

November 16, 2015

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BEACHWOOD CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2015 AT 5:30 P.M. AT BEACHWOOD CITY HALL, CONFERENCE ROOM A, 25325 FAIRMOUNT BOULEVARD, BEACHWOOD, OHIO 44122.

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 P.M. by Chairman Mark Mintz

ROLL CALL:	Present:	M.S. Horwitz, M. Mintz
	Absent:	J. Pasch.
	Also Present:	M.S. Gorden, B.A. Reali, F.S. Goodman, M.M. Jacobs, M.W. Wachter J. Doult, K.A. Carmen, C. McHugh, S. Deitrick, T. Turick

1. Review of Communications Contracts

Mrs. Turick stated that there is no increase to the 2016 Contract for the Beachwood Buzz and the City would like to move forward with renewing the Contract. Mrs. Turick stated that the Beachwood Buzz has been around for approximately 17 years. Mrs. Turick stated that she e-mails Ms. Rapoport all the upcoming events and where she needs to be and she is always in attendance at the events.

Mr. Goodman stated that before the Beachwood Buzz the City prepared their own Newsletter. Mr. Goodman stated that the Beachwood Buzz is the best publication around any of the suburbs plus the City saves money on postage because Ms. Rapoport mails a copy of the Beachwood Buzz to all the residents and businesses.

Mrs. Turick stated that she, Mrs. Carmen, Mr. Doult, Mrs. Deitrick and Ms. McHugh all work closely with Nancy Lesic and her firm. Mrs. Turick stated that they meet monthly regarding the upcoming month events to promote the City of Beachwood. Internal staff meetings are held and Ms. Lesic handles the social media.

Mrs. Turick stated that she works with Ms. Lesic as does the Mayor and City Council and there are times that requiring working at night. Mrs. Turick stated that Ms. Lesic produces high quality work and great guidance. Mrs. Turick stated that Ms. Lesic is considered a Professional Consultant like Mr. Cuini and Mr. Smerigan.

Mr. Doult stated that Ms. Lesic is well connected and has the best contacts with offices in both Cleveland and Columbus.

Mrs. Deitrick stated that Ms. Lesic is part of the Internal Communications Committee. Ms. Lesic is involved in public affairs, journalism, web design, Twitter, Facebook, WCPN streams, blogs, Beachwood Buzz and Inside Business.

Mayor Gorden stated that Ms. Lesic also helps the Council President if needed.

Mrs. Carmen stated that with Ms. Lesic there is a zero learning curve and a team approach is always used, everyone shares the same goal, highlighting the City. Mrs. Carmen stated that Ms. Lesic has great connections with the media.

Mr. Jacobs stated that a year ago there was discussion regarding hiring a full-time public relations person. No one followed through.

Mrs. Turick stated that was up to City Council to do.

Mrs. Turick stated that Ms. Lesic works 30 hours per month with a maximum of 50 hours per month and there is no need for a full-time person because the City has five committed people.

Mr. Berns stated that \$140.00 per hour blended rate is approximately \$86,000.00 per year. Mr. Berns stated that she is working not more than 50 hours that equates to \$6-7,000.00 per month.

Mr. Doult asked if it was possible to hire someone for \$84,000.00.

Mrs. Bellin Janovitz stated that maybe the City could use Ms. Lesic on specific projects thereby decreasing her monthly hours. Mrs. Bellin Janovitz further stated that Ms. Lesic was hired in 2011 to focus on Economic Development and now she is working on refreshing the website and social media.

Mrs. Turick stated that Ms. Lesic's hours were steady and were raised to 50 hours per month for crisis management.

Mr. Doult stated that the Economic Development Newsletter is generated internally but Ms. Lesic reviews it.

Mr. Goodman stated that the demand on Ms. Lesic's time has evolved over the last few years and there are currently five in-house staff employees working on the Internal Communications Committee. Mr. Goodman stated that Ms. Lesic's role has been significant and she has his vote because of the media issues she is rock solid in that area. Mr. Goodman stated that no one in-house can handle the media as well as Ms. Lesic. Mr. Goodman stated that it is up to the new Council members if they would like to bring someone in-house.

Mr. Mintz stated that he has sat in on the in-house Internal Communications Committee meetings and was familiarized with the inner workings of the team. Mr. Mintz stated that 16 years ago the School Board hired Louise Cooper for approximately \$80-90.00 per hour. Mr. Mintz stated that when he was Council President, Ms. Lesic helped during the tax increase time and also helped him when Aloft was considering building in Beachwood.

Mr. Horwitz stated that he looks at the job, not the person. Mr. Horwitz stated that the City would be better served having a full-time Public Relations employee. Mr. Horwitz stated that the City is already utilizing five staff employees to do the job. Mr. Horwitz stated that the City could utilize Ms. Lesic in an emergency. Mr. Horwitz stated that he has worked with Ms. Lesic and he likes her but the City is leaning towards hiring full-time employees and has since hired a full-time Law Director and Assistant Law Director. Mr. Horwitz stated that a full-time employee can handle the social media aspect.

Mr. Mintz stated that there are three new Council members and two of them are not present this evening. Mr. Mintz stated that the new City Council should make the decision.

Mrs. Turick stated that the Ms. Lesic's Contract expires December 31, 2015.

Mr. Mintz stated that it is not appropriate for the current City Council to make the decision.

Mrs. Turick stated that 2016 is a big year.

Mrs. Deitrick stated that the website is also being re-designed between January and May.

Mr. Wachter suggested a shorter term 3-6 months.

Mr. Jacobs stated that everyone waited to the last minute again.

Mr. Goodman stated that the City currently has five employees from the Internal Communications Committee and he is of the opinion that we keep Ms. Lesic for one year and the new Council could begin discussions in March and decide what they would like to do moving forward.

Mrs. Deitrick asked how do you find someone to fit? This is not the School Board.

Mayor Gorden stated that everyone understands how important communication is and the new City Council members have not even met Ms. Lesic. Mayor Gorden suggested we retain Ms. Lesic.

Mr. Doult stated that the City would need a job description first.

Mrs. Turick stated that everything can be handled in-house except for the level of expertise from Ms. Lesic.

Mr. Goodman suggested instead of a minimum of 30 hours and a maximum of 50 hours we change the contract to minimum of 30 hours with a maximum of 40 hours. Mr. Goodman suggested that the bulk of the work could be done in-house.

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Mr. Berns asked if the \$140.00 per hour is a fixed rate.

Mrs. Bellin Janovitz suggested we keep Ms. Lesic on retainer.

Mrs. Goodman stated that the City needs to define what Ms. Lesic will not need to do.

Mrs. Bellin Janovitz stated that Ms. Lesic will use the minimum hours suggested.

Mr. Goodman stated that the City will challenge if Ms. Lesic goes over her allowed hours.

Mr. Wachter stated that we do not even have a proposal yet from Ms. Lesic. Mr. Wachter suggested less hours at the same rate.

Mr. Mintz stated that 30 hours per month is not a lot.

Mrs. Turick stated that the City spends \$2,000.00 per month just for the social media. Mrs. Turick stated that she is waiting for the proposal from Ms. Lesic.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by M. Mintz, seconded by M.S. Horwitz, at 6:30 P.M., to adjourn this meeting to the next regularly scheduled Council Meeting.

ROLL CALL:	Yes:	M.S. Horwitz, M. Mintz
	Abstain:	None.
	No:	None.
	Not Voting:	None.
		MOTION ADOPTED

Approved:

Merle S. Gorden, Mayor

Karen M. Navolanic, Clerk of Council

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