

Communications Committee Meeting Minutes

February 19, 2020

Members Attending:

Pam Yoss – President
Stephen Yellin – Secretary, Council Liaison
Gentiana Brahimaj, Council Liaison
Christina Cioffe (at 7:45)
Lucinda Hayes
Herman Matfes
Athena Sapir
Jim Skidmore
Caroline Yodice

Pam Yoss (PY) called meeting to order at 7:39 PM

1. Approval of January Minutes
2. Township Crest

PY informed the committee that after research, the Township Crest would remain as is.

3. Monthly Newsletter

Caroline Yodice (CY) informed the committee that she had sent a reminder to committee chairs to send information for the newsletter. PY noted that Tracy Proccacini had provided information on the high school's production of *Mamma Mia!* to include in the newsletter.

A discussion ensued on whether to provide a weekly or bi-monthly news update to residents, with headlines instead of full stories, and on whether to set up a meeting with Tina Renna of Renna Newspapers about including the newsletter in their paper. JS offered to set up this meeting.

4. Reach - Driving Wider Audience for Communications

Athena Sapir (AS) gave a presentation on several ways the Township could expand its reach to additional residents with improved use of our website, Facebook, and Instagram. A discussion ensued on how best to implement her suggestions.

Further discussion on this topic concerned problems with the newsletter signup mechanism for the Township website. It was agreed to request that Civic Plus remove the mandatory password request function in order to access the signup page, and to examine creating a new, direct-to-click page for sign-ups in future (as an opt-out policy). There was also discussion on of using Instagram to "follow" local businesses and civic groups.

5. Budget Update

PY informed the committee that all our budget requests were approved by the Township Council at its budget hearing. This includes funding for a mailer to improve communications outreach, the goal being to send this out before Easter. The mailer will either be a letter or a 6" x 8" postcard. The committee will need to decide what content is included in this piece.

6. Seniors Calendar Update

PY and Lucinda Hayes (LH) recapped their meeting with the Senior Citizens Club about the plan to have a paper calendar. The seniors were very happy about this. PY discussed what will go onto the calendar. A discussion ensued on how to improve the calendar (such as having larger font).

PY also noted that the Senior Citizens Club wants us to print their monthly newsletter for them. A high school student may be interning for the committee and would be the logical choice to draft the Senior Newsletter. Cathy Balsamo will handle distribution to the seniors.

7. Getting to Know Council Members

CY provided an update on this series. The series will profile Council members in order of seniority on the governing body.

8. Instagram Photo Contest

PY informed the committee that the software that would be used for the photo contest has been approved, so we can now begin putting the contest together. Christina Cioffe (CC) will write up the rules and the timeline. It was agreed that a public vote would decide the winner.

9. Coffee and Conversations

PY noted that the first Coffee and Conversations would be on February 29th, featuring Mayor Devanney and Councilwomen Poage and Kingsley. A location was still being determined. [NOTE: The VFW hosted the event.]

It was agreed that the other Council members would decide among themselves who will attend the other 2 sessions with the Mayor.

10. Photoshoot

PY noted that the photoshoot for the Mayor, Council Members and Administration (Administrator, CFO and Clerk) occurred on February 4th. She thanked Bob Coletta for his time and assistance in taking the photos.

11. Website Update

PY (for Herman Matfes, who was absent) informed the committee that the next website upgrade would not include the Recreation Department portion as previously planned. The online fee payment system for residents would still be included in the upgrade.

12. Township Council Agendas Reports

SY discussed having elected officials who are sponsoring particular ordinances be responsible for providing a brief summary of the ordinances to the committee prior to introducing the ordinance at a Council meeting.

13. New Business

A discussion occurred on the format and content of the “Happening in the Heights” video series. PY noted that anyone could provide topics or ideas to herself and Liza Viana to include in an episode. There was widespread agreement that the current format should be left as is.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 PM.

- *Minutes compiled by Stephen Yellin, Secretary*