

Present: Chairperson Lynn Kier; Members: Greg MacKenzie, Edna Freier and Tricia Sloan (late)

Absent: R. Jean Ruth

Also Present: Village Clerk/Assistant Manager, Ellen Marshall

Chairperson Kier called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. in the Village of Beverly Hills municipal building at 18500 W. Thirteen Mile Road.

REVIEW AND CONSIDER APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF A REGULAR COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD AUGUST 2, 2012

Motion by Kier, second by MacKenzie, to approve the minutes of a regular Communications Committee meeting held September 6, 2012.

Motion passed.

REVIEW COMMUNICATION TOOLS AND CHANNELS

Committee members reviewed a list of communication tools and channels prepared by Ellen Marshall. Kier commented that she was impressed by the amount of communication tools currently used in the Village. Members went through the list and offered comments and suggestions. Marshall addressed inquiries and provided some background and additional information on various practices.

Internet

Village Website - Committee members have reviewed the Beverly Hills website and concurred that it is an excellent method of disseminating information. It is available to everyone who has access to the Internet whenever they want to view it. The Committee was informed that Village staff members were in the process of meeting with an IT consultant from Enterprise Computer Solutions earlier this year to refurbish the Village website and make it easier to use. Activity ceased in order to give the newly formed Communications Committee an opportunity to provide input on the organization, design, and function of the website.

There was a consensus that two members of the Communications Committee, Sloan and Freier, would meet with Marshall and Robert Ferkel from Enterprise Computer Solutions before the next meeting to discuss renovating the Village website. A proposal and cost estimate for this work will be prepared for review at the next meeting, at which time the Committee will consider taking action to request authorization from Council on a website redesign project.

Annual Village Calendar – It has been the practice of the Village to mail an annual information calendar to all Beverly Hills residents. Committee members questioned how many residents use the calendar other than for occasional instances when specific information is needed. There was agreement that the calendar is a good link to the community and it should continue to be produced. A suggestion was made to include a message inside the calendar informing residents that it contains useful and important information.

Quarterly Villager Newsletter - Committee members discussed the layout and content of the quarterly newsletter mailed to all residents. The comment was made that the content is largely repetitive of previous newsletters. Kier proposed that the newsletter would benefit by a redesigned look and feel that could be coordinated with the website redesign and other communication tools. The cost of the newsletter was discussed. There was agreement that the newsletter should be continued for the reason that it contains pertinent information and keeps people connected.

There followed conversation about creating a new Village brand that would ultimately be incorporated into the website, calendar and newsletter. The current Village logo has been used since the incorporation of Beverly Hills. Kier remarked that Beverly Hills is a beautiful community and should have an associated identification. There would be costs involved in consulting with a professional that provides assistance with branding.

The Committee was in agreement to prepare a proposal for rebranding of Beverly Hills including a cost estimate for Council consideration. In the meantime, members will focus on the current communication tools and how they can be improved.

Weekly GovDelivery messages – Marshall explained that the email messages sent from her office weekly use the GovDelivery system through Oakland County. There is no charge to the Village. Kier suggested publicizing the GovDelivery system more extensively and advising people that they have the ability to sign up for relevant community messages. Information on how to sign up for GovDelivery will be included in Villager newsletters and other tools such as the Village's Facebook page.

Marshall noted that she sends Council meeting minutes to homeowner association presidents who have requested to receive them. She includes other Village updates in her message.

Webstreaming – Village Council meetings and Birmingham Area Cable Board meetings are web streamed and can be accessed through a link on the Village website. It was suggested that not everyone is aware that Council meetings can be viewed online until the next meeting. The suggestion was made to highlight this feature on the Village website, newsletter and Facebook page.

Social Media/Facebook Page – Marshall related that the Village Manager set up the Facebook page, and he maintains it. Committee members thought that the Village's Facebook page could use some attention. There was agreement that the younger segment of the population makes more use of social media sites like Facebook and receives information in that way. Kier suggested that it was important that the Village have a presence on Facebook, but consideration should be given to what information we want to post. It was questioned whether people use tools like the website and Facebook page to receive different types of information. Committee members were interested in finding out what people would like to see on the Facebook page.

Kier distributed a written sheet of comments from Committee member Ruth. Ruth mentioned the possibility of conducting a resident survey to obtain input on what they prefer in the way of communication.

Tricia Sloan entered the meeting at 8:20 pm.

Print Media

Newspapers – Village staff does not generally write press releases. Marshall stated that she mails Council meeting agendas to the Eccentric Newspaper regularly.

U.S. Postal Service – The Annual Village Calendar and Quarterly Villager Newsletter are mailed through the post office.

Billboard – Village meetings and communities events are posted on the outdoor sign board in front of the municipal meeting. Meeting agendas are posted on the outdoor bulletin board. Various public notices are posted on the indoor bulletin board.

Committee members discussed reinstating a bulletin board in the Beverly Park pavilion area. It would be used to post scheduled pavilion rentals, community notices, and postings by residents. Marshall commented that having staff available to change messages may be an issue. Sloan was interested in pursuing this idea. This will be considered as a Spring project.

Flyers – Flyers containing various types of information are available periodically for pickup at the Village Office, Township Office and Public Safety Building. Outside organizations leave flyers in the office for the public.

Telecommunications

Cable Television – Council meetings and Cable Board meetings are televised on the municipal cable channel.

Telephony – An outgoing phone message on the Village office phone system after hours indicates when the office is closed and notifies residents if there is a change in rubbish pick up. The message is not changed every day.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

LIAISON COMMENTS

None

ADMINISTRATION COMMENTS

None

COMMITTEE COMMENTS

Sloan had inquiries on the concept of conducting a resident survey. It was noted that this will be a topic for an upcoming meeting.

Motion by Kier, second by McKenzie, to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 pm.

Motion passed.