

9.3



Robert Kosin <rkosin@barringtonhills-il.gov>

(no subject)

1 message

Walter Smithe <wsmithe@barringtonhills-il.gov>

Thu, Sep 16, 2010 at 9:29 AM

To: rkosin@barringtonhills-il.gov

Please add "FOIA Implementation Update" to the appropriate section of the agenda for the 9/27 board meeting.

I saw the bad press we got and have received a complaint from a resident so I feel we need to get ahead of this issue.

Thanks

The Illinois Policy Institute's Ten-Point Transparency Checklist

1. Elected and Administrative Officials: Contact Information
<http://www.barringtonhills-il.gov/foia/directory.htm>
2. Meeting Information: Calendar (Future), Minutes and Board Packets Past
<http://www.barringtonhills-il.gov/foia/minutes.htm>
3. Public Records: FOIA Submissions and FOIA Officer Contact Information
<http://www.barringtonhills-il.gov/foia/directory.htm>
4. Budgets: General Fund and Special Projects
<http://www.barringtonhills-il.gov/treasurer/budget.html>
5. Financial Audits: Comprehensive Annual Financial Reports
<http://www.barringtonhills-il.gov/treasurer/audits.html>
6. Expenditures: Checkbook Register and Credit Card Receipts
<http://www.barringtonhills-il.gov/treasurer/invoices.html>
7. Salary and Benefits: Wages, Salary, Overtime, Health, Dental, Life, Pension, etc.
<http://www.barringtonhills-il.gov/foia/policies.htm>
<http://www.barringtonhills-il.gov/foia/pdfs/misc/FullTime2010.pdf>
8. Contracts: Union, Private Contractors, Vendors
Not applicable. Invoices found at:
<http://www.barringtonhillsil.gov/treasurer/invoices.html>
9. Lobbying: Taxpayer-Funded Lobbying Associations
Not applicable
10. Taxes and Fees: Sales, Property, Income and Miscellaneous Taxes, Fees on Residents and Businesses
<http://www.barringtonhillsil.gov/treasurer/reports.html>
<http://www.barringtonhills-il.gov/building.htm>
http://www.barringtonhills-il.gov/zoning_docs.htm



Clerk VBH <clerk@barringtonhills-il.gov>

VBH BOT FOIA

1 message

Robert Kosin <rkosin@barringtonhills-il.gov>
To: Dolores Trandel <clerk@barringtonhills-il.gov>
Cc: Sarah Kenney <skenny@barringtonhills-il.gov>

Sun, Sep 19, 2010 at 7:25 PM

Illinois Policy Institute in Barrington Courier-Review: Governing Bodies Lagging in Website Info

By Tony A. Solano
Barrington Courier Review
8/11/2010

Government bodies that levy taxes in Barrington Township have some catching up to do in terms of posting public information on their websites, according to a recent study by the nonpartisan Illinois Policy Institute.

Two audits of information contained on the websites of Barrington Township, Barrington, Barrington Hills, Barrington Community Unit School District 220, the Barrington Park District, the Barrington Countryside Park District, the Barrington Area Public Library, South Barrington and the South Barrington Park District were conducted as part of the institute's "Local Transparency Project."

The government bodies were given points for including information on their websites, divided into 10 categories: Contact information for elected and administrative officials; meeting agendas, minutes and other information; information about acquiring public records; budgets; financial audits; expenditures; salary and benefits of employees and elected officials; contracts; lobbying funds; and information about taxes and fees.

One audit was conducted in May and a second was conducted in July. The average score for the government bodies audited was 24.26 out of a possible 100 points.

"We're not doing this to surprise or embarrass (the governments). We just want to help them better communicate with their communities and constituents," said project coordinator Brian Costin, director of outreach for the Illinois Policy Institute.

The Barrington Township area is one of five township areas studied by the organization for website transparency so far. Governments in the Hanover Township area averaged 34.86 out of 100 on their second audit, the New Trier Township area averaged 39.7, the Palatine Township area averaged 36.8 and the Schaumburg Township area averaged 38.36.

"From an overall perspective, a lot of government agencies are behind in providing information on their websites," Costin said.

Costin said the organization started the project because there was no previous measurement of what government websites should provide the

public.

Barrington Hills had the highest score locally after the second audit at 43.8, improving from 37.5 in the first audit. Costin said overall the Barrington Township area showed the least improvement from the first audit to the second audit out of the five township areas surveyed.

District 220 improved its score the most from the first audit to the second audit, going from 30.9 to 41.4.

Jeff Arnett, chief communications officer for District 220, said the district redesigned its website in February and feedback about what should be included is always helpful.

"We appreciated their input and those kinds of evaluations are very useful," he said.

Arnett said the redesigned website has links to budget and financial documents on the home page so it is easier for residents to locate financial information.

The Barrington Township area governments collectively scored most poorly in the areas of expenditures, salaries and benefits, contracts, lobbying and tax information. The government bodies collectively averaged 3.4 out of a possible 50 points in those five categories, with no agency scoring higher than 4.5 points out of 10 in any of the categories.

Barrington Village Administrator Jeff Lawler said much of that information, such as salaries and benefits, can be found within the village budget, which is available on Barrington's website.

"That information is already public anyway," Lawler said. "From the residents' perspective it isn't something they've been demanding to be seen."

Barrington launched a redesigned website in May and Lawler said the village has been making improvements and adding information based on the suggestions of residents.

"We're always looking to make improvements, but we're primarily looking to add the information that residents want," Lawler said.

He said this fall the village hopes to add a customer relations application to its website where residents can request village services for everything from replacing a burnt out street light to drainage issues.

"We look at the website as a tool and we want to make it a more effective tool for residents," Lawler said.

Costin said the Illinois Policy Institute is expected to perform a third audit on the Barrington Township area in about six months.

He said the organization hopes to do studies of government bodies in other areas, including Cuba and Ela townships, but the project is dependent on volunteers.

"Slowly but surely, governments are improving with transparency, and I hope projects like this will help provide a framework for what they can improve," Costin said.

To view the complete results of the study visit www.illinoispolicy.org.

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Robert Kosin <rkosin@barringtonhills-il.gov>

RE: The results are in: Barrington Hills scores a 37% on state transparency review

3 messages

Robert G. Abboud <president@barringtonhills-il.gov>

Tue, Jun 15, 2010 at 3:00 PM

To: Janet Agnoletti <j.agnoletti@bacog.org>

Cc: Anna Bicanic-Moeller <amoeller@mchenrycountycog.org>, rkosin@barringtonhills-il.gov, Michael Murphy <mmurphy@vbhpd.net>

Janet:

Thanks for your perspective. You have a more correct approach on this. But, I am not interested in having our Village cater to these 'Tea Party' guys. When they show up in front of BACOG and MCCG with a complete list of their donors, income statement, and budget (what they are asking from us), and they can explain why they deserve tax exempt status, then I might think about talking to them.

In the mean time, I suggest Mr. Costin gets a real job in the "free market".

Best Regards.
Bob A.

Robert G. Abboud
President, Village of Barrington Hills
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President@BarringtonHills-il.gov
<http://www.barringtonhills-il.gov/>

www.RGALabs.com

From: Janet Agnoletti [mailto:j.agnoletti@bacog.org]
Sent: Tuesday, June 15, 2010 14:05
To: 'Robert G. Abboud'

Subject: RE: The results are in: Barrington Hills scores a 37% on state transparency review

I talked to Bob Kosin this morning about this. I offered to have the administrators come in with an IPI representative for a nice conversation about what our members are doing in the spirit of openness and how the IPI survey might fall short. However, your comments are, well . . . touché.

Janet L. Agnoletti, Executive Director

Barrington Area Council of Governments

118 Applebee Street

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Visit us on the web at www.BACOG.org

From: Robert G. Abboud [mailto:president@barringtonhills-il.gov]

Sent: Tuesday, June 15, 2010 1:26 PM

To: 'Rhys Seiffe'; bcostin@illinoispolicy.org

Subject: RE: The results are in: Barrington Hills scores a 37% on state transparency review

Mr. Costin:

The Village of Barrington Hills prides itself on being an open government. We have gone to great lengths to WEB publish all our documents. VBH leads the state its implementation of the FOIA processes and technology. We have already processed numerous FOIA requests, many requiring no action on the part of the Village because the information was already WEB posted. The Village maintains open Wi-Fi at the Village Hall and user accessible terminals for those who are not computer literate.

If our Village scores only a 37.5/100 then I suggest that your method of evaluation is only 25/100 in accurately assessing how communities publish and release information. Looking over your spread sheet you have failed to recognize that VBH does not have any of these tax sources other than property taxes which you can get from the various counties as well as our WEB site.

In addition, I read with interest your recent opinion in the Chicago Tribune that municipalities should not receive their portion of the Illinois Income Tax. This is not "aid" as your describe on <http://www.illinoispolicy.org/news/article.asp?ArticleSource=1113>. This is a tax collection mechanism established in the 1960's and works alongside property taxes. Your organization seems to have failed to understand the nature of this revenue stream before making a variety of remarks and unfounded claims.

I must say that for an organization whose policy is founded on "economic liberty and free market principles", I am amused that you survive on donations. As a business owner, this does not sound very free market to me. I noticed on your WEB site you have not posted your budget or listed your donors / contributions. I hope your organization will choose to be more transparent in the future.

I might suggest you consider making a presentation to the Barrington Area Council of Governments and bring your donor list and incorporation documents with you.

Thank you for your input. Have a nice day.

Best Regards.
Bob A.

Robert G. Abboud
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From: Rhys Seiffe [mailto:rhys@illinoispolicy.org]

Sent: Tuesday, June 15, 2010 10:27

To: president@barringtonhills-il.gov

Subject: The results are in: Barrington Hills scores a 37% on state transparency review

Robert J. Abboud

President, Village of Barrington Hills

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Dear Mr. Abboud,

Recently, Tom Smith, a volunteer from Barrington, contacted Barrington Hills about improving online transparency. He did not receive a response, so we wanted to follow up for him, send you the results of the Project again, and answer and questions or concerns you may have.

The Illinois Policy Institute is a Chicago based nonpartisan research organization dedicated to improving transparency and accountability in Illinois governments. One of the ways we advance these goals is through the Local Transparency Project, a program that evaluates government agencies using a 10-Point transparency checklist. This checklist, which measures elements like budgetary disclosure and FOIA accessibility, provides a "best practices" framework to help elected officials/administrators identify opaque areas and help improve transparency for their constituents and taxpayers.

More Information on the Project can be found on the following websites

- Illinois Policy Institute's [Local Transparency Project](#)

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- [10-Point Transparency Checklist, Rationale, and Examples](#)

During the week of May 17th - 21st, the Illinois Policy Institute conducted an initial audit of 10 government units that are either partially or fully within Barrington Township. **The Village of Barrington Hills scored 37.5 out of 100; the average score was 21.66 out of 100.** The results are attached in an excel spreadsheet.

On Monday July 5th the Illinois Policy Institute intends to release the results of a **second Barrington Township transparency audit to be conducted on or after June 30th**. The results will be communicated to the public and the media via our website and press releases.Â Â

Entities scoring higher than 90 out of 100 will receive special praise and a certificate of achievement.

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Between now and June 30th, the Illinois Policy Institute is urging all government units audited in Barrington Township to work with us to improve their transparency scores. In order to improve your transparency scores pleaseâ€¦!

- Review the results of the first transparency audit (attached in excel) and alert the Institute of any items we may have overlooked. Weâ€™re not perfect; if we missed transparency elements on your website please let us know where we can find them. We want to make sure that when the final report is released, everyone receives as much credit as possible and gets the corresponding praise from their constituents!
- Review the 10-Point Transparency Checklist and make available (via website) to the public as much information as possible. Be sure to alert the Illinois Policy Institute to any additions or improvements, and weâ€™ll increase your transparency score.

Our goal is to facilitate the highest possible transparency among all units of local governments in Illinois. We hope to showcase your organization as a model example for transparency. If you need any help or assistance in improving your transparency scores please donâ€™t hesitate to contact me.Â

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Sincerely,

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Brian Costin

Director of Outreach

bcostin@illinoispolicy.org

312-346-5700 x 205

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Local Transparency Project-Barrington Township 1.2.xls
278K

Anna Bicanic Moeller <amoeller@mchenrycountycog.org>

Wed, Jun 16, 2010 at 10:04 AM

To: "robert g. abboud" <president@barringtonhills-il.gov>, Janet Agnoletti <j.agnoletti@bacog.org>

Cc: rkosin@barringtonhills-il.gov, Michael Murphy <mmurphy@vbhpd.net>

Go Bob!

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Robert Kosin <rkosin@barringtonhills-il.gov>
To: Dolores Trandel <clerk@barringtonhills-il.gov>
Cc: Sarah Kenney <skenney@barringtonhills-il.gov>

Sun, Sep 19, 2010 at 7:55 PM

Reference of Barrington Courier Review August 11, 2010

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Anna Bicanic Moeller <amoeller@mchenrycountycog.org>
Date: Wed, Jun 16, 2010 at 10:04 AM
Subject: Re: The results are in: Barrington Hills scores a 37% on state transparency review
To: "robert g. abboud" <president@barringtonhills-il.gov>, Janet Agnoletti <j.agnoletti@bacog.org>

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