

**Town of Somerset**  
**Communications Committee Meeting Agenda**  
**Monday, December 11, 2023**  
**5:00 p.m.**  
**Joanne's notes**

1. Call to Order
  - a. Attendance: Leslie Caplan, Ilene Heller, Joanne Steller, John Barry, Council member Debbie Heller, Town Manager Matt Trollinger, Deputy Town Manager EJ Hardwick
  - b. Agenda approved
  - c. Date for next meeting: January 8, 2024, 4:00 p.m., Zoom. Note change of time to accommodate Debbie's attendance at Town Council meeting.
2. Town website
  - a. Report from Deputy Town Manager: he has made a lot of refinements so that going forward only updates need to be added.
  - b. Discussion of Committee page. Page approved. Description of Town Journal approved with one change: Replace the word "Somersetters" in all instances. Use "Somerset residents".
3. Privacy/confidentiality issues for the Town Journal and Town social media

The Town Counsel has drafted a permission form which the committee reviewed. Its legal formality, while standard for obtaining permission for photo use in commercial instances, struck the committee as too daunting for its intended use in Somerset. Questions arose about whether residents would actually agree to sign such a document, and if the form were implemented, how the Town and its volunteer committees would manage and maintain such a cumbersome system of documentation. The committee:

- a. Had sought legal counsel to develop a permission vehicle that outlined and represented Town policy on photo use and identification of residents in Town media. The committee's main interest was policy that offered protection to children whose images, names, ages, and street of residence currently are used in the Journal in print and subsequently on the website and social media.
- b. Concurred that any policy should keep the language stipulating its legal use of residents' images at public events and also stipulate that there will be no outside use or sale of images taken of residents for the Town Journal or other Town media.
- c. Considered whether the Town Journal should discontinue the practice of identifying children with street names
- d. Discuss the current practices of the Swim Team (Council Member Heller agreed to take the lead on this)
- e. Asked whether informal permission would be acceptable

After lengthy discussion, the committee asked Town Manager to:

- a. Seek further legal clarification and suggestions about other jurisdictions that are implementing photo use policy and legal documents to obtain it.
- b. Speak with suggested jurisdictions to learn if/how they are using the permission document, under what circumstances, how documentation is retained, and how the policy is received by residents.
- c. Learn if/how other jurisdictions identify children in their publications. Including whether name, age, and street of residence used.
- d. Postpone the document's planned Town Council consideration at its January meeting.

The Town Manager will discuss with the Mayor and the Council President.

4. Resource Guide/Directory 2024 update—Leslie has had discussion with Linda who agreed that it is time to work on this update. The following actions were suggested:
  - a. Review draft of revisions collated edits from John, Ilene, and Leslie to include:
  - b. Harmonize the social media listings which do not include the same platforms as appear on the weekly emails.
  - c. Page 8, edit: Preliminary agenda is distributed ...separate sentence for final agenda.
  - d. Page 16: Correct the untidy edit ....every year since 1988. Remove comma.
  - e. Page 19: John's email updated the missing information about MCPS
5. Town Journal update
  - Debbie Heller is finalizing an article updating residents on the Little Falls lane changes for News from Council
  - Per Linda, the next issue should include Directory change requests
6. Lecture series: no report at this time
7. New Committee Members
8. Other Business
9. Adjournment at 6:16