

Report of President's Work Group to Review Council Communication Tools & Processes

Work Group Members:

Alders Grant Foster, Patrick Heck, Arvina Martin, Donna Moreland, Max Prestigiacomo

Former Work Group Members:

Alders Keith Furman, Barbara Harrington-McKinney, Lindsay Lemmer

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TABLE OF CONTENTS
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Introduction

On July 16, 2019, Common Council adopted a resolution creating the President's Work Group to Review Council Communication Tools & Processes. Per the resolution in [Appendix A](#), the Work Group's charge was to address:

"... the Common Council desires to improve communication to city residents and to further the goals and mission of the Common Council by incorporating the core value of Civic Engagement - commitment to transparency, openness and inclusivity..."

and to

"... review the City's current offering of existing communication tools and processes and investigate options and alternatives to improve those tools and processes;"

with tasks to include

- Alder Blog & email subscriptions
- Alder Home Page
- How Alders share content via social media
- Use of calendars for meetings and events
- Templated/prepared content
- Sharing of updates generated by city agencies "

and

"... along with other communication tools and processes as identified by the work group:"

This report summarizes the Group's work on these and other issues identified as the work proceeded. Some issues were simply identified, while others were resolved or partially resolved. Regardless, this report also provides a set of recommendations for future work on the issues for which there was not sufficient time for the Work Group to address and/or solve due to the Group's limited longevity and scope. Another consideration that led to providing future recommendations was that some issues and resolutions have the potential to include both fiscal impacts and larger impacts on staff work plans that were judged to be more appropriate for longer term efforts by alders, city staff and/or additional Common Council actions.

The Work Group would like to thank the many staff members who organized our meetings, provided valuable presentations and information, and helped us formulate solutions to the concerns we identified. Their expertise and patience are deeply appreciated.

City Staff:

Common Council Office: Lisa Veldran, Kwasi Obeng, Karen Kapusta-Pofahl, Debbie Fields
Information Technology: Eric Olson, Sarah Edgerton
Mayor's Office: Katie Crowley, Tariq????

Civil Rights: Jason Glozier
Public Health Madison & Dane County: Allison Dungan
Engineering: Hannah Mohelnitzky
Water Utility: Amy Barrilleaux
Other PIOs?
City Attorney's Office: Roger Allen, Lara Mainella

Process and General Findings:

The Work Group held twenty-three meetings starting on 8/12/2019 with the last meeting on 9/29/2020.

Motivation for Work Group

The Work Group initially reviewed the results of a Common Council Executive Committee (CCEC) [survey of alders](#) that solicited input from all 20 alders about their current usage of communication tools, their levels of satisfaction with the Alder Blog Tool, and their desires for improved and new tools. While only 9 alders responded to the survey, the Work Group verified that city communication tools that alders utilize are:

- Alder Blog Tool and its associated automatic email notification to subscribers of the Blog/Update postings;
- Email from districtXX@cityofmadison.com (no subscription component), and
- Postcard notification of neighborhood meetings, etc.

Communication tools/channels utilized by alders that are not provided through the City include:

- Phone Conversations;
- Social media postings on personal pages (with the associated risk of violating open records laws);
- Neighborhood Association websites and meetings, and
- Regular group constituent meetings, e.g., Coffee with the Alder.

Generally, the survey revealed that alders were dissatisfied with the Alder Blog Tool and many expressed a desire for better content provision, improved coordination of alder communications, new and improved tools, and a tool for tracking constituent requests and follow-through. The survey results led to the Common Council President forming the Work Group to Review Council Communication Tools & Processes.

Work Group Objectives

Based on the survey results and initial discussions the Work Group first established its overall objectives:

1. Reduce the administrative burden on alders related to constituent communications. These burdens exist for both outbound and inbound communications.

2. Connect constituents with content that:

- is relevant;
- is timely;
- has the appropriate level of detail;
- is delivered by appropriate methods (mail, email, blog, various social media platforms, etc.);
- is delivered with method-appropriate formatting;
- reaches underrepresented and disenfranchised constituents;
- accommodates constituents with Limited English Proficiency (LEP), and
- accommodates constituents with Visual Impairment (VI).

3. Provide better access and usability for alders without IT backgrounds, including

- Make tools and processes easier to use, and
- Make training and support available.

In the process of evaluating these goals, members necessarily identified the shortcomings of existing tools, explored both short-term and long-term improvements to existing tools, and evaluated potential new communication tools and processes.

Discussions also led to considerations of currently available sources of information, how they could be better utilized by alders, and potential improvements to those sources with regard to alder communications to constituents. Broadening the audience for communications of all types was one primary focus. These items are detailed below in the List of Work Group Topics.

Strategic communications plan citywide so we know what comes from different agencies, PIO as a team rather than embedded. Not really a recommendation could be findings, what we learned. Could be some conclusions, ideas, don't have to be actionable., not all sections need to have actionaables or recommendations. Check in on status of requests,

TFOGS Overlap

The Group recognized that there was substantial overlap between its work and some of issues researched by the Task Force on the Structure of City Government (TFOGS). In their [Final Report](#) TFOGS recommendations related to improving resident engagement and access to City and Common Council information and processes were particularly pertinent to the Work Group's task. Specifically, aspects of these TFOGS recommendations were amplified throughout the Group's consideration of communication tools and processes:

- Create an Office of Resident Engagement and Neighborhood Support ("ORENS") to support BCC system staffing, training, and resident engagement;
- Simplify city processes and procedures applicable to all BCCs, including time and location of meetings, rules of procedure, and methods for providing input.;
- Implement a robust technology plan to improve representation and engagement on BCCs, and
- Pursue concrete common sense initiatives to improve resident engagement and participation as detailed in Section F of the Final Report.

The Work Group also recognized that many of the possible initiatives proposed by TFOGS related to resident participation and engagement aligned with their work related to improving both incoming and outgoing communications with alders and with overall city communications. Most pertinent to the Group's tasks were these TFOGS possible initiatives:

- Allow video testimony or live electronic participation such as through the internet, from remote centers of the City, or other electronic means;
- Allow public comments to be made and considered prior to a meeting, such as through a system that notifies residents of decisions to be made, asks for their input, and then relays that input to decisionmakers;
- Separate public testimony from legislative debate and action by allowing individuals to provide input at the beginning of Council meetings regardless of when the item on which they wish to speak is considered;
- Vary meeting locations throughout the City;
- Make written comments available to the public and Council members at the time of the meeting;
- Improve accessibility and functionality of Legistar;
- Create a way for people to provide input in Legistar or some other appropriate platform;
- Provide classes for the public to learn how to use Legistar;
- On the city website, allow option for having a chat with a city employee who can direct a resident in the right direction should they have an issue or question about government services;
- Continue working towards having 311 number for city services; Maintain subscription lists for Council and BCC items so that residents can be made aware of issues coming before a body through an email blast or text message and report back promptly when a decision has been made;
- Review customer relation software options that may create better processes for residents to navigate city services, such as through ticketing system where issues are ticketed, followed up on by staff, and then the results reported back to the person requesting the service; and
- Add more than just the name of meetings to the city calendar so that more information can be obtained with one (1) click, instead of requiring multiple clicks to get relevant and substantive information about a meeting.

While the Work Group recognized that some of these initiatives were mostly beyond the scope of the Group's charge, it was often difficult to separate a consideration of alder communications from the overall city communication processes and tools mentioned by TFOGS. From a constituent's perspective, the preferred and/or effective sources of information for constituents is not always clear, so the Work Group also considered the various sources and types of city-sourced information and whether or not alders are or should be disseminating each.

The TFOGS proposed initiatives listed above include several related to Legistar and its reputation for being difficult for residents to access and understand. The Work Group appreciates that city staff has been working to address these limits and replace or overhaul Legistar, but the Work Group wants to reiterate that Legistar currently is not just a barrier to accessing

information about Common Council actions, but also a barrier to communications both to and from residents. This is discussed further in Topic #9 below and was also researched by TFOGS.

Items looking for a home in this report:

More on Donna's concerns about under represented communicites

More on Educatoino/training for underrepresented, TFOGS,

i. 311 system

Accomplishments to date:

- Focused discussion with Planning & Traffic Engineering divisions???????? – this happened?

List of Work Group Topics

1. Alder Blog Tool and Email Subscriptions
2. Input for Alder Blogs
3. Incoming Email Adjustments
4. Broadening the Audience for Alder and City Communications
5. Registration for and Input at Public Meetings
6. Alders Calendaring Tools
7. Council Social Media Policy and Social Media Platforms
8. Supplementing Postcard Notification with Digital Advertising
9. Legistar Improvements and Meetings (as it relates to communications)
10. Common Council Staff's Role in Alder Communications

Work Group Topic #1

Alder Blog Tool and Email Subscriptions

Identified Concerns:

- The current alder blogging tool is unfriendly by today's standards and is difficult for many alders to use. The blogging tool is the primary method that many alders use to communicate with constituents, so modernizing it could decrease the amount of time alders spend writing blog posts and could make the information easier for constituents to digest.
- Content provided by others for inclusion in an Alder Blog/Update is the subject of Work Group Topic #2.
- The blogging tool's associated email subscription management system has limited capabilities, e.g., alders cannot email their subscribers without making a blog post and it is not apparent that it is tied to the user's City account.

- Generally, the city email subscription management system for residents is confusing and difficult to use, including the subscription management for alder blogs.

Findings:

Note that for the purposes of this discussion, alder blogs and alder updates are equivalent, although technically the blog tool creates single accumulating posts rather than the individual posts of the update tool. Formatting capabilities, posting methods, email subscriptions, etc., are the same for both.

Based on Work Group discussions and the CCEC survey of alders concerning communications, the Group learned that some alders utilize the existing blogging tool at least weekly, some only occasionally, and some not at all. A few alders have found ways to exploit the tool and its relatively primitive formatting capabilities in order to make posts more readable, but most alders do not have the time, skillset, and/or desire to delve very far into stretching the tool's limits. The Work Group believes that if the tool was modernized, more alders would use it, and would use it more frequently, to communicate with constituents.

Some alders communicate with constituents exclusively by utilizing non-city email listservs, including those of Neighborhood Associations within their Districts. Additionally, some are using some combination of alder blogs, listservs, and social media. The Work Group believes that if the blog tool was modernized, more alders would use it, but other methods of communication will likely continue to be used. Social media, in particular, is becoming more in demand by alders and residents (see Topic #7).

For all methods of communication, alders should assure that they are following appropriate Council policies (list those here? What are they?).

The email subscription system which allows subscribers to receive all blog posts that an alder makes is also somewhat primitive. The ability to email subscribers in addition to their receiving an automated email that contains a heading image and the first few lines of the post would open up the possibilities of more communication channels.

Alder blogs are currently one-way communications. Alders can post, but there is no commenting feature. Subscribers can respond to the email notification that a new blog entry has been posted since its sender is the appropriate DistrictXX@CityofMadison.com address, but the blog post itself is not included in the subsequent thread; only the text of the email notification of a blog post is included.

If residents were more aware that their subscribing to an alder's blog effectively enables them to have a city account, they could be pointed to that capability when they subscribe. Generally, the email/notification management system seems overly complex and difficult to navigate, including for blog subscribers.

Solutions:

Completed

Alder Blog Tool Improvements

1. Worked with IT staff to create a prioritized list of desired improvements to the blog tool.
2. Worked with IT staff to decide upon an improved blog tool solution with more design options, realistic preview view, improved analytics, email list and post scheduling capabilities.

Ongoing Implementation

IT is in the process of replacing the current alder blogging tool with a tool that is already used by various city departments. That tool will be adapted and improved to meet alder's blogging needs. The adaptation of this tool is expected to have no increased costs associated with expanding its usage to alders. IT indicates that this project can fit into their work plans, which indicates that altering the new tool to enact the desired enhancements will begin in Q3 2020 with implementation completed in late 2020. There may be a trial period when several alders use and test the new tool, but that process is to be determined.

The new tool will be more intuitive, WYSIWYG, and will allow more formatting and embedding options. The latter will allow easier importation of information from other sources. More practical matters include more contemporary and intuitive menus, options for saving drafts, and activating posts, etc.

Recommendations:

1. As web-based or application-based blogging tools evolve, IT generally is evolving along with them. IT should have ongoing discussions with Council Staff so that new tools and capabilities for use by alders can be proposed for quicker implementation.
2. CCEC should periodically be informed by Council Staff about new capabilities that alders may want to consider adding to their blogging tool.
3. While this relates to several other Work Group topics, the ability for residents to self-manage their communications from both alders and the city should become more intuitive. Opt-in and Opt-out features should be reviewed, streamlined, and should include content-based opt-in and opt-out features for alder-provided content.

Responsibility:

Common Council Staff
IT
CCEC

Work Group Topic #2

Input for Alder Blogs

Identified Concerns:

info to get out to audience is city created information, that's what we want, to make it easy. It is really city communications, alders can do more if they want, they can synthesize

- All alder emails - public comments
 - Include Kwasi
- Registration for public meetings

- Sorting for alders
-

Reduce duplicative efforts to create content (multiple alders preparing similar content)

Make sure content delivery is timely (not too late, not too early)

- Make sure content is relevant to its audience
- Make sure content is accessible to non-English speakers/VI audience
- Make sure content has the appropriate level of detail

Look to reduce duplicative/irrelevant emails to all alders from staff

What about a weekly summary that goes out on Friday?

vi. CC Staff point person for communications

Findings:

- Reduced redundant press release emails from PIOs

1. PIO/Council Coordination/Process/Standards

- Recommendation for strategic communications plan at agency level and shared with alders
- a. PIO should be a team rather than embedded in agencies? (Donna)
- b. Inefficiencies of current structure

Also mentioned in #9 below

1. Have multiple channels available for distribution of content (fb, twitter, email, etc.) and automate pushing of content

In progress:

Development of Weekly Summary Content for Alders to Share (

Donna: we need to know the options of what info is available. I want district-specific information and development-specific info in my district.

Grant: I think we were planning on just city-wide info for the weekly summary going to all alders. Maybe key things coming up in city meetings.

Donna: I like the city meeting schedule.

Kwasi: who's the audience? Is it alders or is it their residents? Alders are interested in a lot of items happening at meetings they're unable to come to. If it's for residents the info may not need to be as detailed.

We want someone from the Council office reviewing what's going on and staying on top of it to share out via this weekly summary.

Grant: Would it be feasible to just have someone go through Legistar agendas and pull what's going to be of interest to all of most of the city.

Barbara: Actually staff should be doing that instead. Really looking at that kind of material. If alders don't ask for that info they don't get it, but staff should be providing that info.

Grant: I agree there are opportunities to improve that with city agencies, but there's also broader topics that aren't district-specific that could be the main focus of for these weekly summaries to start. Not everyone has time to review all the agendas.

Barbara: some alders want district-specific info and some don't. There needs to be consistent information sharing. Example: major construction notification.

Katie: Maybe alders could give Kwasi a heads up when city-wide big things happening.

Jason: It's hard to track what's happening at each meeting. This would be very difficult. Grant does this every week and it takes about an hour. Can one staff member stay on top of big city issues every week. Grant will walk through how he does it with Kwasi, and include Patrick and Marsha since they do this every week too.

City meetings

Kwasi: Controversial things like AirBnB, Edgewood, Straws
Agenda items
Decisions/Actions
Big items

News releases and other important announcements

Other agency emails

Events

Library updates

Events

Parks

Library

Solutions:

Completed

- Development of Weekly Summary Content for Alders to Share
 - Working with PIOs and Council staff to create a weekly summary of city-wide updates to be sent to all alders each week, making it easier for alders to share timely, relevant and consistent information with their districts.
- Future topics under consideration by WG:

Ongoing Implementation

Recommendations:

- .

Responsibility:

Common Council Staff
PIOs

Work Group Topic #3

Incoming Email Adjustments

Identified Concerns:

- Emails sent via webform to Alders' DistrictXX@cityofmadison.com accounts should be easier to scan to determine if the sender lives in your district, if they want a reply, subject matter, etc.

Findings:**Solutions:***Completed*

- Improved online contact email form
- Revised the order and information that displays in the email triggered by the online contact form in order to make them more easily scannable by alders
- Inbound all.alder email reduction

Ongoing Implementation

N/A

Recommendations:

- N/A

Responsibility:

N/A

Work Group Topic #4**Broadening the Audience for Alder and City Communications****Identified Concerns:****Findings:**

PIOs) recommended our capacity in terms of PIOs, etc.,

1. A lot of District alders don't know what is going on with TE, permits, etc., put in PIO space discussion, liquor licenses, not a new item
11. In overall city communications – better subscription management – in overall city discussion, alders shouldn't have to help pull together this info, people can do it themselves – so put in #4. Alder communications are city communications, so have to work on both. Defined alder communications, even blogs are just summarizing what someone else is creating, led us down the path to understanding what PIOs or doing, investigated standardization, led to Council Staff helping

Strategic communications plan citywide so we know what comes from different agencies, PIO as a team rather than embedded. Not really a recommendation could be findings, what we learned. Could be some conclusions, ideas, don't have to be actionable., not all sections need to have actionables or recommendations. Check in on status of requests,

1. A section on alder communication with staff that has this.
 1. Relationship to city PIO staff?

Repeat from #4 Topic, should be mentioned here too

2. **PIO/Council Coordination/Process/Standards**
 - . Recommendation for strategic communications plan at agency level and shared with alders
 - a. PIO should be a team rather than embedded in agencies? (Donna)
 - b. Inefficiencies of current structure

it is related to the surveys, much adaptation needed.

- Outreach
 - How we put info out
 - How we gather opinions
 - Polco
 - Nextdoor
 - Crossover with TFOGS recommendation for Resident Engagement

Lisa can send out links and surveys in English and Spanish, blurbs are translated.

News release can go out in English and Spanish - one PR with both English and Spanish

Lindsay will follow up with Tariq on whether NRTs can be lead people through the survey and collect their responses

Barbara will lead the survey discussion with the NRT Park Edge/Park Ridge. She can talk with them for input

Lindsay will create an intake form online for Barbara to use.

4. Resident engagement/survey/RESJI

SO Jason and I are willing to put in our social capital to ask people to answer these surveys and to get the questions translated. We just want to be clear that we don't have the capacity to be tracking responses, following up, or creating the mechanism for people to respond (survey monkey).

Here is our suggested list. Bold questions would go into a survey, the non bolded would be questions that if alders were asking stakeholders in person they could use to prompt deeper responses. Bold questions will be sent for translation into Spanish and Hmong **once you ok them**. Turn around time on this is likely 3 days. If you all oked them on the 23rd you would likely have them back on about the 29th to put into a survey monkey. You could start building the English one and then copy the format for the other two languages.

1. **Where do you get news or information? Survey would have the following choices with prompt to select as many as apply [TV news national, TV news local, print newspaper, blogs or rss feeds, social media, mail, email, radio, word of mouth or conversation, your faith community, interest groups and hobby groups, other?]**
2. **Tell us a bit about why you get news from this source?**
3. **Are there ways of getting news or information that don't work for you?** (example prompt if in person: I don't have reliable internet, I don't have cable or TV, English is not my primary language so blogs in English don't work for me, etc)?

4. Do you currently get news or information from your Alder (link map to find your alder)? [yes, no]
5. If yes, how? [blogs, email, social media, in person, mail]
6. If yes, do any of these communications not work for you [blogs, email, social media, in person, mail] add text box after asking respondent to please tell us more about their answer
7. What kinds of information would you like to get from your Alderperson or from the City Council? [Do you want to give choices or open ended? If choices we will leave that to you to generate]
8. What is the easiest way for you to communicate with your Alder? [Social media, text, phone call, mail, email, a web form (report a problem), blog comments, other.
9. What would not work for you [Social media, text, phone call, mail, email, a web form (report a problem), blog comments] and why?

Allison and Jason

Tariq (and Mari) – This email is going to come a bit out of the blue (and will likely be too long) because we talked about this a while back and I am now wanting to get more details in writing. I am hoping you are still on board with asking Allied drive NRT (and maybe others that have resident attendance – you would know best which teams fall into that group) for feedback and recommendations for improving Alder/Council communications with residents. My hope is that you (Tariq) and Mari would be willing to use some time on an agenda for the Allied drive NRT to ask the team the questions below. I can also pitch this to other teams at the NRT leader meeting next Monday, 1-13 and/or invite Ald. Foster to attend.

The workgroup is still working out how to actually capture and code the feedback. Mari – I think your experience might be very helpful here. There is a thought that in addition to an Allied drive and other NRT ask, that the workgroup would ask all Alders to go into their districts to libraries, churches, and other places where people gather in order to ask these questions as well. Or maybe even to ask Library or community center staff to try and gather this feedback. If that happens there will need to be a way for the feedback to be easily captured as well as a potential need to provide some training/framing for alders or other conversation facilitators.

There is a recognition that the City as a whole needs a more robust look at a communication and public engagement strategy and that while Ald. Communications are a part of this, the work group is not going to come up with a comprehensive plan to address this for the whole city. The focus here is to look at council communications with a limited ability to gather data as well as a likely limited ability to do a drastic or comprehensive QI process. The whole city look needs to happen but this is not that. It certainly may be a place where this group continues to raise awareness about that other need as we all work to do continuous improvement towards the service promise.

How am I involved you may be wondering? This is part of an ask that came to RESJI tools and training to provide feedback to bring an equity lens to the recommendations. My suggestion/contribution is to encourage that the group get feedback from those who likely are not currently being reached with existing communication options. Maybe this is part of the elusive “equity in community”. I recommended not running an analysis tool because it seems like there is not adequate data to do so. Happy to talk to either of you more about that or hear feedback on that recommendation.

ASK:

- Can you confirm that you would be willing to put these questions to the Allied NRT and to communicate the feedback to the workgroup?
- Are these other NRT’s or groups that are already meeting where these questions can be asked?

- Are you willing to thought partner with Ald. Foster about how to capture the feedback and if there might be a partner survey that could be shared electronically?
- Would you be willing to review the questions below and give feedback on them?
- Would you be willing (I can support this) to do learning development with any alders who were willing to go out and ask these questions around how to facilitate these questions and to capture the feedback? – this was a direct ask for support from Ald. Moreland who is up for going out and soliciting feedback but would like training on how to do so.

Context script that conversation facilitator would communicate:

“As a resident of the city of Madison, the Common Council and Alderpersons realize that their communication with City residents is not consistent across districts and that the current system could potentially be improved to get residents the information that they most want and need in the way that is most accessible for them. The goal of today’s conversation is to get feedback on where you currently get information generally and as it relates to City news and information, to understand the format in which you like to get news and information, to hear feedback on what information you want to be getting from your alder, and to learn more about how you would like to give feedback or information to your alder so that they can best represent you in government.

I am going to ask a couple of questions around this topic, person X here will be taking notes that will be shared with the workgroup generally and not with your name attached unless you want us to share your information. Once all the feedback is put together we will share it back with this group as well as including it in the recommendations made to the Common Council. One point to note, this work relates just to the communication that is coming from your Alderperson or the City Council and the group knows that there is a need for a more complete ask and recommendations for all City of Madison communications and community engagement.”

1. Where do you get news or information generally? Is this from TV news, print, blogs, social media, mail, email, radio, word of mouth or conversation, your faith community, interest groups and hobby groups, other? Can you tell me a little about this and why you get news from this source? Are there ways of getting news or information that don’t appeal or work for you (example: I don’t have reliable internet, I don’t have cable or TV, English is not my primary language so blogs in English don’t work for me, etc)?
2. Do you currently get news or information from your Alderperson? If yes, how do you currently get information from them?
3. If yes, what about that system (of getting information from your Alder) works well for you and what does not?
4. What kinds of information would you like to get from your Alderperson or from the City Council? Is there information that you get that is not interesting or relevant to you? Are there things you can remember learning about from your Alder that were useful? (example: flooding information, council or hearing dates, election information, closures and construction, safety information, updates on legislation and policy, etc)
5. How would it be most easy for you to communicate with your Alder person and council and to give them feedback? Social media, text, phone call, email, a web form (report a problem), other. What would not work for you and why?

“Thanks for giving that feedback. If you think of anything else that you would like to share later please feel free to give XXX a call or email XXXX and we can certainly add in your thoughts”

Still need to review results?

Opt out vs in for new content types

Solutions:

Completed

- Resident engagement
 - Developed and distributing a survey to better understand Madisonians communications preferences and habits
 - Engaged NRTs to gain qualitative data on the communications preferences and habits of underserved Madison populations
- Review survey and NRT results

Did we do a PIO survey?

Ongoing Implementation

Work with TFOGS Office of Resident Engagement

Recommendations:

- Work with TFOGS
-

Responsibility:

Common Council Staff
TFOGS
CCEC

Work Group Topic #5

Registration for and Input at Public Meetings

Identified Concerns:

- 1. Make it easy for public to comment on any legislative item - special attention for
- people that have not been represented in the process historically
- 2. Maintain/strengthen impact of large public input/voice
- 3. Allow public comment to travel with legislative items across BCCs/council
- 4. Make sure those comments are easily viewed by BCC members
- 5. Make it easy for BCC support & other city staff to support this process
-

Findings:

Solutions:

Completed

Ongoing Implementation
Work with TFOGS

Recommendations:

- *Work with TFOGS*
- .

Responsibility:

Common Council Staff
IT
TFOGS
CCEC

Work Group Topic #6

Alders Calendaring Tools

Stuff from elsewhere

- *Calendaring*
 - *Weekly meeting schedule*
 - *Use of calendaring for alders*
 - *For public*
 - *Outlook/Google/Other Integration*

how to communicate out events

Identified Concerns:

Findings:

Solutions:

Implemented

Ongoing Implementation

Recommendations:

- .

Responsibility:

Common Council Staff
TFOGS
CCEC

Work Group Topic #7

Council Social Media Policy and Social Media Platforms

Identified Concerns:

- Some alders want city social media accounts so that they can post information there. Research shows that young people, in particular, use social media and access information via social media much more than email and oftentimes do not read email or subscribe to blogs.

Findings:

Need to say why we need this policy and why using social media is good

so that needs to be looked at. Goal of group is going to be reducing the policy, we need from IT what is important to be included in the future policy. APMs don't apply to Council but they're often used as a starting point, so let's get help identifying what the critical pieces are in 3-16/social media policy so we can use those to move forward.

Eric recommends limiting the specificity, keep it high level. For example: What's considered acceptable, who approves, etc. When it comes to things that aren't regulated, that can go into the best practices information instead of the policy. Existing social media APM is going to be heavily revised because there's a lot of unnecessary content.

Where is this effort? Draft Social Media Policy

Social Media

1. Have multiple channels available for distribution of content (fb, twitter, email, etc.) and automate pushing of content
2. Official alder accounts for fb/twitter/etc.

Solutions:

Completed PHASE I

- Updating social media policies & establishing tools & processes
- Working with IT & City Attorney's Office on an updated CC Social Media Policy draft & investigating options for official alder social media accounts

Ongoing Implementation

Recommendations:

PHASE II, MORE Platforms, auto-publish for blog, social media, etc., could be automatic to have account too that takes no individual account, autoposting doesn't have to be tied to a new blog tool. I available, could adjust downward requirements for participationg

Technical guidelines, dormant or not, who does it, etc.

Reiterate that personal is personal, how to be very clear, separation is easier for everyone, reduces expectations, and gives the cupport of the city to your Social Media usage

Responsibility:

Common Council Staff
IT
City Attorney's Office
CCEC

Work Group Topic #8

Supplementing Notifications With Digital Advertising

Identified Concerns:

Findings:

Use of alder budget for outreach?

Solutions:

Completed

Ongoing Implementation

Work with TFOGS

Recommendations:

- Work with TFOGS
- .

Responsibility:

Common Council Staff
TFOGS
CCEC

Work Group Topic #9

Legistar Improvements and Meetings

Stuff from elsewhere

- Digital Ads Legistar
 - Legislative information processes
 - Recommendations on improving transparency
 - Hybrid/Virtual Meetings
 - Equity for virtual meetings - CCEC or TFOGS

Identified Concerns:

1. We support TFOGS in creating standards in agendas, attachments etc., timing standards, etc. barriers to people knowing, we can't share if not there., could be in legistar
 - i. Put all meetings (workgroups/subcommittees) in legistar in a generic form
 - ii. Legistar meetings for associated bodies (MPO, MMSD, CARPC, City-Village Association)

3. Create requirements for Legistar upgrade/replacement

a. Legistar update/replacement

- i. Put all meetings (workgroups/subcommittees) in legistar in a generic form
- ii. Legistar meetings for associated bodies (MPO, MMSD, CARPC, City-Village Association)
- iii. Calendar subscription for legistar

Ability to have better insight in things related to my district, tagging feature, meeting schedule, where do people go to find out what/when/where, etc., group who reviews legistar should have alder representation, public can't figure it out

Legistar meetings for associated bodies (MPO, MMSD, CARPC, City-Village Association)

Members of the public should be able to send in comments on any legistar item easily.

Potential channels of submission include:

- Email
- Online form
- Telephone?
- Text?
- Polling?
- Other?
- Comments should be organized and available online for review by BCC/Council members
 - Members of BCC have access to them and they are updated (semi) real time (up to meeting start time?)
- Possible info to collect
 - Name
 - Address
 - District/Alder
 - For/Against/Neither
 - Lobbyist?
 - Comment

- Email or phone (for responses)
- Tabulate counts (for/against)
- If this were in place, could we get CC office admin support to triage all alders messages from public?
- What level of active notification do we want? (notifications when individual comments received or batched for larger volume)
- Make sure to not lose the impact of receiving thousands of emails in a few days
- Allow alders to not miss other important emails
- Ensure alders know where the comments are coming from and give them easy opportunity to respond to their constituents
- Send a response to folks so they know their feedback was received
- Standardize how comments are attached in legistar (individual attachments vs. bulk)
- Issue of people wanting to comment on items that were on agenda for introduction (not allowed to register since there's no public comment on these items)

Findings:

Solutions:

Completed

Ongoing Implementation
 Work with TFOGS

Recommendations:

- Work with TFOGS
- .

Responsibility:

Common Council Staff
 TFOGS
 CCEC

Work Group Topic #10

Common Council Staff's Role in Alder Communications

Identified Concerns:

1. Consideration of a CC staff point person for communications, how would that relate to PIOs?, Communications Dept?, ongoing oversight of CC communications, annual survey of alders ? once we are gone, we want this work to continue (not just the recommendations), CC staff check-ins with CCEC?, OREN recommendations TFOG????,

Findings:

Solutions:

Completed

None

Ongoing Implementation

.

Recommendations:

Responsibility:

Common Council Staff

IT

CCEC

Conclusions and Reiterate Recommendations

APPENDIX A

Enabling Resolution adopted by Common Council on 7/16/2019

[Legistar Item #56505](#)

Establishing a President's Work Group to Review Council Communication Tools & Processes.

Fiscal Note

No appropriation required.

Title

Establishing a President's Work Group to Review Council Communication Tools & Processes.

Body

WHEREAS, the City of Madison Common Council values the ability to communicate city information and their work in a variety of formats with the residents of the City; and,

WHEREAS, the Common Council desires to improve communication to city residents and to further the goals and mission of the Common Council by incorporating the core value of Civic Engagement - commitment to transparency, openness and inclusivity; and,

WHEREAS, the Common Council wishes to review the City's current offering of existing communication tools and processes and investigate options and alternatives to improve those tools and processes;

NOW THEREFORE IT BE RESOLVED, that the Common Council of the City of Madison establishes a President's Work Group to Review Council Communication Tools & Processes; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the work group review will include the following along with other communication tools and processes as identified by the work group:

- Alder Blog & email subscriptions
- Alder Home Page
- How Alders share content via social media
- Use of calendars for meetings and events
- Templated/prepared content
- Sharing of updates generated by city agencies

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the following Common Council member are appointed to the President's Work Group to Review Council Communication Tools & Processes:

Ald. Grant Foster, District 15 (Chair)

Ald. Barbara Harrington-McKinney, Council Vice-President

Ald. Lindsay Lemmer, District 3

Ald. Donna Moreland, District 7
Ald. Keith Furman, District 19

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the work group will be staffed by the Common Council office, with input from the city's Information Technology Department and other city departments as needed; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the work group will use a racial equity and social justice lens throughout its work and may access training to apply the City of Madison Racial Equity and Social Justice Impact Tool; and,

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Work Group will begin work upon adoption of this resolution with a goal of completing the review and report by the November 5, 2019 Common Council Executive Committee meeting.

Extensions to Work Group Deadline

Resolution adopted by Common Council on 10/15/2019 to Extend Work Group Deadline

[Legistar Item #57510](#)

Extending the deadline for the report and recommendations from the President's Work Group to Review Council Communication Tools & Processes to March 31, 2020.

Resolution adopted by Common Council on 6/2/2020 to Extend Work Group Deadline

[Legistar Item #60615](#)

Extending the deadline for the report and recommendations from the President's Work Group to Review Council Communication Tools & Processes to September 30, 2020.