

University Park Town Council Committee on Policy, Rules & Municipal Structure

Thursday, August 27, 2015
7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
UP Town Hall

Present: Linda Verrill, Joe Thompson
Absent: Bradlee Hess

Meeting Notes

Using the handout below as a guide (updated with meeting notes), the Committee discussed functions and features required and desired for a modernized Town website, viewed the web links on the last page, and discussed reporting our findings to the Council.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm. The next meeting has not been scheduled.
Submitted by Linda Verrill, Chair

Ideas for Modernized UP Town Website Policy, Rules, & Municipal Structure Committee Meeting 8-27-15

Key is to consider how, with minimal available resources, the Town can provide information likely to enable residents to make well informed decisions consistent with democratic principles and processes.

Functions and Features of a Modernized UP Town Website

- Easy to navigate (simple interface)
- Easy to update by Town Hall staff (Content Management Systems)
- Place for Council meeting and Committee documents – accessible by public (file sharing)
- Items of current interest box(es)
- Calendar
- Analytics-enabled search functionality
- Tree display of location within website (aka Breadcrumbs)
- Minutes searchable by topic
- Online form completion and submission
- Able to serve content to a wide range of devices
- Ability to archive and play video
- Include opportunities for 2-way communication – sign up for notifications

- Consider a way to notify residents when new information is posted – opt-in for specific information
- Should we develop an “Open Government Policy and Statement” for display on the website?
- Cohesive appearance throughout
- Sleek look

Many information transparency and process transparency objectives can be achieved with a modernized town website

Local Agency Website Transparency Opportunities. 2012 . Institute for Local Government. www.ca-ilg.org/WebsiteTransparency (accessed August 25, 2015).

- Potential Web content
 - Decision-making information
 - Info on council, committees, and commissions
 - Agendas and supporting materials for upcoming meetings
 - Meeting notices
 - Minutes and agendas for past meetings
 - Archive of video or audio recordings
 - Explanation of how the public can participate; other information
 - Financial and Human Resource Information
 - Current and past year budget and explanatory information; graphs, charts
 - Revenue source information
 - Treasurer’s monthly report
 - Salary and compensation information
 - Job descriptions
 - Contracts and purchasing
 - Current contracts: legal counsel, consultants, etc.
 - Current RFP’s
 - Purchasing policies
 - Information on doing business with Town Hall
 - Labor agreements and personnel rules and documents
 - Financial policies
 - Permits
 - Information and application forms
 - Regulations
 - Code Enforcement
 - Contact information for staff who can answer questions
 - Elected Official Information
 - Names, biographies, terms, contact info
 - Information on powers and duties of position

- How to run for office
- Voter registration information
- Departments, general contact info
 - Police (Chief's ideas)
 - House Check forms available online
 - Complaint forms available online
 - Crime alert feature
 - Public Works
- Disclosure, Public Service Ethics and Transparency
- News – and info about signing up for news

Reviewed Examples of Nice (some are award-winning) Government Web Pages (bolded links considered by meeting attendees as the best examples of the list):

<http://www.mountainview.gov/default.asp>

<http://www.el-cerrito.org/>

<http://hyattsville.org/>

<http://www.collegeparkmd.gov/>

<http://dc.gov/> (has a “listen function” and has “open data portal”)

<https://www.oakgov.com/>

<https://bouldercolorado.gov/>