

Discussion Item

Communication Committee
Recommendations

Communications Committee: Recommendation, Summary, and Next Steps

Committee Members:

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Highest Level Recommendation

The Communications Committee recommends that the board and Parkfairfax hire an experienced communications director/manager who is paid to coordinate, oversee, and manage all communication efforts affecting the Parkfairfax community, as well as track and report on effectiveness of communication initiatives and strategies.

Background

Effective communication is essential for the success of any business. It helps to build strong relationships with customers, vendors, and employees. When communication is clear, concise, and consistent, it fosters trust and confidence in the organization. This, in turn, leads to increased productivity, improved morale, and higher levels of customer satisfaction.

—Tushneem Dhamagadda, CEO at hubengage.com

A statement heard repeatedly during board meetings this past year gave perspective to our work and recommendations “...these decisions are not easy. They affect everyone, including us. We live here too.” The recommendations proposed are not a band-aid fix to check a box and move on. They are investments that will have a long-lasting, positive effect on every person who engages with and lives in Parkfairfax.

The role/function of the [Communications Committee](#) was used as a guide when we were reinstated as an official committee by the board in March 2023. We started with an assessment of the current state of the existing communications (comms) in PFFX. This included content creators, platform(s) used to deliver content, and the intended audience.

1. Overall Communications Status
 - a. Community information is available and being shared, however, some content is outdated or delayed, and the format and most platforms are basic with limited flexibility. Buildium is a feature rich platform but is severely underutilized.
 - b. PFFX residents continue to express frustration over the lack of organized, consistent, useful, timely communication.

2. Communicators
 - a. Board of Directors
 - b. Management Office
 - c. Maintenance
 - d. PFFX residents

3. Platforms
 - a. Weekly Email
 - i. Who manages this list?
 - ii. How are emails added/removed?
 - b. PFFX Website
 - i. Existing contract for WordPress support technician (\$/year) to handle technical requirements.
 - ii. Content added, removed, and maintained by PFFX staff (Dana Cross)
 - c. Monthly Forum Newsletter
 - i. Compiled and managed by PFFX staff (Dana Cross)
 - d. Buildium
 - i. PDF format is available on PFFX website, also with limited paper distribution.
 - ii. App used by residents to place work orders
 - iii. Managed by PFFX staff
 - e. PFFX Facebook
 - i. Official PFFX Facebook (almost never used)
 - ii. Unofficial resident group pages (owners page, residents page, parents page, buy/sell give-away page)—majority of resident engagement happens here

4. Recipients
 - a. Current residents & owners
 - b. Potential residents & owners
 - c. Employees
 - d. Vendors

Summary of Committee Actions

1. **Website Content Review**
 - a. Resulted in recommendations for:
 - i. Content that could be removed.
 - ii. Broken links.
 - iii. Suggested edits to existing content to simplify.

- iv. Content that should be reviewed by other committees for further guidance on whether it was still current/needed on the website.
- b. The website review was never followed up on and we are not entirely sure if all the issues were handled or what was done with the recommendations.

2. Survey of Residents

We gathered input from residents and owners on their preferred communication methods and frequency. We received approximately 280 responses (# of responses varied by question).

- Respondents like the current delivery platform and schedule of the **weekly newsletter, website, and the Forum**.
- There was a positive response to the addition of opt-in text messaging used for emergency purposes.
- Positive response in the survey to placement of tasteful ads as a revenue stream on the website or in the weekly email.

Recommendations

1. Hire a Communications Director or Manager

- Full time or part-time depending on budget, to oversee and handle all communications for the community (weekly email, monthly forum newsletter, website, Buildium messages, social media posts, etc.).
- Sample [job description](#) for this role. Ideally, this person would also have experience with updating and maintaining content on a WordPress website.
- PFFX staff person that would be familiar with the community and support the Director by communicating initiatives. Would also support the board by clearly communicating board goals and activities with residents. We fully realize the budget implications but feel the investment in this role will result in positive changes to the community.

2. Modernize the Weekly Email

- Very well received for the content and delivery schedule.
- Platform needs to evolve from a plain text-heavy email design to a modern newsletter that follows current business format. Two good examples of this design are the ALX Now and Mayor Justin Wilson's e-newsletters. (See *Example 1 *Example 2) Modern email newsletters use headers, columns, links to expanded information, and ads (ALX Now version). This layout lets the user quickly scan and click through to details of the content that is of interest to them. Use of the weekly email as a revenue stream was supported by many residents in the survey.

3. Prioritize Updating and Continually Maintaining the Website

- Users are frustrated with the website. It has outdated information (prior year pool hours) and content is hard to find. Layout could be improved upon.
- According to the survey results many residents would support the placement of tasteful ads on the website as a revenue stream.

4. Update the Forum Ad Structure

- People like the format and monthly delivery.
- This is our original revenue stream from ads, and it needs an update since it is now mostly digital. The text below is lifted from the website in the ad pricing page for the Forum. The highlight below needs to be updated to note it is distributed to the 1684 recipients via email as a viewable and downloadable PDF.

The.Parkfairfax.Forum.is.a.newsletter.serving.the.Parkfairfax.Condominium.Community;.Circulation.is.approximately.8806.with.7000.on_site.and.approximately.066.additional.in.the.surrounding.areas;.The.Forum.is.printed.on.a.77f.x.70f.double.page.format;.Each.page.is.therefore.02%.x.77;.All.terms?such.as.%.Page?7-0..page?etc.are.based.on.the.02%.x.77.page.size;..

5. Utilize Buildium to its Full Capabilities

- This property management software service Parkfairfax purchased is a feature rich platform that is not being fully utilized. There is a fiscal responsibility to show the return on investment for this purchase.
- Currently use the maintenance ticketing service.
- Also has email functions, text messaging (a positive comms addition in the survey results), and an online resident messaging community. There are multiple communication opportunities with Buildium.
- In addition to those services, the biggest benefit of this platform is reporting. The board and management will be able to see engagement stats they can share with PFFX staff and residents. In turn, data driven decision making will be the norm in achieving the organization s goals and mission.

We welcome the opportunity to review these recommendations with the board.

*Example 1



Victim of ‘suspicious death’ at
Four Mile Run Park identified
by Telemundo

Apr 26, 2024 03:50 pm | James Cullum



The body of the man found at Four Mile Run Park on Tuesday has been identified as Kevin Isaías of El Salvador by Telemundo 44, though

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We Welcome You To Join

Insight Memory Care Center and Silverado Alexandria Memory Care
A Social Day Club for individuals with early stage memory loss

Join us for our social day club promoting brain health for those living with early stage dementia.

DETAILS	LOCATION
May 7th - June 28th Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays 10am - 3pm	Silverado Alexandria Memory Care 2807 King Street Alexandria, VA 22302

CLICK HERE TO REGISTER
OR CALL 703-215-9110

*Example 2

The Council Connection

your connection to City Council by Mayor Justin M. Wilson

April 1, 2024

[View this newsletter in your web browser](#)

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A year ago, Alexandrians donated almost \$3 million to non-profit organizations addressing need in our community, all in one day!

[On April 24th, Spring2ACTion returns for the 14th straight year](#), with a goal to blow through last year's record and help