

TOWN OF MANSFIELD
COMMUNICATIONS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Thursday, March 10, 2011
Mansfield Community Center Conference Room C
Approved Minutes

Members Present: Patrick McGlamery (chair), Leila Fecho, Richard Pellegrine, Ronald Schurin

Staff Present: Jaime Russell

- I. **Meeting Called to Order** at 7:08 p.m. by Patrick
- II. **Approval of Minutes** moved by Dick, seconded by Ron, approved unanimously.
- III. **Public Comment** – None
- IV. **Old Business**

A. Committee Membership Status

Patrick reported that a possible new member had decided she was not interested. Ron has not yet made full contact with the University Communications Department but will renew his efforts.

There was discussion of the skill/interest set that would be desired for a new member. What would be particularly useful would be a sense of the information needs for younger residents; an interest in data, particularly related to demography and location; and some knowledge of information technology.

Dick suggested that we see if the League of Women Voters might have a member who would be interested in joining the Committee.

Patrick said he would communicate these ideas to Paul Shapiro, who now heads the Town Council's Committee on Committees.

B. Wording of Communications of Referenda Items

Leila communicated with Town Clerk Mary Stanton to convey the Committee's wish that on the Town Clerk's official mailers to town residents regarding budget referenda, which by law include a brief summary, there be a more prominently displayed referral to the Town website that has more complete information on the referenda items (saying, for example, "For more complete information go to") The Town Manager's office also sends out a mailer, and this has a useful, prominently displayed referral to the website.

By Friday, March 18 Patrick and Leila will send a letter to the Town Council with this recommendation.

Dick raised issues regarding the format of petitions regarding referenda items. The Committee referred this item to New Business (see below).

C. Wording of Communications of Budget Items

The Committee noted that no further action is needed on this issue, except to note that we are monitoring budget communications for clarity and effectiveness. Dick noted that the Town's budget communications seem satisfactory, but expressed the wish that District 19 communications had more transparency. Patrick asked Dick to consider how we might urge District 19 to proceed in this area.

D. Using Signs for Communication

Patrick reviewed the issue of signage, noting that: a survey of Town residents has shown that citizens need and want information and get it from signs; the Town has a history of signage such as local village signposts; the current system is obsolete; and there may be underutilization of the Town's capacity for conveying information through signage. Past discussions have included such topics as determining additional (and/or better) locations for signs (Dick noted that it might be possible to have commercial establishments place signs on non-political Town issues on their property); Aline had suggested contests for villages to develop their own signs; there is a recommendation for a contest at the Festival on the Green.

Dick suggested that the Historical Society might give advice on this issue. Patrick will draft a letter to the Town Council on this issue.

E. Using Robocalls for Communications

The Committee deferred discussion of this item to a later meeting.

V. New Business

Dick's concern (noted above) that there needs to be more information and possibly a template for petitions to the Town Council, possibly including notations that signatories for petitions regarding referenda and some other actions must be Town residents and registered voters, will be placed on the agenda for the next meeting. At that meeting we will have available examples of petitions currently used for candidates and other samples, and we will seek advice from the Town Clerk on the legal requirements for petitions.

VI. Reports

No reports.

VII. Communications

No communications.

VIII. Agenda for the Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on Monday, March 21. The agenda will include:

A. Committee Membership Status

B. Wording of Communications of Referenda Items

C. Monitoring Budget Communications

D. Using Signs for Communications

E. Using Robocalls for Communications

F. Formats, Templates, and Other Issues Regarding Petitions

IX. Adjournment

On motion by Ron, seconded by Leila, the meeting adjourned at 7:58 p.m.