

**TELECOMMUNICATIONS ADVISORY BOARD**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**May 12, 2014**

**In Attendance:** Ed Ebenbach, Committee Chairman; Kurt Krause and Joe Salvati, Committee Members; Ken Snyder, Board of Supervisors Liaison; Ashley Thompson, Special Projects Coordinator and Staff Liaison, Stephanie Mason, Township Manager; Guests: Gideon Slife and Lyndsay Fraser, FocusMX

**Minutes**

Mr. Krause motioned approval of the minutes from April 15, 2014. It was seconded by Mr. Salvati, the motion carried unanimously.

**Comcast Franchise Renewal Update**

Mr. Ebenbach reported that there is nothing new to report. At the moment no specific negotiation meeting date has been scheduled.

**Social Media Discussion**

Mr. Ebenbach opened the session on Social media by asking all participants to introduce themselves and to indicate what they wanted to achieve through their participation in the meeting.

Gideon Slife and Lyndsay Fraser introduced themselves as being invited guests from FocusMX (the Township Website Designers) whose purpose was to aid the committee in its goal of developing a strategy to increase the reach and engagement of the community in the Township's social media channel activities. They passed out a Social Media Overview white paper to review with the committee members. The various elements contained within it were offered for discussion at numerous points within the discussion, and those elements are included within the general notes below.

Mr. Ebenbach started the discussion by asking Ms. Thompson to present the most recent usage statistics for the Township's social media channels, and she provided supportive documentation that included statistics from Hootsuite and Facebook. She reported that as of May 12, 2014 the Township has 579 "Followers" on Twitter, and 480 Facebook "Likes", and that both counts have grown significantly over the last past three months, more than doubling on Twitter from <200 on February 1, and on Facebook by about 80 "Likes". Ms. Thompson stated that the highest reported activity on Facebook and Twitter during the last three months was event driven, occurring during February, at which time the Township relied heavily on both channels to get up-to-date snow and ice storm information out to residents. Ms. Thompson reported that the statistics also show that 71% of the Township Facebook "Likes" are women aged 35-44 years old.

Ms. Mason then presented statistics that she had compiled comparing the Social media activities of twelve local municipalities, including Doylestown Borough. Ten of the twelve use Social media at this time, and one is just about to launch their use. Most use social media for both Emergencies and to promote events, and most stated that they thought communication through social media usage was "effective". A few stated that they did not advocate the use of social media to create dialogue with citizens and/or to participate in surveys. The municipal data as presented did not include user, population,

or service age data, so no numerical comparisons as to the reach/penetration of the services was possible. It should be noted that Doylestown Borough, which has employed Social Media for much longer than the Township's startup date of September, 2013 has 1400 followers at this point for a population of approximately 8,300.

General discussion followed, with many topics raised:

- Mr. Slife suggested that the Township provide him with the current Township census data so he can provide the committee with more information about who is viewing the social media outlets. .
- Ms. Frazer suggested that the committee tailor the use of their social media channels, explaining that the Township should try to see which followers are responding, use creative hashtags for various events, and retweet the tweets of others to connect with potential new people.
- Mr. Slife suggested that the Township review each message that they are trying to send out to create a single message that can be sent through multiple channels but still gets through to all followers. Ms. Thompson and Ms. Mason reported that they already use Hootsuite to post on both Facebook and Twitter accounts.
- Ms. Frazer suggested that there should be no more than 1-2 posts on Facebook each day, but that since Twitter has a more conversational aspect, it can be used more often or even continuously.
- Ms. Frazer and Mr. Slife suggested that since the Township has a lot of events during the summer months, that the Township take the time to create hashtags for each event in order to engage followers to retweet the Township's posts and spread the word about events, thus possibly gaining even more followers. Mr. Slife reported that the Township could create Facebook events for the upcoming special events and invite followers to come. He explained this would allow the followers to view the information and potentially invite other friends to join. He also said that the use of hashtags would help residents to "find" events by the use of normal search tools. Mr. Salvati suggested that the Township could use their upcoming large special events as a means to promote resident engagement with the Township's social media accounts. It was also suggested that the Township's social media information should be handed out to attendees at Township events, and included in all Township literature.
- Mr. Ebenbach and Ms. Mason both reiterated that the Township is hoping to identify a means to gain more followers and to reach more residents via social media. Ms. Frazer suggested that the Township view the VisitBucks Facebook and Twitter accounts, as they have done an excellent job of reaching followers. Ms. Frazer explained that the Township should engage followers in information content by including "softer stuff" such as pictures in posts, as she explained that pictures are a draw for followers who will view and then share the Township posts.
- Mr. Slife suggested that the committee pick a number of approaches that they would like to use to gain more followers and FocusMX will work to help the Township succeed with their goals.
- Ms. Mason and Mr. Salvati suggested that the Township can also gain more social media followers by asking the other Boards and Commission of the

Township to follow the Township's social media sites themselves and then they can help create an awareness of the Township to their other social media contacts.

Mr. Ebenbach concluded the social media discussion by thanking all for their participation. The following items were identified as the next steps to advance the group towards its objective:

1. Delineate specific Township Social media objectives
2. Flesh out Municipality Social media data to add population, current Social Media statistics, and length of service
3. Examine suggested reference sites such as VisitBucks
4. Letter to Boards and Commissions requesting that they urge their members to "Like" and "Follow" the Township social media channels, and use their influence to spread information about those channels to others.
5. Present items 1 and 2 above to FocusMX to get their help in formulating a go-forward strategy.

### **Website**

Mr. Snyder reported to FocusMX that the Ways and Means committee had a discussion regarding creating a page on the Township website for information to be posted by the committee. Mr. Slife reported that this wouldn't be a problem and that a page could be added.

### **Adjournment**

On a motion made by Mr. Krause, seconded by Mr. Salvati the committee adjourned at 9:00PM.