

NORTH YARMOUTH COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

May 9, 2014

Minutes

Attending: Darla, Rob, Katie, Donna, Kathy

Minutes of the March 7 meeting approved and are ready for posting.

Letterhead: The design has not yet been submitted to the BOS – Darla still needs a copy to print out and send to board. Katie will send this after this meeting. Submission to the BOS will complete our work on this project. Marnie and BOS need to approve final choice. If the vote is yes, we recommend printing on white linen paper.

OK to submit North Yarmouth Historical Society items to RFTH – it will go after town items.

RFTH: The last issue was May 3, next one will be May 17. Approval was obtained to put veteran registration information on the town website; the Flag Committee also needs its own page. A quote from Jess is needed for creating a separate page on the town website. If the town approves the quote, then there can be discussion about who pays for it.

Where is this committee going? We are handling social media (FaceBook, web page), and provide RFTH and news articles. Donna has been doing a nice job as gatekeeper, and Jess has been tying things together well. Some stuff doesn't go by us, e.g., Steve's letter on Wescustogo update. Darla noted that some design changes were made to the website (with information from Debbie, Donna, and Jess) that didn't go by the committee. Rob asked when things should be brought back to the committee for discussion. There was discussion about the postcard, which was time sensitive but was held by Marnie to take to BOS, then came back for changes and consequently went out late. Darla ended up spending a lot of time on this. The BOS didn't ask for a review and oversight in the beginning, only that we would get the information out, and there was no written charge from the board, so the process got confusing and held up. The bottom line: If more people want to get involved, then we need to know up front what the process will be, especially for time-sensitive projects. Katie: If we are given a task, we also need the final date so that we can work to a schedule. In the case of the postcard, there were unnecessary delays for a simple project. We knew the date it had to go out and could have met it if not for complications. The fact that the postcard was late came back on us. Recommendations to speed up the process for this type of project:

- (1) The Town Office needs to take responsibility for bulk mailing.
- (2) We should produce a template to be used for, e.g., postcards. We could template other projects too so that information can just be dropped in. Other stuff that might use a template: cleanup day. The template should be produced in software that the Town Office can also use – start with Debbie and create template in e.g., Microsoft Word. Thus no design experience would be necessary. Cover of Town Report and Warrant also candidates. What can we do to help the town do things more easily and get stuff out on time?

Next meeting: Bring in a sample of a Word template for the postcard. Ashley should send Katie a pdf of the postcard. This should also be the large standard size, which costs the same to mail as a small postcard. Postage was \$236 for the mailing we did; Darla will find the cost of printing the postcard – she thought it was around \$350 for 1500. Municipal rates are different than nonprofit rates. Express Copy charges slightly more for printing but has a person who also does mailings. The Yarmouth Post Office only has Rendell and only does mailings on Tuesday and Thursday mornings.

How does/will the BOS tell us what they want? Rob will ask that specific requests need to be in writing to us; they used to be part of the BOS agenda.

Increasing the RFTH mailing list: There is a database for people on committees with addresses and other information. We could put people serving on town committees on the mailing list for RFTH and give them as opt out option. IContact will find duplicates automatically and has the opt out option. We could say something like "Thank you for serving on X committee. To help you stay up on town affairs, we are sending you RFTH." We could also include staff and fire/rescue. There should be an intro letter explaining why people were added. We can also set up a table at the Town Office announcing meetings, etc. There is already a signup sheet at the Town Office. On the template for the postcard, we could also add a line at the bottom with signup for RFTH info.

Budget: We need to have a budget – don't think there is one for this year. We should include 4 postcards/year for around \$2000. Darla can do a spreadsheet on costs; Donna has notes on the costs for the website work. Jess only does the technical work. Donna will take down survey results today; Debbie doesn't have time to do this. To develop a more realistic budget, someone needs to do documentation of the time taken to work on the website – the town needs to know the real cost of maintaining a website. Jess has been crucial, but his time is critical and needs to go into the budget. Darla and Donna collaborate; also need to add the cost of TV, the cost to produce the town warrant and town report. This has been reported outside of what we do. Rob: Other towns do a lot less. The budget needs to be sent to Marnie after we compute and approve, especially if we expand the use of mailed postcards.

Signs: May be coming around again (we tabled discussion). The EDSC will be meeting next week to reopen the discussion of branding.

More on where the committee is going: We need to be clear about what we do and how we do it. Donna noted with there will soon be a coalition of BOS, EDSC, and planner to be hired soon. We should be stepping forward and reaching out to establish what we can do. Or do we brainstorm how we might be helpful? The town whole future direction is in the hands on the BOS, who seemed to be reaching out to the EDSC. Darla: There has been a lot of discussion in town asking why there hasn't been any progress. The takeaway from this: The community needs to be reminded that nothing has been finalized yet. Is there anything else we can do? Steve's letters went out in February and April. We could request that the BOS and EDSC issue short meaty updates every several weeks or months so that townspeople know what is going on. The BOS could send another letter after the next meeting with EDSC and possibly add a note about more information being available in RFTH? There is a lot on the BOS plate right now. Could something be added to the Town Report? Rob can write the EDSC and BOS.

Next meeting: June 13, 7:30 am.