

## **Meeting of the Minneapolis Charter Commission Communications Committee**

August 31, 2011 - 5:00 p.m.

Meeting Location: Standard Heating & Air Conditioning Co.

Training Center, First Floor

130 Plymouth Ave N, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Committee Members Present: Ferrara (Chair), Johnson, Kozak, Sandberg

Guests: Matt Laible, Minneapolis Communications Department

### **1. Review and advise Charter Commission on the following Action Steps, as requested 7/6/2011:**

#### **a) Review with the Minneapolis Communications Department representative their ideas and abilities to communicate with citizens regarding Agenda Items (b), (c), (d), and (e);**

The Communications Department was not involved with the last redistricting effort. Matt worked with the Advisory Group Committee last spring. He distributed copies of the work done during that process to solicit members for the Redistricting Group. The Communications Department uses three primary methods to communicate with those interested in Minneapolis issues: news releases, postings on the City's website, and social media (Facebook has 8-9,000 followers) and Twitter (about 3,000 followers). News stories are generally tweeted as well as distributed to a list of local news organizations. Matt can also help us refine the text for a story or release. Matt noted that the department needs to be careful when there might be unsettled policy. The department can get into the elements of the process but must avoid editorializing.

Todd noted that currently, items for distribution are created by Peggy and the Charter Commission chair. Todd's interest is determining how to interface with the current system, including the website. The redistricting effort will be an open process and he wants folks to know this. The expectation is that there will be legal review of anything that is made public.

Natonia is concerned that there are neighborhoods that may not be linked either through the City or NRP. Natonia said that Upper Willard Hay is not getting the information. Matt suggested asking the Neighborhood Community Relations Department (NCR) to include more neighborhood contacts. After some discussion, the committee agreed that we should ask the Charter Commission to solicit distribution from NCR, NRP and Communications. There may be some overlap among these organizations as there may be with the Charter Commission distribution list.

Andy noted that there will not be serious interest until maps are produced. But there needs to be a clear explanation of how the process will work and this needs to be communicated to the public. Another question that the Charter Commission should answer is what input the general public can have in the process.

Matt said that lead time for distributing news releases is generally just a few days or less if the content is ready to go. As to running meetings, this is outside the purview of

the Communications Department. He suggested we talk to NCR or Public Works. Matt would be willing to develop a general solicitation to encourage those interested in redistricting to sign up for Charter Committee listsrv.

**b) Plan for communicating through the existing City website, including a separate redistricting page;**

Todd said that there will need to be a system for retrieving and communicating data. Todd noted that the current redistricting website is based on information from ten years ago. Natonia's concern is, as it relates to the content, is what is the job? We should find out who did had responsibility for the website ten years ago and how can it be updated. Matt said that responsibility for the website would likely come through the clerk's office. Todd suggested that we should ask who will be responsible for creating the new 2010 website. BIS creates the architecture and Peggy posts the information that, in the past, comes from the Chair or the CC. Will this process change for redistricting, and does this apply to both architecture and content? The committee agreed that the committee should request an October update by the Clerk on the process for making the redistricting pages on the website current.

**c) Develop contact information for traditional and alternative media for distribution of information; including email lists, neighborhood contacts, known communities of interest, and persons or groups requesting inclusion;**

See Natonia's comments above-- not all neighborhood communication vehicles are getting information from NRP, NCR or Communications. Matt agreed that working at neighborhood level to get the audience most likely to want to be involved and that it would be important to involve NCR. Natonia will contact David Rubador, NCR, to discuss how to expand their list to ensure that all neighborhoods are included in any upcoming distributions.

**d) Develop a plan for posting open meetings of the Redistricting Group, posting or distributing maps approved by or to be considered by the Redistricting Group, and public hearings; and**

**e) Recommend to the Charter Commission any additional suggested communication strategies.**

The committee agreed that this step should be postponed pending more information about the website.

**2. Create report for submittal at September 7, 2011 Charter Commission meeting.**

Jan will forward minutes to the committee for review. After agreement, Todd can use them for the report.

Next Regular Charter Commission Meeting: September 7, 2011  
Next Communications Committee Meeting: September 28, 2011