



Minutes of the Barrington Hills Village

Communications Committee Meeting

November 16, 2009

**5:30 p.m.
Training Room
VILLAGE HALL
112 Algonquin Road**

Final

1. Organizational

1.1 Call to Order

Chairman Linda Fox called the meeting to order on November 16, 2009 at 5:35 p.m. in the Barrington Hills Village Hall.

1.2 Roll Call

Communications Committee

Present

Linda Fox, Chairman
Barbara Kemp, Vice Chairman
Pamela Cools, Recording Secretary
Victoria Kelly

Mike Zachar
Laura Ekstrom (arrived 5:51 p.m.)
Debbie Stone (arrived 5:46 p.m.,
departed 8:49 p.m.)

Village Representatives

Fritz Gohl, Trustee
Ruth Schlossberg, Attorney

Robert Kosin, Village Administrator
Sarah Kenney, Planning & Zoning
Coordinator

1.3 Approval of Minutes

Approved October minutes as amended. Motion by Barbara Kemp, and seconded by Mike Zachar.

Approved 4-0-3 (Ekstrom, Kelly and Stone abstained, as they were absent from the October meeting.)

2. Reports from the Village

2.1 Ruth Schlossberg

- Mr. Kosin introduced Ruth Schlossberg, from Zukowski, Rogers, Flood & McArdle, a Crystal Lake law firm specializing in municipal law. Ms. Schlossberg is an expert in FOIA (Freedom of Information Act) and Open Meetings Act (OMA) compliance. She gave a presentation to the Communications Committee on how these issues apply to how governments should conduct public meetings, especially in light of the new state law that goes into effect on January 1, 2010. She distributed copies of three PowerPoint presentations, as well as a handbook for elected officials to all committee members.
- Public records do include personal electronic communications between committee members. There are some exceptions, such as preliminary drafts of documents. E-mail is FOIA-able. The location of the e-mail file is irrelevant – personal computer, village laptop, or personal Blackberry are all subject. For this reason, it is best to use official municipal e-mail addresses to conduct village related business.
- OMA—public business must be conducted in view of the public. How does this apply to an e-mail message sent to all members of the committee (a “blast”)? You may opt to blast directly – if so, make sure to include a disclaimer that the recipients should not reply to all, just to the original sender. Alternately, you may send the message to the clerk (or other staff), and have them send to all. It is also not recommended to blind carbon copy (BCC) other members when sending messages.
- When posting information in a public forum (like a website, Twitter or Facebook), it is important to take care with the content. You must make clear rules and limits for posting in advance. However, governments are allowed to express a viewpoint and opinion, and to promote their own agenda. Ms. Schlossberg advised that we use a disclaimer for our Twitter page.
- After a question and answer session, Ms. Schlossberg concluded her presentation and Chairman Fox thanked her for her time.

2.2 Robert Kosin

- Linda Fox asked Mr. Kosin to provide the committee better advanced notice and information to use to keep residents informed, such as IDOT and other press releases, and board packets and minutes. Often, posting of minutes is delayed several weeks or more after committee/board approval.
- Mr. Kosin agreed to release draft minutes ASAP after the meeting at which they were approved and send them to Chairman Fox.

3. Old Business

3.1 Twitter Review – Disclaimer

- Pamela Cools reported that our Twitter followers are increasing, albeit slowly, and that new followers include two *Trib Local* reporters and a Daily Herald reporter. We are newly following Harper College.
- Pamela asked Vicki if she would provide some tweets about the Census.
- Discussion resumed on the topic of incorporating a disclaimer on our Twitter page. Pamela provided two examples of disclaimers – one from the Department of Health & Human Services standards for new media, and another from Barrington Bank’s Twitter page. The committee discussed the relative merits of each, and agreed to use the HHS version (#1). Laura Ekstrom made a motion to accept version #1 and to forward the disclaimer to Mr. Kosin for his review prior to our posting on the Twitter page. Mike Zachar seconded. All present said aye.

3.2 Census – Victoria Kelly

- Vicki has been in contact with Quintessential Barrington magazine about including an article written by our committee about the Census. Members suggested possible angles for the article: 1) to stress the specific economic impact on our community (consult Trustee Smithe for financial figures), 2) to present historical census counts and demographics for Barrington Hills, or 3) to stress the importance of the census to create a genealogical record for our future generations. The article is due by November 30th.

3.3 Newsletter – Pamela Cools

- The next issue of the newsletter is scheduled for February 1st 2010. The submission deadline will be in early January.
- Pamela did not receive a response to her e-mail to Allegra concerning a potential cost savings on the newsletter by having addresses inkjetted directly, rather than continuing with the use of peel-and-stick labels. She will send a new request and report back to Linda and Fritz.
- Pamela is also continuing to review the Comprehensive Plan to compile a list of potential newsletter topics, per Linda’s request. Future newsletter content will also be guided by the results of the survey.
- Vicki mentioned that the Cook County Forest Preserve (CCFP) recently purchased some wetlands near Woodcreek Rd., contiguous to existing Forest Preserve land. She suggested that we might publicize the acquisition both in the newsletter and on the website once the purchase is finalized.

3.4 New Resident Marketing Brochure

- Laura Ekstrom and Debbie Stone are continuing to work on the text. They were reminded that when the brochure was last discussed by the Village Board, Steve Knoop, Bob Abboud and Walter E. Smithe all

had specific items that they requested to appear in it. Concern had been expressed that the brochure should contain facts and not just lighter, marketing based content. Chairman Fox will continue to work closely with Laura and Debbie.

3.5 Website Integration Update

- **Phase I Status**

The fall-themed portal page is now up and active. Tim Evans is still working on the three other seasonal pages.

- **Google Search**

Mike Zachar described a recent difference of opinion that arose while the portal page was being developed. The Communications Committee had previously voted to utilize a “local” search engine on the portal page, but Bob Kosin overruled this decision and insisted on using Google search. Mike has several significant reservations concerning Google: 1) Google search is still a beta version, 2) the Google user agreement allows Google to start advertising on your search results page at any time, and 3) you must agree to allow Google to modify and update their software at any time. This could introduce some security vulnerability in the future. Bob Kosin feels Google is preferable because: 1) although it is a beta, Google has been stable and running for two years, 2) the Google API needs no additional coding for other operating systems to function properly. Mike stated that he informally searched other .edu and .gov sites, and none of them use Google – even the State of Illinois. Mr. Kosin wishes to remain with the Google search and the committee deferred the final decision until the sit-down meeting with President Abboud and Trustee Gohl.

- **Phase II**

Tim Evans has expressed frustration with his lack of access to parts of the .gov site, which he needs in order to implement our changes and enhancements. Bob Kosin has expressed reluctance to allowing external parties access to the .gov site. Phase II will involve allocation of posting duties and division of content between our committee and village staff. Tim Evans will be allowed to have access to the pages necessary for him to do required maintenance and repair. These pages will have specific IP addresses for his access. Bob Kosin will retain restricted access to certain file folders. Mike cautioned that this type of structure still does not allow a single vendor to maintain all areas of the site.

Trustee Gohl agreed to have a sit-down meeting with Bob Abboud and Bob Kosin to discuss the decision-making hierarchy for the website. There will also be a meeting with the Website Integration Project team.

Debbie will begin DreamWeaver training shortly, and Sarah reminded the members that the village will be paying for online training through ECC for anyone else on the committee who wishes to do so.

3.6 Survey

Mike Zachar reported that Sarah & Pamela have both been trained in coding the surveys, and he has checked and reviewed their first 30 surveys. Data input is continuing – it is a tedious process.

4. New Business

Chairman Fox asked Fritz Gohl's assistance in facilitating a better flow of information from administration to the committee so we can better publicize news and events to the residents.

5. Adjournment

Given there was no new business, Linda Fox entertained a motion for dismissal at 8:58 p.m. **The next meeting is on Monday, December 7, 2009.** Motion to adjourn made by Mike Zachar and seconded by Vicki Kelly.

Approved 6-0-0.

Meeting Adjourned

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela A. Cools
Recording Secretary
