

Communications Advisory Committee Meeting
Thursday, April 6, 2023, 6:30 pm
Wheelwright Room
Exeter, NH 03833

MINUTES

Present: Martha McEntee (Chair), Lindsay Sonnett, Herb Moyer, Chris Zigmont, Bob Glowacky (Communications Coordinator), Andy Swanson (IT), and Molly Cowan (Select Board Rep).

Absent: Nina Braun

The meeting convened at 6:33 pm.

Approval of Minutes. On a motion by Lindsay seconded by Herb, the February 2, 2023 meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

Tasks for Select Board Report. Martha asked for feedback or suggestions for communications experts and other resources to help guide our research into strategic analysis of the Town's communications needs. Chris mentioned that he has resources on the commercial side of things, particularly with respect to best practices but he thinks we need to focus on municipal communications. He said he would try to provide some examples that could help us.

Martha talked about the recent Massachusetts Municipal Association webinar on municipalities use of social media that she and Bob reviewed and said she would try to get in touch with the officials who presented in that program to get their ideas.

Molly wants to look into whether this is something we should pay for because she thinks people are not going to do an evaluation of our communications situation for free. She said she would check with some of the contacts she has through her work to see if they know of some consultants that they like.

Herb suggested that some university communications programs may have students who may be interested in doing projects to evaluate municipal communications that could assist us.

Martha said that she felt that the resources available on the internet would allow us to do a great deal of research ourselves and save the money that would otherwise go to a one-time expenditure on outside consultants to use to invest in building communications skills of Town staff and improving Town communications capability by doing things such as getting a more robust email capability.

Chris highlighted the importance of the budget cycle and said we needed to compile a list of proposed budget item ideas to consider at our next meeting so that we can bring them to the Select Board in time to have them considered for the FY24 budget. Possible FY24 budget requests include: an evaluation/study by a consultant; enhanced MailChimp; educational courses in communications of Town staff; and costs for a physical newsletter (printing and mailing).

Social Media Update. Bob said that the meeting with Russ had been postponed and he hoped it would be next week and the draft could be brought to the Select Board on April 17th

Communication Coordinator Update. Bob reported that progress was being made with finding funding to upgrade MailChimp. He also reported on the outreach efforts to provide residents with current information on the Sewer Siphon project primarily through updates from Select Board meetings and the DPW on the website and with videos.

Other Business.

Martha thanked Lindsay for her long service on the committee. She also thanked Nina who was unable to attend her last meeting.

The next meeting date will need to be changed as May 4 does not work for some members. May 11 may be an option but members will be informed of the definitive date once members' schedules are set.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 pm.
