

Communications Advisory Committee

Minutes

April 27, 2021, 9:00 am

ZOOM Meeting

Attendees: Connor Barry, Martha McEntee, Lindsay Sonnett, Bevin Kennedy, Daryl Browne (Select Board Representative), Robert Glowacky (Exeter TV Representative), Andy Swanson (IT)

Absent: Nina Braun

Connor thanked the committee members for their work on the Warrant Article summaries and said he'd received overwhelmingly positive feedback about them.

Bob briefed the committee on his research into texting services versus the mobile app. He gave background about TextMyGov and Rave Mobile. He noted that both the Fire and Polices Departments had started to use Rave Mobile to send emergency alerts. Rave Mobile could cost less and provide the same text alert features but lacks the "reporting" features. It is potentially free or very low cost to get Rave Mobile up and running for the whole town (possible cost sharing between departments).

Lindsay remarked about the growing use and importance of texts alerts as a communications medium, noting that generating text alerts requires very little effort to get out lots of information to people who want it. Others agreed that text alerts are growing in popularity as texting and mobile apps replace emails as a favored means of getting information.

Bevin noted that an advantage of the mobile app is that it can be used to report issues but that few residents use it and it does not allow staff to respond to resident reports.

Darryl raised the issue of accessibility, and Andy noted that a few years ago the website was redesigned to work with different devices.

Bob noted that the MyExeterNH app contract was due to end in August and had a June notification date for nonrenewal, He will follow up with Andy about freeing up funds already in the budget for a new service, see if Rave can be opened up for use by other departments beside Fire and Police, and get more detailed information on cost.

After discussion, the members agreed that Bob should explore the possible use of Rave Mobile to replace MyExeterNH, reach out to departments who may want to be included in a demo of the RAVE Mobile system, and report back to the committee.

Bob and Martha will work on how to report the communications survey findings and next steps.

The meeting adjourned at 9:50 am.
