

Electronic Media Advisory Committee

Notes for Minutes February 26, 2015

Attendance: Zachary Rubin, Joshua Waldorf, Dave Kelliher, Jill Laurinaitis, Lisa Gage,
Bernard Griga (Electric Reliability committee member)

Township Liaison: Ron Smith

I. Announcement of new committee members: Jill Laurinaitis and Ann Schreiber
(Ann Schreiber absent.)

II. Approval of Minutes from November 13, 2014

III. Discussion of Website improvements:

Dave Kelliher reported that site was converted from Cushy site to Wordpress.
(Easier to update.)

Dave reported that township was utilizing Bill Kyle as a part-time “webmaster” and that Bill trained employees, mostly Lynn Todd, to update website as well as redesign certain elements, such as making LMT Community Clips more visible on website.

Zach Rubin raised question of whether EMAC should recommend hiring an outside consultant to evaluate website. Joshua Waldorf disagreed and said the role of EMAC should be to make these recommendations. Joshua Waldorf also pointed out that the changes he recommended in the 2013 document he wrote still had not been implemented for the most part.

Joshua Waldorf recommended hiring a PHS student to update website as an internship, and said that he would look into it.

Discussion ensued regarding upgrading the website to include mobile application. Mobile site would allow easier access to important information.

Dave Kelliher agreed to look into costs of upgrading website to include mobile function.

Lisa Gage noted that Falls Township and Middletown Township have implemented mobile websites.

Jill mentioned the need for an Emergency section on website. Question posed as to whether the website server DMX had a battery back up system. Dave Kelliher to investigate costs for that as well.

Jill Laurinaitis discussed the need for the township to have a communications plan to cover both the emergency aspects, i.e. immediate issues as well as ongoing long-term issues facing the township. This plan is needed prior to execution. Joshua Waldorf and Lisa Gage concurred. Joshua stated that people won't initiate finding out about news; news needs to be brought to residents through all modern channels that are available.

Jill offered to write the shell of a communications plan, which will include the different channels of communication for different needs.

IV Discussion of Facebook/Social Media:

Dave Kelliher mentioned free App called hootsuite, in which one can post in one place and hit multiple platforms.

Committee discussed creating an official page and cited Yardley Boro as well as Falls Township as a model to research. Ron Smith was in support of FB page

Discussion of reluctance of LMT to initiate a Facebook page ensued. Facebook doesn't allow page administrator to block comments; only to delete them.

The township has been hesitant to create a Facebook page due to Legal concerns regarding censorship that Kristin Tyler had learned about at a State Conference for Supervisors.

(Attorneys said townships should not have FB page for this reason; She will reinvestigate this at next conference in April.)

Discussion of Police department's Twitter account for emergency communications was a consensus that only 200 (?) people had signed up for the service. Same for Ready Notify Alert.

Consensus that Township Twitter account would be useful only in emergency situations.

V. Discussion of Newsletters/Paper and Email:

Mixed review on paper as a primary method of communications to reach ALL Homes in township and announce new methods of communication, general emergency procedures, introduce current board and relate issues pertinent to township. Use as a vehicle to obtain more email addresses to allow for subsequent newsletters to be electronic. Currently township has approximately 3,000 email

addresses, mostly from pool list. Township has them in email program called Constant Comment.

Question from some committee members about relevance of paper in this day and age. Lisa Gage noted that Kristin Tyler announced at communications forum that there would be a newsletter this year.

Discussion of email electronic newsletters: Committee brainstormed about other ways to harvest email addresses: Appeal would center on need for emergency communication as well as general township information

1. Appeal on snail mail newsletter
2. Banner approach on LMT website – see Falls Township moving banner email solicitation.
3. Incentive campaign – some kind of reward, drawing for gift.
4. Insert into tax bills. Would incur small cost for printed insert.
5. Sign up sheet at Library – directing to LMT website
6. Ask YMS/PAA to include appeal in their emails/websites
7. Post on Facebook Lower Makefield is a great place to live – refer to website
8. Supervisor candidates door-to-door direct people to website
9. Ask Steve Santarsiero to appeal /refer constituents to LMT website

Other methods of communications discussed included robocalls. Township has access to home numbers only through tax bills. Consider expanding request for emails to include cell phone numbers.

Next meeting assignments:

All members to look at website and make recommendations.

Jill to investigate other townships social media platforms.

Dave to obtain costs for mobile website and emergency back up of server.

Lisa to initiate steps to produce first video focusing on emergency preparedness.

Ron Smith requested EMAC plan within 60 days.

Next meeting: Thursday March 26 at 7:30 pm.

