

City of Huntington Woods
Communication Advisory Committee
July 21, 2020
Minutes

The remote meeting called to order at 7:03 p.m.

Present: Erin Walker, David Welch, Chera Reid, Ilene Cantor, Will Butler, Amy Sullivan

Absent: Lauren Willens, Lynne Golodner, Jeff Samoray

There were no changes to the agenda and the June minutes were approved as written.

Public participation – Claire Galed reviewed the Communication Audit and found it informative.

The first item of business was to discuss what other project the Committee is interested in pursuing, in addition to the survey.

Jeff sent his suggestions earlier to the Committee to create an Instagram account, combining Facebook accounts, and creating a calendar for content.

Ilene also liked the idea of combining Facebook accounts with robust content, an updated website and consider creating a City app.

Erin expressed she was a frequent library user and was concerned that if multiple departments contribute content to one Facebook page, that it will be difficult to find material related to just the library. She suggested that the Library retain their own Facebook page. She was not sure that blogging is necessary because it can be difficult to make sure it remains current so either do it right, or do not do it at all.

David also like the idea of a City app and agreed with Erin's concern about combining Facebook pages. He also suggested one central place where residents can see all the Facebook pages the City offers and choose which ones are most relevant to them.

Will said initially he thought that one Facebook page would be convenient, but the other points are valid. He has no strong opinion on the idea of a blog, but it does require constant attention to keep it updated.

Chera likes the idea of an app and does not see the value add of a blog if there is no unique content to express. She reminded the Committee that the City's Master Plan update is coming up and provides a good opportunity to roll out a strong communication plan to get the word out.

Since the app had been mentioned several times, Amy went on to the second item of business – a City app. She said she had found these cities had apps and encouraged the committee to look at them before the next meeting – Novi, Southfield, Troy, and Battle Creek. If anyone finds other city apps, they should share them with the group. Amy reached out to the app developers for these cities and heard back from one that would not do a standalone app – only in conjunction with a website design. She will follow up with the other developers who have not responded and see if Revize creates apps.

Going back to the discussion of what project to undertake in addition to the survey, Amy suggested creating an Instagram account and then leaving the Recreation and Library Facebook pages as separate pages but combining City Hall, Public Safety and DPW to reduce the number of Facebook pages. The Committee thought that was a good path. Chera suggested that there be 3 Instagram accounts to mirror the 3 Facebook accounts.

Claire Galed reminded the Committee that not all residents are using Facebook so that cannot be the only or main source of communication with residents.

Chera concurred with Claire’s concern for inclusion because we need to be aware of all residents and who we are missing.

Will said it was important that our communications drive people to the website and that the content on the social media platforms all have the same information.

Amy said the City will need to determine if an outside source should control the Instagram accounts since it is a new initiative or if it can be handled in house like Facebook is. Chera said the employees at her workplace had gone through a social media best practices workshop and she could possibly find a way for the same workshop to be available to City staff.

Next steps for the City will be to find social media best practices training, create the Instagram accounts and determine who should manage them and find out how to combine Facebook pages.

The third item of business was the communication survey. Amy had sent out surveys that other cities had conducted. The Committee liked the format of the survey by the City of Veneta.

Ilene thought the idea of an “open box” question at the end of the survey would be valuable.

Chera said the purpose of the survey should be clear and the results should be sharable. Will liked the thumbnail format that Veneta used.

Chera said the survey design needs to consider distribution to residents who will not or cannot fill it out online, so everyone has access to it, i.e. large print surveys or translate to other languages.

There was also discussion about whether to restrict responses to one per household or give multiple people the opportunity to complete it within a household.

Amy will type up the questions from the Veneta survey so the Committee can adopt them to Huntington Woods at the August meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:48 p.m.