sonnett, Nina Braun, Bevin Kennedy, Robert Glowacky (Exeter TV Representative). Daryl Browne (Select Board Representative )

Connor submitted an Annual Report on the Committee's 2020 activities to the Town focusing on our communications survey and long-term town communications plan. He praised the Committee for its good working relationships and successes during the difficult year. He also noted that he met with the Exeter Police Stakeholders Task Force to share our survey experience. Bob Glowacky has also been assisting the Task Force with its survey.

Connor raised the issue of the Sustainability Committee's efforts to communicate with the public about the solar array and how this case highlights the need for a broader town communications plan. This led to a wide-ranging discussion about how we can move forward with the development of a long-term communications plan for the town. Committee members discussed:

- The need to provide a communications coordinator as a resource for town personnel to turn to when they need to publicize specific issues or events. Content would remain the responsibility of each department.
- The need to improve the town website; develop website best practices and procedures to comply with legal requirements (e.g., record retention, no electioneering by public employees); staff training; and posting mechanics and procedures to ensure that postings are up-to-date and stale information is deleted.
- Bob's draft description of department's infrastructure and staff showing who in each department currently handles various communications tools(website, social media, texting) and has access to use those tools, etc.
- Bob's draft communications plan, best practices outline and policies.
- The difference between "best practices" and "policy," with members agreeing to focus on practical ways that will empower town staff to improve communications.

Nina asked how we should move forward, and Bob suggested that going forward the committee members should pick a few topics/tools below for them to take a deep dive into with him via Zoom where it's easy to share screens. Bob will circulate a list of Town communication tools/topics for members

- Website (already done by most committee members)
- Social Media
- Exeter TV
- Town Mobile Apps
- Email Newsletters

- Print
- Public Meetings
- Telephone

With each topic committee members should look at the following:

- What works?
- What doesn't work?
- Identify issues and possible fixes
- What are the best practices for different types of information?
- Policy issues or concerns
- Compliance issues
- Ideas from other towns/cities Ideas from private sector
- What is achievable in the short term?
- What would need additional resources?

Lindsay noted that we should be ready to prepare warrant article summaries for this year's Town meeting and that we may have a short time-frame to do so . Daryl said that it's not clear what the Deliberative Session and Town meeting will look like this year, but Concord will require meetings to be in person. He said the Select Board would be considering the articles in the next two meetings, and Lindsay said we should be able to divvy up the assignments among Committee members early in February so we can get the summaries on the website and in the newspaper and Bob can prepare videos for the website.

The next meeting was tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, January 26.

The meeting adjourned at 9:53 am.

\*\*\*