

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday, July 10, 2012

6 P.M.

HAMPDEN TOWN OFFICE

1. MINUTES OF 6/12/2012 MEETING
2. OLD BUSINESS
 - A. PORTABLE SOUND SYSTEM – Affirmation of Council Action
 - B. Newsletter Update
 - C. District/Neighborhood Meetings
3. NEW BUSINESS
4. PUBLIC COMMENT
5. COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENT

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, June 12, 2012

Attendance:

Councilor Kristen Hornbrook Matt Thomas, FF/Paramedic
Councilor Jeremy Williams
Town Manager Susan Lessard
Resident Jeremy Jones

The meeting was opened at 6 p.m. by Chairman Hornbrook.

1. MINUTES OF 4/10/2012 MEETING – Motion by Councilor Williams, seconded by Councilor Hornbrook to approve the minutes. Vote 2-0.
2. OLD BUSINESS
 - A. UPDATE – CABLE TV CONTRACT PROGRESS – The Town Manager updated the committee on the current status of the contract negotiations with Time Warner. The Town is represented in the negotiations through its membership in the Penobscot Cable Consortium. The goal of the negotiations is not to lose any items that are part of the current contract. The contract will include a capital equipment grant to the Town similar to the one given at the time of initial adoption.
 - B. UPDATE – VIDEO STREAMING PROJECT – Matt Thomas informed the Town that he was working with the Town Manager to come up with a computer that could be dedicated for possible use in this project. The Manager indicated that she would work with the GIS/IT Specialist to come up with one that could be used when it is retired from regular office use. Mr. Thomas also discussed item 3-E, the u-tube channel idea. He indicated that it would be simple and easy to find – but would require more work to upload the video from the cable tv system. Since the purpose of the video streaming is to make what is available via cable also available via the internet in as cost effective way as possible, the original plan to feed the channel through a connection, possibly at the library, continues to be the preferred option.
 - C. PORTABLE SOUND SYSTEM – MATT THOMAS – Matt explained that the Public Safety Department was in the process of getting a 60 inch LED television for use in the community room for training activities. This purchase would be funded from leftover monies received from a class held by Hampden for Fire Training. In consulting with the Town Manager, they were made aware that the Town wanted to acquire a portable sound system for it use – much of which would be in the Community Room. Matt did the research and located a system with six microphones that should

be suitable. The total cost of acquiring the system is estimated to be \$1500. The original budget for a sound system for this year was \$3500, so it is well within that amount. Motion by Councilor Williams, seconded by Councilor Hornbrook to recommend the purchase of the sound system identified by Mr. Thomas at a cost not to exceed \$1500. Vote 2-0. The recommendation was referred to the Finance Committee to designate the funding source.

3. NEW BUSINESS -

- A. IDEAS FOR COMMUNITY SURVEY – The Committee suggested three topics for inclusion in the survey questions:
 - 1. What is the most effective form of communication?
 - 2. What information would you like to see more of from the Town?
 - 3. Rate the effectiveness of Town Communication
- B. NEWSLETTER IDEAS – JULY EDITION – The Committee reviewed the list provided as part of the packet and added Hampden Academy Update and Election Outcome from the June primary/school budget as topics.
- C. STUDENT INTERN WORK – The Town Manager informed the Committee that intern Justin Foster is working on two projects – one with Mr. Folsom regarding the Hampden Academy tour and the other with Richard Newcomb involving a history show. Councilor Williams asked that a list be provided of areas to photograph as part of a flyover in mid-July so that footage could be obtained that could be used in other shows of Town-owned facilities/parks.

The Manager provided information to the Committee regarding a multi-viewer that is available from NESCOM. Hampden has been discussing obtaining one for some time so that we could eliminate five televisions in the video room and replace them with one flat screen. It would greatly improve the overheating situation in the room due to the presence of all the televisions. The cost of the unit is \$750 plus approximately \$300 for a flat screen to accompany it. The new cost of the multiviewer to NESCOM was \$9000. Motion by Councilor Williams, seconded by Councilor Hornbrook to recommend to the full council the purchase of the multiviewer/flatscreen. Vote 2-0. The item was referred to Finance for a funding recommendation. It was noted that this item could be purchased with some of the funds remaining that were budgeted for the portable sound system.

- D. DISTRICT/NEIGHBORHOOD MEETINGS – This idea was raised at the last meeting as a way of encouraging residents to talk with their

elected representatives in a less formal atmosphere than regular council meetings. The idea of doing it by District was based on the premise that each district may have concerns that are different. Use of the Kiwanis Hall or the Snowmobile Club was suggested. In order to move forward with this idea, the remainder of the Council needs to be brought up to speed and then decide if they wish to host/participate in such meetings. The Town Manager will prepare a draft on the subject and forward it to Committee members for input. It will be put on the Communications Committee agenda for July 10th, and if approved by the Committee, referred to the Council at the July 16th meeting.

E. UTUBE CHANNEL IDEA – Discussed as noted above under Item 2-B.

(Councilor Hornbooks' notes after Manager Lessard left :)

4. Public Comment: Jeremy Jones stated that he really thought the Hampden YouTube channel was a very good idea. He stated that there could even be two. One for Council and Committee meetings and the other for goings on in the town like special events or things the town wants to highlight. Committee members agreed. He also wanted to know if Committee thought it would be helpful to download the newest meetings first and then begin slowly backlogging the older ones so that eventually a complete video record could be found on line. Committee members agreed this was a good idea.

5. Committee Member Comments: none.

Motion to adjourn by Councilor Williams at 7:10.

Motion 2nd by Councilor Hornbrook.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Lessard
Town Manager

Item 2 – A

Portable Sound System – Confirmation of Council Action

At the Finance Committee meeting held on June 18th, and at the Regular Town Council Meeting held subsequent to that meeting on the same date, the recommendation of the Communications Committee to purchase a portable sound system for the Town at a cost not to exceed \$1500 was discussed.

As a result of information received related to the use of wireless microphones, both the Finance Committee, and ultimately the Town Council, voted to recommend a not to exceed cost for the portable sound system of \$1800 to allow for the acquisition of wireless microphones. The vote taken at the Town Council authorized this purchase but requested that it be put on the Communications Committee agenda again for concurrence, since the original \$1500 recommendation had come from that committee.

The purpose of this agenda item is for the Communications Committee to consider the increase in cost and vote on whether to concur with the Council vote. If that occurs, the sound system with wireless microphones can be purchased. If the Committee does not concur with the change in amount, it will go back to the Town Council for further discussion.

DISTRICT/NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING PROPOSAL

The Communications Committee of the Council is proposing that the Council sponsor informal district/neighborhood meetings for the purpose of improving communications between the Town Council and residents by allowing residents to ask questions of Councilors in a less formal atmosphere than a Town Council meeting.

Location:

It is proposed that these meetings take place in locations other than the Town Council Chambers, such as the Kiwanis Hall or the Snowmobile Club.

Format:

The format would be question and answer with an individual at each meeting designated to be the 'moderator' to keep the meeting moving and to insure that meetings remain civil and productive.

Topic:

While the real intent is to open more dialog between residents and Town Councilors, it is recognized that a meeting without a focus is likely to be poorly attended at best. In order to engender interest in attending, each meeting would have a main 'topic' (such as HA re-use, parks, budget, or some topic of interest in particular to a certain neighborhood or voting district, etc.)

Length:

Depending on interest/attendance, the meetings would not run more than 2 hours.

Participation:

In order for this proposal to be successful, participation by the majority of the Town Councilors is necessary. Holding such meetings with only a few Councilors in attendance would not be a productive use of time and would likely cause dissatisfaction from residents who took the time to attend.

Timing:

In recognition of the fact that there are already a significant number of meetings for which Council attendance is required on a monthly basis, one meeting would be held every six months.