

Web Communication Committee July 18, 2018 - Minutes

Present: Jamie Malcolm-Brown, Chair, Michael DeChiara, Gail Fleischaker, Stephen Grettenberg, Fred Steinberg, Susie Mosher, member and note taker

Celebrate Shutesbury will be on Saturday, 9/15/18. There will be an effort to encourage town committees to have a presence at the event, increasing awareness of town government. Susie suggested the Web committee think about having a table. Ideas for the table are: a, "Did You Know..." poster highlighting information citizens can get from the town web site, a laptop people could visit the website and see its features in action, such as the search function, committee web pages, the calendar, agendas, minutes, etc.

It sounds like a "Did you know..." feature on the home page might be a good idea.

Creating an option that allows citizens to subscribe to receiving minutes from specified committees would be useful.

Drupal offers a checkbox list of features a person can sign up for; a format worth considering for our website.

Minutes from May 16 were read and approved as written.

Some of the current color scheme on the website for different print headings, etc. are hard to read. There are accessibility guidelines we can find to improve the contrast, meeting the visual needs of our public.

Gail Fleischaker highlighted some navigating/format problems she ran into on the Recycling Solid Waste Committee webpage. There are taxonomy pages that hold everything with a specific tag and web pages where committees have organized their information for the public. It was agreed that Stephen and Jamie will create places to click for the committee web page and a place to select the taxonomy pages.

The tagging system enriches the search function which Jamie has made live on our site. The committee experimented with the Search function and found it to be a great improvement. THANKS Jamie and Michael. The google search is available on the page also, but it drags up out-of-date information. There may be a way to have Google refresh their searches from our current website. As in any successful search the naming conventions and words used to search for something can determine how successful the results are. The search page language was tweaked.

Susie requests a tutorial for posting and tagging content on the website. Although administrative rights and responsibilities can be delegated to a smaller group of web masters, there has been many confusing ins and outs with the website and education will help share the work load.

Susie made an executive Town Clerk decision to sign up for the My Town Government service @<http://mytowngovernment.org> in order to improve the agenda posting, calendar update and minutes receiving process. There are so many ways information gets lost, miscommunicated. It is handled by too many people and errors are made. This program will eliminate a portion of the Town Clerk's daily

work load as well as make posting easier for boards. After visiting Barre, talking to Dalton and Athol, as well as reading the endorsements by other Town Clerks, Susie feels the town will be well served by a program that has been working since 2010.

As an alternative, the process to make our own working program is months away and would take a lot of consultation and testing for the design. My Town Government is ready to go, and its creator has a lot of experience in helping towns get started.

There were proprietary concerns raised by Michael and Stephen and worries about how the program may detract from our town website traffic. They have questions about archiving and interfacing the minutes and calendar parts with our website. We have been working to get people used to our site and this represents a change. Susie will get answers for the questions and Fred will assist.

The next meeting is scheduled for September 12 at 6:00 pm. Meeting adjourned 8:50