

Minutes of Communications Committee Meeting

October 16, 2019

In Attendance: Christina Cioffe, Dr. Donald DeFabio, Lucinda Hayes, Sander Raajmakers, Caroline Yodice, Pam Yoss, Council Members Pete Bavoso & Stephen Yellin

Pam Yoss called the meeting to order at 8:05 PM.

1. The minutes of the September 12, 2019 meeting were accepted and approved.
2. “Best Visual Media” Award – The exciting news of Berkeley Heights receiving the “Best Visual Media” award from the Rutgers University Center for Government Services’ Municipal Public Information Contest was shared and discussed.
 - a. It was agreed that a number of the Communications Committee members would travel to Atlantic City in November to receive the award in person at the New Jersey League of Municipalities Conference.
3. Coffee & Conversations – A discussion took place regarding the Coffee & Conversations meetings and how to improve their effectiveness in future. There was general agreement that it would be best to hold these meetings between November and April in future years.
 - a. Pam Yoss proposed the committee record the meetings, releasing the questions and responses separately. The responses would be shown as given by the elected officials while the questions would be repeated by a narrator or

shown in text form. It was agreed that the idea should be considered.

- b. The final Coffee & Conversations meeting will take place in late November, potentially November 16th or 17th. Council Members Poage and Kingsley will participate along with Mayor Devanney.
4. E-Newsletter Update – Caroline Yodice reported that the Township E-Newsletter would be sent out on October 30th, and that additional submissions would still be welcomed.
5. Realtor Letter – Christina Cioffe reported that a draft of the letter to be included in realtor packets has been sent to Mayor Devanney and Township Administrator Viana for review. Further review from committee members will also occur. Ms. Cioffe reiterated that the committee is working with real estate companies and employees to encourage them to share the letter with residents moving into their properties.
 - a. A discussion ensued as to whether the realtor letter should include a recommendation on a particular Facebook forum(s) for new residents to join. It was agreed that the only recommendation should be to follow the official Berkeley Heights Township Facebook page.
6. Instagram – Christina Cioffe reported that the Township’s official Instagram page, *@BerkeleyHeightsGov* is now up and running. It will be updated as frequently as possible.
 - a. Sander Raajmakers noted that it would be a great advantage for the Instagram account if viewers could “swipe up” when using it. It was agreed that the committee should investigate this further.

- b. A discussion ensued as to the idea of launching a photo contest for the Instagram page in order to generate new content, using the hashtag #lovemytownbh. It was agreed that this would be an excellent idea and that a solicitation for entries would be included in the Township E-Newsletter.
- 7. Media Relations Status – there was no update on this topic.
- 8. Website – Pam Yoss informed the committee that planning for Phase 2 of the Township website upgrade is underway. The focus will be to install the new Recreation Department program features as well as online payments for Recreation programs. A demo of the Phase 2 upgrades will be scheduled.
 - a. A discussion ensued on the idea of seeking a free module from Civic Plus for this purpose. No resolution was reached on this topic.
- 9. Redevelopment website update – Sander Raajmakers provided an update on the graphical design of the Redevelopment portion of the Township website. There was general agreement that the design looks excellent.
 - a. It was noted that the Redevelopment digital map could be either “clicked” on at various locations, or the entire list of projects could be viewed as a separate list.
- 10. Old/New Business:
 - a. Dr. Donald DeFabio and Lucinda Hayes led a discussion on how the Township could and should avoid duplicating filming at community events. The relative merits and detriments of long form versus short form videos was also discussed. It was agreed that both types of video forms would continue to be filmed.

- b. The concept of “how to” videos being placed on the website was discussed. The idea is to provide a “how to guide” for setting up an account on the website which was suggested by Council Member Poage. Pam Yoss noted that she had created a demo with screenshots using I-Movie and that the idea could certainly work. It was agreed to further pursue the idea.

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned by voice vote. The next meeting will occur on Thursday, November 14th.

Respectfully submitted by Stephen Yellin