

SOUTH BAY CITIES COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Social Media Working Group

Minutes

Thursday, April 9, 2015

Attendees: Stephanie Kou (Manhattan Beach), Jesse Reyes (Redondo Beach), Kit Fox (Rancho Palos Verdes), Alexa Davis (Rolling Hills Estates), Calvin Ko and Hillary Theyer (Torrance), Pamela Manning (County of Los Angeles), Jeffrey Robinson (Area G Disaster Management), Medha Paliwal (West Basin Municipal Water District), Chandler Shields, Marilyn Lyon, Aaron Baum and Kim Fuentes (SBCCOG)

---- AGENDA ----

I. Introductions

- *New attendees provide a brief overview of their services*
 - **Aaron Baum** – Looking to leverage SBCCOG studies and programs via social media.
 - **Stephanie Kou** – With Parks and Recreation department; City launched Facebook, Instagram and Twitter accounts for individual departments. Posts themed content on a weekly basis for Parks and Recreation social media accounts.
 - **Medha Paliwal** – Works with media in Public Affairs for West Basin Metropolitan Water District.
 - **Calvin Ko** – Works with Torrance's Water department – looking into social media options to promote water conservation programs.
 - **Alexa Davis** – With Rolling Hills Estates' Public Information department; using Nextdoor but no other social media platforms at the moment.

II. Guest Speakers:

- **Medha Paliwal** – *Public Information Specialist at West Basin Municipal Water District (West Basin)*
 - West Basin Municipal Water District is a wholesaler of water to retailers in the South Bay.
 - Drought promotion is currently at the forefront of West Basin's social media focus.
 - Recently expanded social media to:
 - Facebook
 - Instagram
 - LinkedIn
 - Pinterest
 - Twitter
 - YouTube
 - Impetus to get onto social media: people were talking about West Basin on social media and they did not have a presence.
 - Staff browsed social media platforms and found that a conversation about West Basin was taking place online.
 - Lead to Board adopting a policy and opening accounts to interact and communicate with the public.
 - Policy is to delete inappropriate comments and discuss how to react/engage with public comments on social media platforms.
 - Currently, organizing and categorizing Pinterest account (e.g. ocean friendly garden workshops, rain barrel giveaways, facility tours, etc.)
 - Learned valuable lessons with YouTube concerning account information records, archiving login information, and being locked out of the account.
 - In-house graphics designer handles all editing for media content, including social media (e.g. YouTube videos)
 - Social media goals:
 - Expand awareness of West Basin.
 - Enhance West Basin's reputation.

- Provide updates to public.
- Make info easier to find and share.
- Engage in two-way communication and enhance channels for feedback.
- Targeted audience includes public agencies, elected officials, residents, and others.
- Social media content includes awards, customer announcements, conservation tips, drought updates, and other media releases shared via other methods.
- Twitter hashtags that are currently popular in West Basin's posts:
 - #CADrought, #water, #watereducation, #WaterWednesday, #TourThursday
- Tracks URL analytics for posts using bit.ly shortening tool.
- Distributes printed materials with social media platforms advertised, encouraging the public to share content with West Basin.
- Uses a Word document for the social media content calendar, which also serves as an archive for all social media content.
 - No formal policy within West Basin for archiving, processing social media content.

III. Recap of Activity Since Last Meeting

- *mySidewalk*
 - **Alexa Davis and Calvin Ko** – Familiar with other cities using Granicus and SpeakUp, which appears to be similar to the “all things civic” platform that mySidewalk employs.
 - **Group consensus** – Monitor the tool's growth in Southern California to see if it picks up traction amongst the communities.
- *General Assembly:*
 - *Continuing the conversation: monthly question posted on SBCCOG's website*
 - **Chandler Sheilds** – Posting a monthly question on SBCCOG's website, seeking to engage public comment (i.e. conversation) after the General Assembly; public is encouraged to respond via social media platforms (Twitter or Facebook).

IV. LinkedIn Group

- *Report on usage*
 - **Chandler Sheilds** – Engagement is steady and new members are continuing to be added; members are encouraged to post ideas for new speakers.

V. Other Issues of Interest

- *Experience with Nextdoor?*
 - *Would we like a rep to speak at a future meeting?*
 - **Alexa Davis** – Rolling Hills Estates has 500 followers for City account on Nextdoor; can only post, cannot see “neighborhood discussions”.
 - **Kit Fox** – Rancho Palos Verdes has a City account as well with 1400 followers.
 - **Group consensus** - Look to schedule a representative from Nextdoor to speak at a future meeting.
- *Social media vendor showcase at our meetings?*
 - **Hillary Theyer** - Useful with a screening process beforehand, ensuring vendors/businesses are useful/familiar for the municipal/government audience.
 - **Group consensus** – Recommend vendors for consideration that the group would like to hear speak at future meetings via LinkedIn group.

VI. Next Meeting

- *Does the second Thursday every other month at 3:00 P.M. (see schedule below) work for us?*
 - **Group consensus** – Yes.
 - Next meeting – June 11, 2015

- *Possible agenda items:*
 - *New guest speakers*
 - **Alexa Davis and Hillary Theyer** – A series of attorneys to speak from different perspectives (e.g. labor law, HR, recruitment) about the legal implications of using social media.
 - **Aaron Baum** – An expert on analytics for mining the significance behind social media engagement.
 - **Jeffrey Robinson** – Recommends looking into analytical tool, Node Excel, which breaks down data into an Excel spreadsheet format.