

Commissioners' Journal
June 6, 2017

The Geauga County Board of Commissioners met for a work session on June 6, 2017 at 11:00 a.m. in the Commissioners' Chambers located at 470 Center Street in Chardon, Ohio.

It is declared and determined that all formal actions of the Board of County Commissioners concerning and relating to the adoption of all resolutions that were adopted in this meeting, and that all deliberations of the Board of County Commissioners that resulted in such formal action were open to the public and were in compliance with all legal requirements, including section 121.22 of the Ohio Revised Code.

The President of the Board, Ralph Spidalieri opened the meeting at 11:10 a.m. with the following in attendance: Commissioner Spidalieri, Commissioner Claypool, Commissioner Lennon, County Administrator David Lair, Clerk Christine Blair. The audience included Director of Administrative Services Linda Burhenne, from the Department on Aging, Director Jessica Boalt and Community Outreach and Marketing Coordinator, Bill Phillips.

In April 2017 the Board of Commissioners sent a request for proposal to several agencies for interest and qualifications to provide services for Social Media Organization, Development, Administration, Newsletter creation, design, editing, production, and Website Enhancement. Responses were received from the Impact Group, Write 2 the Point, and other agencies for individual services, along with a response from the Karlovec Media Group.

The Board met to discuss the responses received, to discuss the options of contracting the service, the possibility of a long term commitment of hiring an employee, a print company that might offer services, along with content, who would supply it, and mailing versus electronic. Commissioner Spidalieri stated that the Board needed to make some kind of decision about a direction for the newsletter. His personal opinion is that it is a good idea to have a newsletter but to also look at the electronic format and having it placed on the website. Mr. Spidalieri stated that as subscriptions diminish newspapers are going to become a thing of the past, adding that he has personal experience with it in dealing with advertising. Some of the things they have to consider are; cost justification and whether they would need to hire someone to facilitate it.

County Administrator David Lair added that it would be good to note that the Sheriff's Office has a Lieutenant that acts as their PR person and handles public information in an emergency. Commissioner Lennon inquired if Mr. Phillips' position includes public outreach, and that he didn't know any reason why the Commissioners' Office couldn't do the same. Mr. Lennon stated that he could easily justify the cost as a service that is providing information to the residents.

Commissioner Claypool stated that conceptually the idea is good, but that it comes down to details, citing whether the need exists to hire an employee, to contract it out, and whether it would be done monthly, quarterly and if the departments would be providing content. Mr. Claypool stated that there was something to be said about employee versus contracting. He suggested a trial test run, get feedback from the constituents to see if it's a value before continuing it, and are there opportunities to dovetail costs with other departments that are already doing this. Mr. Claypool stated that we could start putting together a newsletter and approach some departments as a way to start the process, adding that he needed some more concrete numbers to analyze cost.

Mr. Lair stated that the specifications were general, not put together on cost breakdown on specifics.

Director Jessica Boalt stated that a lot of their clients (about 5,000) prefer the hard copy newsletter, adding that they do have a portion that has it emailed to them (about 600). Ms. Boalt stated that the newsletter they send out is done monthly; it uses larger print to make it easier for residents to read, it covers all the senior centers and includes alert information about health and fraud. Ms. Boalt asked Mr. Phillips to discuss the process including timeline to get completed. Mr. Phillips stated that it is normally 3 days everyone submits information to him on the 5th and then by the 7th he starts compiling all of the information and edits content. Mr. Phillips stated that he goes out and sells ad space and collects the fees for those ads. Ms. Boalt stated that they sell ad space as a way to defray the cost of the newsletter. Ms. Boalt stated that to print 24 pages monthly, folded, stapled, address labeled and mailed is about \$0.73 per copy. This does not include any staff time. A color edition is posted online, but the mailed version is black and white. It was noted that the print difference between color and black and white was about \$150-\$200.00 a month. Ms. Boalt stated that once the newsletter is approved for print, they don't

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have to touch it again, that POV handles the printing and mailing. As far as staff time goes, there isn't a lot of written content; it's mostly copy and paste, flyers, calendars, and the health and fraud information. There is concern over copy right. There was a brief discussion about the mailing cost per piece since they weren't doing a full saturation mailing and whether the address is sprayed or a label is added.

Director of Administrative Services Linda Burhenne inquired if Mr. Phillips had done a newsletter as part of what he had done when he worked in the Commissioner's office, to which he replied that it was just an internal newsletter and included content that was sent to him by the other departments.

Discussion continued about the population that would want to have a hard copy or an electronic version, the cost per piece for mailing through permit and the difference in content that would be provided. Mr. Phillips explained that currently they send information to the design person at POV and then she sends the layout for approval. Once they approve it, POV handles the rest complete via permit mail. Ms. Boalt added that it would be good to select someone that can handle both print and electronic. They discussed options on how to obtain email addresses for those residents that prefer the electronic version versus print. Mr. Spidalieri erred on the side of caution on electronic versus paper because the price per print copy will increase, noting that the more you print the less the cost. Commissioners' Clerk Christine Blair added that the Park District is working on moving to an electronic newsletter as a way to offset the cost of the hard copy they currently send out. It was noted that the Library also sends out a hard copy and it would be good to contact them and the Park District to discuss who they use, who is compiling it and the cost.

Ms. Burhenne stated that one thing they haven't discussed is who is going to provide content and the point person on who is going to make sure it happens. Mr. Claypool stated that departments are going to write it, but Mr. Lair asked who is going to crack the whip. Mr. Lennon stated that if we choose to go with an outside agency, that would be who would run point, or the Board could consider hiring an employee. Mr. Spidalieri expressed that it doesn't need to be 24 pages, and discussed web press versus sheet and the cost difference on the two. He suggested an 8 or 16 page version to start with and to have Mr. Phillips help us get started on a layout and at least do a launch of something. Mr. Lennon stated that he didn't want to get into that type of business; he wants to leave that to the professionals. Mr. Claypool added that whatever goes out the door will represent them.

Ms. Boalt asked what the Board wanted to put into the newsletter – whether you are doing this monthly, quarterly, discussing upcoming meetings or correcting comments that are the result of discussion during a meeting that is hitting a blog before they get back to the office. Mr. Claypool stated that it would be a mixture, talk about hot topics happening in the county, to use it as a way to promote the county, and about events that are happening. Ms. Burhenne inquired about where they wanted to let the electronic version live, inquiring if the county website would be the location.

Mr. Claypool stated that they needed to gather a little more information, reach out to the department heads and ask what they want to contribute and re-group on this.

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BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD

Motion: *by Commissioner Lennon to adjourn the meeting at 12:02 p.m.*

Geauga County Board of Commissioners

Ralph Spidalieri

Walter M. Claypool

Timothy C. Lennon

Christine Blair, Commissioners' Clerk

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