

Media Communications Advisory Board

Monday, January 23, 2023

AGENDA

Meeting will be in-person at the Whitemarsh Township Building
616 Germantown Pike, Lafayette Hill, PA19444

___ Mark Cratin ___ Sharon Harvey ___ Ryan Hurley ___ John Pedicino
___ Crystal Taylor

BOS Liaison: Fran McCusker ___ Staff Liaison: Craig McAnally ___

1. Call to Order
2. Re-Organize: Motion to elect the Chair of the MCAB for 2023
Motion to elect the Vice-Chair of the MCAB for 2023
3. Approval of the July 2022 meeting minutes.
4. New Business:
 - [New Electronic Message Board at Joshua and Germantown Pike](#)
 - [Whitemarsh TV Station \(WTV\)](#)
 - Website (whitemarshtwp.org)
 - Social Media Outlets- (Facebook [Whitemarsh Township](#), Twitter [@Whitemarshtwp](#), You Tube Channel [Whitemarsh Township PA](#))
 - E-Newsletter ([The Whitemarsh Weekly Sign-Up Page](#)) and Newsletter ([Whitemarsh Living](#))
5. Old Business:
6. Announcements:
7. Adjournment:
8. Next meeting: March 27, 2023 at 7:00 PM

Media Communications Advisory Board

Monday, July 25, 2022

MINUTES

Meeting attendance is available through Zoom or In-Person at the Township Building:

CRATIN HARVEY PEDICINO TAYLOR HURLEY

BOS Liaison: MCCUSKER Staff Liaison: HALBOM

1. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:14PM
2. Approval of the March 2022 meeting minutes.

Sharon Harvey motioned to approve the meetings, as presented. Ryan Hurley seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0.

3. Old Business:

- Township Website Contract: Contract with CivicPlus (Website Host) ends March, 2023. The Township has received a one-year renewal offer at the existing price point.

Sean shared that the Township was offered a one-year extension by CivicPlus for the township website. The Township's contract was due to expire in March of 2023. In the past year, the Township has been reviewing the level of customer service and response from CivicPlus. Township staff were provided a free training and has since made better use of features on the site such as fillable forms and embedded videos.

Sean reported that he had reached out to CivicPlus to request a new contract term. The one-year extension does not raise the cost of the web service and will allow the Township to continue monitoring the level of service.

Chair Hurley asked what the cost comparison would be between CatapultWeb and CivicPlus. Sean replied it was hard to calculate, but that staff time would be the largest difference in terms of time and cost. Switching away from CivicPlus would create a need for more staff time to be dedicated to the new site. Chair Hurley suggested staying with CivicPlus and continue monitoring the service level. He asked that staff keep abreast of functionality differences between the two options.

- Meeting Room Upgrades: Sean shared that the microphones are still on backorder due to supply chain issues. The vendor is researching temporary options for microphones to be used in the interim. Sean shared that an HDMI port was also due for repair in the meeting room.

4. New Business:

- Website Discussion: The Notify Me feature has not been utilized lately. The MCAB will discuss potential options with the feature as well as touch points with the Whitemarsh Weekly, Email/Text Alerts, and social media use.

Sean reported that he had gone through the site and cleared out some of the old Notify Me content. It was previously used for a weekly newsletter that is now sent through constant contact. The only current use appears to be notifications for monthly meetings. Chair Hurley shared that he noticed this issue when he signed up for the meeting notifications but is curious how the feature could be utilized. He asked if the Notify Me could be used for road

updates, or that would be duplicative. He asked what the cost to use the feature in new ways would be. Sean replied he would follow up with CivicPlus to see if additional fees would be applied to use that feature.

John Pedicino asked if we know the number of residents signed up for Notify Me. Sean replied that he didn't know the number, but it would be about five years old. He replied our Constant Contact numbers were about 3,500. John agreed that Notify Me could likely be used in more useful ways such as trash delays, road closures, and the like. Sean also shared that Notify Me is used by the County for weather emergencies since the County uses CivicPlus for their website. That could potentially cause confusion if folks are signed up for both Notify Me alerts.

- Social Media Update: The MCAB will review recent social media traffic and ways to track analytics. The MCAB will also discuss Road Closure announcements made across social media and the Township website to identify possible improvements to our communication plan.

Sean shared that the Township YouTube page is up to about 60 subscribers. Once the Township has 100 users, they can edit their page name to something more concise. He shared that the road updates on social media receive the most shares. Sean asked the MCAB for their thoughts regarding road closure updates and how the Township could improve communications about road closures. He shared that currently, the Township provides weekly road updates on the website that are linked to social media and Weekly Newsletters and WTV.

Chair Hurley agreed that, while social media response to road closures was normally negative, the alternative of not knowing the information would be worse. He offered that sharing the news with graphics and maps to help residents identify the locations is always helpful. He suggested that be specifically mentioned when speaking with CivicPlus when talking about the Notify Me feature. Chair Hurley shared that road updates should use actual dates, not "Today" or "Tomorrow" to avoid confusion.

John asked if it would be acceptable to use email addresses captured through normal business to invite them to follow social media pages. He asked if NextDoor has been considered for use. Chair Hurley replied that the volume of conversation and frequently upsetting topics on NextDoor was best to avoid. He recommended speaking with other municipalities beforehand. He offered that contests or giveaways was also a good way to boost interest and traffic to our social media pages.

- Sean shared that he had made a modest budget request for MCAB so they can purchase items needed for Township Day. Chair Hurley suggested a sum of about \$500 would be adequate. He suggested discussing ideas at the September meeting for use of those funds.
- Tree Giveaway Update:

Sean shared the online fillable forms for applications for a huge success. After sharing the fillable form link through the Whitemarsh Weekly, the Township received about 75 applications in the first hour. To date, about 200 applications have been received. The Township also used physical signage with QR codes linking to the fillable application form in the Parks. Sharon asked how many trees were given away this year compared to last. Sean replied that 125 trees were given away last year, and 250 were given away this year.

Chair Hurley asked if figures could be quantified for the ecological benefits supplied by the trees given away. Sean replied that yes, we can and that those figures are shared with the Township Engineer for things like Stormwater management. Carbon sequestration could also be determined through some online calculators. Ryan suggested advertising those numbers with some context so residents understand the benefits provided through the program.

5. Announcements:
6. Adjournment: **Chair Hurley motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:54, Sharon seconded the motion. It passed 3-0.**
7. Next meeting: September 26, 2022

§ 3-53.3. Media Communications Advisory Board. [Added 6-26-2008 by Ord. No. 853]

- A. Establishment and purposes. There is hereby established a Media Communications Advisory Board (MCAB) for the following purposes:
- (1) To advise the Board of Supervisors and the Township Manager regarding the operation and supervision of the Government Access Channel (GAC) operated by the Township in conjunction with the cable television system(s) serving the Township; and
 - (2) To facilitate and coordinate all media communication services provided by the Township and the dissemination of information relating to governance of the Township and activities and services of interest to its residents.
- B. Appointment of members; term and compensation.
- (1) The MCAB shall consist of five members appointed by the Board of Supervisors. All members shall be residents of the Township. **[Amended 9-28-2017 by Ord. No. 980]**
 - (2) The members shall serve for a term of three years; except that of the members initially appointed, three shall be appointed to serve for a term of three years, three members shall be appointed to serve for a term of two years, and the remaining member shall be appointed to serve for a term of one year. Each member shall serve until his successor has been appointed and qualified. Any vacancy occurring in the membership shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment for the unexpired term. Consecutive service on the MCAB may not exceed three full terms.
 - (3) At its first meeting each calendar year, the MCAB shall elect a chair and a vice chair from among its members. A majority of the members is required for the MCAB to take any action. The MCAB shall meet at least monthly; however, the chair or a majority of members may call a meeting of the MCAB.
 - (4) Members shall not receive compensation but may be reimbursed for reasonable expenses incurred in the performance of their official duties.
 - (5) The unexcused absence of any member from two consecutive meetings, unless the MCAB has excused the absence for good and sufficient reason, shall constitute a resignation.
 - (6) A member may be removed from office by at least a four-fifths majority of the Board of Supervisors, after written notice, including a clear statement of the grounds for removal, and opportunity for reply, at least 30 days before voting on removal. The only grounds for removal are failure to meet the qualifications or limitations set forth in this Code, substantial neglect of duty, gross misconduct in office, inability to discharge the powers or duties of office, and violation of this Code.

- C. Powers and authority. The MCAB shall have the following powers and duties:
- (1) To promote and develop the best use by the Township of all media communications services available;
 - (2) To oversee the utilization of all forms of media for the dissemination of information pertaining to the community;
 - (3) To study, review and make recommendations regarding the purchase of equipment necessary to support cable television communications initiated by the Township;
 - (4) To develop ideas for local programming on the GAC and utilization of the GAC and the Township's website for dissemination of information pertaining to the community;
 - (5) To advise the Township staff with regard to the determination of the content of the GAC and, specifically, to determine which meetings conducted by the Township shall be televised on the GAC;
 - (6) To develop guidelines for the use of the GAC, consistent with applicable laws;
 - (7) To make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors regarding coordination of available media for public communications and, with the approval of the Board of Supervisors, to develop specific strategies for maximum utilization of the media;
 - (8) To solicit the cooperation of Township residents and submission of ideas concerning the use of all forms of media communications available;
 - (9) To act as a liaison to cable television franchisees serving the Township in order to advise the Board of Supervisors on cable technology and operation of cable systems within the Township;
 - (10) To review operating and capital budget requirements for the operation of media communications, particularly the GAC, and to make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors for expenditure of Township funds for such purposes;
 - (11) To prescribe and promulgate rules and regulations governing its own internal organization and procedures in a manner consistent with this Code;
 - (12) If requested by the Board of Supervisors, to provide training and education to officials, employees and those doing business with the Township; and
 - (13) To prepare an annual report which shall be submitted within 30 days following the end of the fiscal year and prepared for the purpose of its inclusion in the annual report of the Township Manager to the Board of Supervisors pursuant to the Charter.

2023 Meeting Schedule
MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS ADVISORY BOARD

Meets 4th Monday 7:00 PM January, March, May, July, September, November

Monday, January 23, 2023 @ 700 PM

Monday, March 27, 2023 @ 7:00 PM

Monday, May 22, 2023 @ 7:00 PM

Monday, July 24, 2023 @ 7:00 PM

Monday, September 25, 2023 @ 7:00 PM

Monday, November 27, 2023 @ 7:00 PM