

Town of Winchendon
109 Front Street, Winchendon, MA 01475

Communications Committee Minutes

March 3, 2025
4:30 p.m. – Town Hall 4th Floor Conference Room

Members Present: Inanna Arthen, Dave Connor, Guy Corbosiero, Greg Vine, Shaina Cunningham, Katie Johnson, Amanda Phillips

Absent: None

Others Present: None

Meeting called to order by Chair Inanna Arthen at 4:36 p.m.

No members of the public had comments.

Motion to nominate Amanda Phillips as Vice Chair made by Dave Connor, Greg Vine seconded. No other nominations. Approved unanimously.

Motion to nominate Katie Johnson as Secretary made by Greg Vine, Guy Corbosiero seconded. No other nominations. Approved unanimously.

Motion to approve minutes of January 6, 2025 made by Greg Vine, Katie Johnson seconded, approved.

No additions to the agenda.

Continuing discussion of primary goals and objectives:

Shaina Cunningham said that the Community Communications group will be meeting monthly starting next month. Community Partnerships meeting is bi-monthly. Discussing how to effectively move forward with the events calendar, and how to streamline communications among partners. There is a Google form for partners to fill in their events, for groups that don't use a shareable Google calendar of their own. Need to talk with the schools and the PTO about pushing out school events on the WPS platforms like ParentSquare. Working with Alexis Chanthachack at the Beals and Jill Sackett at the UU church. Keep identifying gaps in who needs to be looped in, such as the Clark Memorial YMCA, and Winchendon Housing. Define who is not yet at the table and needs to be.

Currently finishing the behind-the-scenes work, getting ready to roll the calendar out to the community as a whole.

Will be able to "toggle" different calendars, decide which will be on the new town website.

Greg: should Communications Committee meet with the Community Connector team?

Shaina: Need a community buy-in to a single centralized location. We don't want to ask people to add another task to what they have to do. Some groups in town have said they're not interested in being part of it.

Dave: Platform is important. You can have a municipal calendar, and an events/community calendar but they need to all be on one tool. We need to get people to go to one place to get it all.

Courier: can be like "Snopes," do fact checking. Need concise summaries, with bullet points, easy to follow. Possibly an "audiobook" version that people can listen to while driving, etc. People have long commutes. Do a Courier podcast. North Central Chamber of Commerce has a podcast. We might be able to get on that.

Have a theme of "community", topics on Power of Community. Find things people can rally around like land preservation. Add this to the What's Up Winchendon series.

Greg: connect with Steve Wendell at the WGCW internet radio in Gardner.

Katie: Transportation project funding is uncertain due to pending override vote. We have scheduling software. Getting the word out about ride availability. The system is not used much on Saturdays. We're trying not to duplicate what MART is doing, but be the "last mile" for people at the points that MART stops (getting people from home to MART stop, or MART stop to destination). Aiming to help people access healthy food, services, etc.

Override information and misinformation: we need to spread information widely. Have a fact sheet/FAQ. Involve active community members who have influence. Need voices of authority. Need to be sure information going out is really accurate. Liz Latoria at the schools is reaching out to find a platform for presentations and disseminating information about the override and the school budget.

Need to clearly tell people exactly what the implication is for their own taxes, what the real actual cost will be to them. Also need to focus on the benefits of what will be lost with no override—monetary value as well as everything else.

Next meeting: April 7, 2025, 4:30 p.m.

Adjourned, 5:55 p.m.

Minutes approved by: Inanna Arthur, Chair