

Town of Durham Minutes and Agendas
Telecommunications Minutes
Telecommunications Committee
2009-12-14 7:00 pm
Durham Town Office

Geoff Leighton opened the meeting at 7:00 pm.

Members present Kris Koenig, Geoff Leighton, Milton Simon, and William St. Michel.

Secretary Deborah Larrabee

Guest: John Jenusaitis

Minutes November 23, 2009

Geoff Leighton moves to accept the minutes of November 23, 2009 as written. Second K. Koenig. 4-yes
0-no 0-abstain

Geoff Contacted different web hosting sites.

Geoff introduced John Jenusaitis who had submitted a resume to Geoff regarding the Website. J.

Jenusaitis Worked for a company that served the Brunswick Naval Air Station.

Also for review were copies of T.H. Creations quote dated February 2009.

Another contact was Todd Langhill. Mr. Langhill wanted to know what the committee was specifically looking for now. Geoff sent Mr. Langhill information.

Geoff suggested swapping out the current company Wild Pages for a local company to do the website.

K. Koenig felt our website was antiquated. Although our website is currently user friendly.

P. Lewis Spoke about Streaming Videos of our meetings on the Web.

The goal for tonight was to refine the current website using the T. H. Creations as a guideline or use T. H. Creations as proposed.

M. Simon asked if the pricing was still valid. The Committee would need to get new pricing.

T.H. Creations Review

Po Box 273

Auburn, Maine 04210.

Physical address; Lisbon Street, Lewiston, Maine

I. General Project Description

The existing website, found at www.durhamme.com, displays an inconsistent format and must be updated externally. The goal with this project is to bring the website inline with current web format rendering it both user and search engine friendly, and to develop the site within a content management system providing modern features and functionality for maintaining the site in-house. Using a modern CMS (Content Management System), the website could be easily updated in-house without special

software, FTP, or knowledge of HTML. The CMS automatically converts text entered into a rich text editor to XHTML for web display.

II. Our Proposal

Some new items suggested are the active image gallery, to highlight and showcase your area offerings.

Extras were:

- ◆◆ Google map locator with starting directions
- ◆◆ Active image gallery
- ◆◆ Web traffic reports
- ◆◆ Automatically updating sitemap
- ◆◆ Google map plug in – signal Google of changes

Standard features detailed:

Google map locator with starting directions: T.H. Creations, Inc will add a Google Map with an input field for visitors to enter their starting location. The script will automatically send them out to Google maps where they can print their own detailed directions to your location. Your location will already be identified to Google within the script that we add to your site. To see a sample Google map locator visit www.pinelandlumber.com and click on their ◆◆Directions◆◆ page menu.

Active image gallery: If your new website will employ a variety of photos, we can add the capability to add image galleries that use a light box effect to display the output file. All images added to a gallery will be displayed a thumbnails, but will open a larger view with a JavaScript that automatically adjusts to the viewing size and creates a light box effect. To see a sample light box effect, please visit

<http://www.uncleandys.com> and view one of their ◆◆Photo Galleries◆◆ pages. The back-end administrator will have the JavaScript light box effect programmed into the administrator so all images that get added to the gallery will automatically create a thumbnail and employ the light box effect.

Web Traffic Reports: T.H. Creations will install and set-up Mint, a web tracking software directly on the hosting server. This is a one-time installation and set-up fee. This software differs from the traditional web statistics report in that it is easy to use and provide intelligent information that is easy to interpret. Traditional web traffic stats do not sift out SE robots visiting your website, or the hits generated by the website administrator, Mint does. Mint also displays the keywords that people used to find your website, the referring address where the visitor was before visiting your website, displays peak traffic days and time. If you would like to see Mint in action, check out our web stats at

www.thcreations.com/mint.

Why would you want Mint web reporting? It is a great way to measure your online promotional efforts and track the results. It also provides useful information about how people are finding your website and what keywords or phrases people are using to find your kind of service and products. It can also help you to see where you◆◆re getting the best for your bucks if you are paying for advertising.

Google Sitemap Plug-in: T.H. Creations will install and set-up a PHP script that will automatically notify and update the Google search engine index every time something is added, or changed within your website.





Why would you want a Google Sitemap Plug-in? To increase your website search engine ranking (increase your chances of being found online).

Automatically updating sitemap: Updateable Site Map: T.H. Creations will add the capability of an


automatically updating sitemap within the CMS website. As new page are added or obsolete pages deleted, the sitemap page would automatically update to reflect the current site architecture.

Why would you want a sitemap? Since there are three standard ways that people navigate within any website, adding the sitemap could be useful to those who use this method for finding what they seek quickly.

III. Deluxe Features/ Options:


Newsletter/ E-gram: We will recreate a subscribable newsletter function to work in conjunction with the CMS website. T.H. Creations, Inc will add the ability to retrieve subscribers email addresses and store them for future use within the CMS website. Through the same website administrator we will add the ability to create a newsletter. Upon publishing the newsletter the information will automatically be sent to all stored subscribers and create an archived copy on the website for others to view. Any newsletters created will automatically be styled to duplicate the design of your new website and will include links back to your website, including an   unsubscribe   option.

From the website administrator you will have the options to manager your subscribers.

Price: \$250.00 

Currently the Newsletter is mailed to everyone. It would be nice to have the newsletter available on e-mail as well.

Online Form(s): The current website employs a form for retrieving event information from its membership and viewers. We will have to recreate the form to work within the CMS system. If we rewrite them within the CMS we can easily modify, add, delete, and update going forward. However, unless you know PHP and HTML, you will not be able to update these forms in-house as part of the CMS.

Price: \$250.00 

D. Larrabee stated that online forms would help people when applying for Planning Board or Board of Appeals. Geoff thought that Warren Hatch the Administrative Assistant would have suggestions too.

Calendar of Events: The existing website also employs a calendar of events on the home page within a right sidebar and a calendar view of monthly events. This section of the website is currently maintained manually using tables. We suggest changing the format to tie into the CMS. T.H. Creations, Inc will provide an updateable, preformatted section for adding events listings. Events listing can be auto-expiring so that past events no longer show up on public display. T.H. Creations, Inc. will format the events listings to show up in a specific section(s) and be displayed in a styled form. All event listing will automatically create a link to the full details including a picture, if applicable and will be auto-archived. Geoff inquired if D. Larrabee was comfortable with the posting of the calendar and other related postings. D. Larrabee stated the posting works fine.

There are some aspects that Bob Becker currently does that D. Larrabee cannot.

D. Larrabee corresponds with Shannon for current events at the beginning of each month. Both Shannon and Debbie work with D. Griffiths who does the newsletter.

Question what does code the CSS mean.

Other highlights:

Content: All site content/copy is the responsibility of Town of Durham. T.H. Creations will populate (add the text) to the initial pages as long as an electronic copy is provided. In this case, we can retrieve the majority of the content from the existing website.

Training Offered: T.H. Creations, Inc. will provide 1 hour of hands-on training to the user(s) that will be administering the website within one month of site completion. A one-hour training session will walk through the basics, provide question and answer time, and practice hands-on tasks. The hands on approach will include: changing content, uploading images, deleting obsolete data, adding or changing links, email addresses and related functions for maintaining the site. We will also provide written documentation for performing the basic maintenance functions of the website.

The server for T. H. Creations has resource for Streamline Video. They have an outside company that does the streamlining.

III. Additional Considerations and Peripheral Costs

Hosting, Bandwidth and Storage**:

The existing website is hosted by Wow Pages. T.H. Creations, Inc. also provides hosting service. For this proposed website, our basic hosting package would be sufficient to house your website. Our basic package fee \$199.95 annually prepaid.

Annual Recurring Hosting Fee \$199.95 per year ❖V cancel at any time – See terms & conditions

* Includes up to 5 email addresses with hosting account

Initial Cost None ❖V no hosting setup fee

Annual Recurring Hosting Fee \$199.95 per year ❖V cancel at any time – See terms & conditions

Currently Wild Pages hosts the Website. Another company wrote the website for them.

When the website needed updating Wild Pages is hard to reach and then is slow in correcting or updating.

P. Lewis missing from the quote is offsite backup capabilities.

Geoff stated a local Website Host from Durham would be beneficial. This person would be familiar with the town and the town's needs.

J. Jenusaitis suggested Go-Daddy: Self done. With this type of website question of safety, security and privacy issues.

P. Lewis inquired about a webmaster to over see the Website and Town Channel. Be able to request updates, etc. P. Lewis suggested maybe somebody from the Telecommunications Committee do this.

Originally back in the Spring Geoff talked with several Web Hosting Companies. T. H. Creations only company to submit a written proposal.

M. Simon suggested that T. H. Creations be used as a guideline for an RFP. M. Simon felt that RFP's would be important to see what companies are out there.

T. H. Creations is willing to revamp the Durham website with up to date technology.

The new website host will need train and work with Debbie, Dave and Shannon.

The Committee also needs to look long term to when the town will administer their own website. One obstacle will be volunteers vs. paid to do the project. Plus the website will need to remain user friendly. Geoff feels a paid person is necessary. Right now there is a person paid to update website, town channel and newsletter. A paid person would stay longer.

Geoff asked J. Jenusaitis and M. Simon to create a Request for Proposal. Then reviews of the RFPs as proposed edit then send out to vendors. Chief St. Michel stated that because the request is under \$5,000.00 a quote would work. D. Larrabee read from the purchasing policy which confirmed this suggestion. After review recommendations could be given to the Board of Selectmen to review.

Chief St. Michel asked J. Jenusaitis about his suggestions. Was J. Jenusaitis advocating for a user friendly website and not worry about a person being readily accessible. The wait 5 years or so and when technology changes update again. Are there questions and information that should be added to the RFPs?

When this website is has been redone. The Town Office will be trained as well as other persons.

K. Koenig spoke about Videos.

K. Koenig would like to see high school students make community videos earning their community service time.

Geoff has met with the school librarian who currently does the video club at the Durham School. Geoff will send an e-mail out to members inviting them to the next meeting. Also Geoff will talk with Mr. Pidden about contacts for Freeport High School.

K. Koenig also stated that even if there were adults interested in videoing events, areas, etc. that would be fine too.

Geoff stated there is such a gap between middle school and high school this project can be difficult to do. Any high school student from any town could do the videoing of Durham. High School students may be more apt to video if a plan is in place.

D. Larrabee is serving on a committee to demo the old school. Mrs. Larrabee suggested a documentary be done on the old and new school. This will be happening in June.

Geoff asked that members review the Budget for 2009-2010 and make suggestions.

W. Hatch asked for two radios for Public Works from Franchise monies. Frequency coordination is coming out of roads budget. Questioned how much for radios. Chief St. Michel suggested \$350.00-\$450.00. This will be a VHF frequency. Monies are left over from Telecommunications this year may use for radios.

M. Simon questioned about purchases for the school. S. Welsh has been asked for a quote. She is requesting franchise money to pick up cost of broadcasting RSU meetings.

Budget money set aside over the last three years for Durham equipment has been earmarked as such. Future monies are in question.

Chief St. Michel stated he had heard the video person wants to charge the RSU for the videoing of the RSU meetings as this not Freeport only anymore. This may be the reason for a charge.

Cameras on hand that are not being used anymore. Geoff heard from Will Pidden that these cameras are planning to be used in the new school. M. Simon wants to be sure that the existing equipment will be used in Durham before budgeting more monies for new equipment. Geoff stated he will ask the Principal to the next meeting to talk about the school budget.

M. Simon suggested that if the school will not be getting franchise money perhaps could be used for Eureka.

P. Lewis asked if the new school will have a fiber feed. Geoff stated yes and a point of origination. Currently the school is receiving a DVD of the RSU meeting which is being shown on the Durham Channel on Thursday nights.

Durham Eureka Community Center

Chief St. Michel stated that the Dept. of Labor required that the upstairs be closed. The reason is the doors upstairs do not meet code and the stairs require rails both sides. State suggested a locked door for the communications room and list as storage. Area with no floor needs to be closed off. Dept. of Labor is recommending renovations be done before using upstairs. Suggested price of three to five thousand to finish upstairs.

Geoff suggested there were two or more issues:

1. Joe has been paid. Geoff will check with Warren.
2. Long term: Upstairs could be an origination point. The switches could be located down stairs.
3. Check with new Eureka committee to see what needs to be done. Geoff will find out whom? Maybe Pearl Scribner.
- 4.

Next meeting will be on January 25th at 7:00 pm Town Office.

Secretary,
Deborah Larrabee