

BUCKS COUNTY CONSORTIUM

Thursday, October 1, 2015

Meeting Minutes

1. Call to Order:

A meeting of the Bucks County Consortium was held at 9:00 a.m. at Newtown Township, on October 1, 2015, and called to order by Consortium President Eileen M. Bradley.

2. Roll Call and Introductions:

The following Bucks County communities were represented at the meeting:

Eileen M. Bradley, New Britain Township
Angela P. Benner, New Britian Township
John McMEnamin, Lower Southampton Township
John Boyle, Yardley Borough
Jamie Gwynn, Northampton Township
Caroline Brinker, Doylestown Borough
Bob Pellegrino, Northampton Township
Kyle Seckinger, Warwick Township
Christian Jones, Warrington Township
Joseph Golden, Upper Southampton Township
Joe Galdo, Lower Southampton Township
Bill Wert, Dublin Borough
Gail Weniger, Warwick Township
Michael Brown, Springfield Township
Sandra Zadell, Chalfont Borough
John Davis, Doylestown Borough
James J. Miller, Warrington Township
Autumn Canfield, Doylestown Township
Stephanie Mason, Doylestown Township
Tim Hagey, Warminster Municipal Authority
Bill Cmorey, Bensalem Township
Kurt Ferguson, Newtown Township
Greg Lippincott, West Rockhill Township
Carolyn McCreary, Plumstead Township
Micah Lewis, Newtown Township
Mark Fournier, Telford Borough

Sponsors:

Jim Gray, RBC Capital Markets
Dan O'Brien, RBC Capital Markets
Michael Davisson, Univest Municipal Pension Services
Jeff Hugo, InR
Chris Tomlinson, InR
Michael Primavera, InR
Chris Englebert, Beirne Wealth Consulting

3. Approval of Minutes – September 3, 2015:

Upon motion by Caroline Brinker, seconded by Sandra Zadell, the Minutes of September 3, 2015 were approved as presented.

4. Treasurer's Report and Payment of Bills:

Eileen Bradley reviewed the details of the Treasurer's Report for September 2015. Upon motion by Carolyn McCreary, seconded by Tim Hagey, the Treasurer's Report for September 2015 was approved as presented.

5. Social Media Panel:

Panel: John Davis, Sandra Zadell, and Jamie Gwynn

Ms. Bradley introduced the members of the panel, John Davis Manager of Doylestown Borough, Sandra Zadell Manager of Chalfont Borough and Jamie Gwynn Assistant to the Manager at Northampton Township.

How their municipalities started with social media: Jamie Gwynn started off the conversation by stating that Northampton Township created their social media presence on Twitter when they revamped their outdated website. Northampton Township chose not to create a Facebook account and only created a Twitter account to have more control over what was said.

John Davis stated that the reason Doylestown Borough started with a social media presence is that their council is in tune with social media and wanted to have that presence for their residents. Initially a dmail account was set up were residents could sign up to receive email blasts about township events, road closures, and emergency information. Then after their website was updated and went live Facebook and Twitter accounts were automatically created causing them to quickly scramble to set up the pages.

Sandra Zadell stated that when she was at Doylestown Township when they were updating their website and decided create the social media accounts at the same time.

Social Media Policies: Doylestown Borough obtained a social media template policy from the Delaware Valley Trust to help regulate how the pages would be used. Whereas, Doylestown Township obtained Bucks County's Social Media policy and adapted that for their use.

Sandra stated that the social media policy helps to handle the residents who bash the municipalities.

Responding to Residents on Social Media: Sandra stated that when she receives crazy comments on social media she just ignores them. When she has individuals making comments that are factually not true she will comment with factual information to shut them down. She has also told individuals that they are welcome to set up a meeting with her when they are complaining about the Borough on social media, which usually stops the complaining. John Davis added that he has yet to receive inappropriate comments that need to be removed from their social media accounts.

Jamie Gwynn stated that in his situation it is harder to respond to residents since he is not the manager. He believes it depends on the municipality and how engaged in responses their elected officials want them to be and how much time they want staff to spend on social media.

Uses for Social Media: John stated that using social media means no more press releases because papers now handle media through social media. Social Media is what people use to find out what events are happening, what roads are closed, when power will be restored, and updates on emergencies. John stated that during Hurricane Sandy, social media made a huge difference for the residents of Doylestown Borough; they were able to see real time updates on power outages and road closures. Even when people are out of power, they have their cell phones and will search social media for answers. Doylestown Borough will also use their social media

pages to post pictures of departments doing work on the road, fixing water main breaks etc., to help provide a positive presence in the community. John also added that social media is a great way to also humanize the police departments.

Sandra stated that she would use social media for emergency updates, law enforcement, and for “feel good” items. She has found that when she posts “feel good” items about borough parks and events, her number of followers will increase.

Social Media Applications: John stated that he uses Hootsuite, which is an application that allows you to post to Facebook and twitter simultaneously. John also has set up keywords and phrases that allow him to monitor if people are tweeting or posting about Doylestown Borough. Using Hootsuite allows municipalities to monitor what is being said and provide the municipality the opportunity to find out about a hot topic before the residents show up at a public meeting. Hootsuite also allows municipalities to participate in conversations and comment on real topics and facts.

Sandra Zadell added that by being able to monitor when people are talking about your municipality, you can also help to prevent problems before they start. In addition, posts can be preloaded into HootSuite to automatically post on a specific day.

Questions: Eileen Bradley asked how many hours are spent a day on social media. John responded stating that he has woven social media into his day and for him it is the same as answering emails and phone calls. Sandra stated that she would check her social media accounts each day and 9 times out of 10 there is nothing to comment on or deal with. When there are emergencies is when she will spend more time posting, but with the applications on the cell phone, she can do that from anywhere.

Kurt Ferguson asked if the municipalities had a policy so that they could remove comments from their social media. Sandra responded stating that is what the social media policy is for. For example, if someone is using vulgar language, the social media policy states that is not allowed and the comment can be removed.

Bob Pellegrino asked how they get residents to sign up and follow their social media accounts. Sandra stated that is where posting “feel good” pieces helps, because it will spike the number of followers. Also, weather events will spike the number of followers because that is where individuals go, hoping to receive updates.

6. Discussion:

2016 Budget: Carolyn McCreary suggested that when the executive committee is setting up the budget for 2016 they consider allocating funds for scholarships that could afford individuals the opportunity to attend PELRAS, APMM, and/or ICMA. Sandra Zadell added that would be beneficial to emerging leaders and agrees with Carolyn’s request.

Salary Survey: Bob Pellegrino suggested the executive committee also discuss the Salary Survey because since it was switched to the online system, everyone is not completing it.

7. Community Updates: There were not Community Updates at this time.

8. Other Business: There was no Other Business at this time.

9. Adjournment:

Upon motion by Carolyn McCreary, seconded by Tim Hagey, the meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

The next meeting was scheduled for 11:45 a.m. on November 5, 2015 at Doylestown Country Club.

Respectfully Submitted,

Angela P. Benner
Consortium Coordinator