

Appleton Communications Committee
Meeting Minutes: Introductory Meeting 1.25.06

Meeting location: Town Hall

In Attendance:

Taylor Vaughan, Kal Winer, Than Porter, Peter Sandefur, Jane Shields, Marydale Abernathy

1. Selectman Taylor Vaughan thanked the group for volunteering and described the initiative that led to the formation of this committee:

Committee Purpose:

Formed in December, 2005. "Be it resolved that the Board of Selectmen of Appleton, Maine, shall form a Communications Committee to advise and recommend to the Selectmen new and improved methods of reciprocal information sharing and communication between the public (residents and business owners) and town government and to advise the Selectmen and other Town officials on managing the Town's growing information-handling needs and any supporting networks or information management procedures or systems."

Taylor gave a broad description of existing modes of communications and/or lack thereof [example: availability of meeting minutes for the Board of Selectmen meetings], and inspired the committee to brainstorm ways to improve our community communications as a whole by involving a wider range of people in town business, community happenings and decision-making.

2. Taylor has created the town website and email list to provide a central place for town info and meeting minutes, but has hopes that this committee could come up with ways to maintain these, and improve all communications, both electronic and non-electronic, as many townspeople do not have internet access or have interest in this mode of communication.

3. Kal suggested that Taylor, as Town Selectman could let the committee move ahead on it's own steam and serve as advisor rather than being a core member of the committee. Taylor humbly and graciously stepped down and removed himself and Walter from the committee member list.

4. There was conversation about existing modes of communication, and thoughts expressed about possibilities of joining with school newsletter initiatives, websites, and several questions were raised about the privacy of town email lists. All these items could be agenda items for future meetings.

5. Taylor asked for chairperson volunteers and Kal suggested a rotating chair. Marydale accepted the role of first acting Chairperson, and we agreed that a stint of 3-4 months would be acceptable before passing responsibility to the next committee member.

6. Discussion on frequency of meetings: The group agreed that once a month would be adequate for now, and Than offered his classroom at school for the next meeting. We also agreed to meet the First Wednesday of the month, and therefore set the time of 7pm, Feb. 1st, 2006 as the first official committee meeting. Marydale asked for agenda items to be emailed for the next meeting.