

**Meeting Minutes
President's Work Group on
Council Website Policies & Guidelines
Tuesday, February 5, 2008 at 10:00 a.m.
Room 417, City-County Building**

Attending: Ald. Mark Clear, Ald. Brenda Konkel, Ald. Michael Schumacher (arrived at 10:10 a.m.)
Lisa Veldran, Council staff and Roger Allen, Assistant City Attorney

The meeting started at 10:05 a.m.

Approval of Minutes from November 7, 2007

Ald. Brenda Konkel moved approval, seconded by Ald. Mark Clear. Motion was approved.

Discussion of Council Website Policies & Guidelines

Issues identified:

- Alder neighborhood meetings and posting on city's website (alder pages)
- Website Linking questions
- Draft Document: Common Council Website Policies
- Current Web Content

Alder neighborhood meetings and posting on city's website (alder pages)

Ald. Mark Clear noted that there was a question about whether an informal alder neighborhood meeting can be posted to the alder's City of Madison website.

Lisa Veldran noted that she currently posts neighborhood meetings to the alder web pages when Council office staff generates those notices. She was unclear if a meeting that was called by an alder and posted on their private blog (e.g. Ald. Konkel's meetings on the 2008 budget) could also be posted to the City of Madison alder web page since there was no formal meeting notice created/mailed by Council staff.

Roger Allen stated that he saw no problem with posting announcements/notices of neighborhood meetings on the alder web pages. He did note however if a quorum (or negative quorum) of Council members (or other committee members) are invited and show up, there would be a requirement to comply with the State Open Meetings law requirements (24 hour notice, accessibility, an agenda, etc.)

RECOMMENDATION:

Announcements of neighborhood meetings dealing with official city business or potential city business can be posted to an alder web page. The following announcements/events cannot be posted to the alder web page:

- Community/social announcements or events
- Neighborhood association meetings or events
- Political announcements or events

Website Linking questions

The subcommittee questioned linking from the alder web pages to alder blogs and/or non-city organizations (e.g. Downtown Madison, Inc., Chamber of Commerce). Roger Allen recommended that alders, when linking from the alder City of Madison web page, follow APM 3-13 – Web Linking Policy: <http://www.cityofmadison.com/mayor/apm/3-13.pdf>

RECOMMENDATION:

Allow mention of blog in alder biography, but no linking to the blog. Alder can state within their biography that if someone wants the blog link, they can email that alder for the link. (Note: Recommendation on links to outside organizations took place under "Website Content")

Ald. Michael Schumacher asked if an example could be prepared so alders have an idea of how that language should read. Lisa Veldran indicated that she would be able to draft example(s).

As a side note, Roger Allen mentioned that a translation button might be available for alder web pages.

Draft Document: Common Council Website Policies

Ald. Brenda Konkel had questions on the following:

Questionable Content on Common Council Website (page 1)

1. What is the definition of “questionable content”?

It was decided to ask the Webmaster, Sarah Edgerton, if there is a definition.

2. Question #5 – What is “offensive” (Does it contain objectionable statements or remarks that may be **offensive**)?

Ald. Brenda Konkel thought that any definition would include protected classes.

3. Question #6 – What organizations, agencies or businesses would be affected by endorsements for posting to an alder web page (Does it constitute endorsement or favoritism of a specific organization (including political or campaign related organizations), agency or business?)

Ald. Brenda Konkel noted that Downtown Madison Inc. and the Chamber of Commerce have recently been endorsing candidates.

RECOMMENDATION:

- Political parties: No linking allowed.
- Non-city organizations: If an alder links to an organization that endorses candidates on their web page(s), then that link would be disabled during the election cycle.

Photos and Images (page 2)

RECOMMENDATION:

If alders post photos to their web page they must have a signed release form or release of copyright filed in the Common Council Office. It is the alder’s responsibility to file the form with Council staff.

Current Web Content (page 3)

Welcome Page

Lisa Veldran noted that she had questions about how long pending and adopted legislation should stay on the web page and how much.

Ald. Michael Schumacher thought alders should differentiate between legislation they sponsor and legislation they support.

Ald. Brenda Konkel noted that she divided her legislation into topics.

RECOMMENDATION:

No timeline for posting. Legislation can be moved to “Archives”. Lisa Veldran noted that the City’s Webmaster (Sarah Edgerton) might have issues relative to the effect on the design of the web page if legislation is kept on the web page indefinitely. This issue will be discussed at the next meeting when Ms. Edgerton is in attendance.

Recommend moving Pending/Adopted Legislation under “Initiatives” vs. “Welcome Page”.

No recommendation was made on displaying information (e.g. by topic, by sponsor vs. support, etc.)

Biography

A summary biography is to be written by the alderperson.

RECOMMENDATION:

Alders may not change their biographies during an election cycle.

Committees

This section is populated by information entered into the Legistar database.

RECOMMENDATION:

Move previous committee information currently under "Archives" and place under "Committees". Ald. Michael Schumacher noted he would like to have subcommittees also listed in this section. This issue will need to be discussed with the Webmaster, Sarah Edgerton.

District News

Web links to Neighborhood Associations are permissible on an alder web page.

Web links to neighborhood activities sponsored by the city or other neighborhood organizations.

Need to discuss at future meeting: Newsletter articles appearing in neighborhood association newsletters should not be posted on the website but linked to the Neighborhood Association website where the article is located.

RECOMMENDATION:

Apply policy to web pages that is currently stated in the Council Policy Guide relative to newsletters during election cycle.

Initiatives

Contains current legislation sponsored by alder (vs. supported)

Materials created by departments should be linked and not created as a new link on the alders webpage

Dated materials should be pulled and deleted or moved to the Archives page.

The Council website is NOT a central repository for documents but rather a portal tool to link to City Departments and work that they do.

Archives

Placeholder for dated district news and old initiatives and newsletters.

RECOMMENDATION:

Place the "Archives" button on the bottom of every alder web page. This issue will need to be discussed with the Webmaster, Sarah Edgerton.

No recommendation was made on how long we would archive information on the archive page.

Next Meeting

February 26, 2008 @ 2:00 p.m., Room 417, CCB

The meeting adjourned at 11:27 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Lisa Veldran
Administrative Assistant
Madison Common Council