

Vision Implementation Committee
May 28, 2009
Minutes (Approved 6/11/09)

Present: Kirk Hazlett, chair; Tim Bowman, Jonathan Mascia, Sara Oaklander, Jennifer Page, Paul Solomon

- Administrivia:
 - Kirk convened the meeting at 7:05 p.m.
 - The minutes from May 14, 2009 were approved unanimously.
 - Town Day report:

The day went very well. Jonathan, Tim, Sara, Paul and Jennifer all took their turns at greeting the public and distributing Meet Belmont flyers. We did not find it a convenient venue for discussing the vision or recruiting new members.
 - Membership of VIC
 - 4 Kirk raised a question from Sandra Curro concerning who the VIC appointee by the Town Moderator would be. We agreed that once we have recruited new members, we would designate one of them and ask that Mike Widmer appoint that person.
 - 4 Sara has identified a possible recruit from her precinct and will pursue the matter.
 - 4 How do we help newcomers learn about VIC and our work? If Town Day is not the right venue, what about Meet Belmont? We discussed the possibility that we have a special exhibit space for VIC, perhaps in a different location from the “regular” exhibitors (in the front hallway? in the exhibit area just as you enter?) which -- with some fanfare -- attracts attention, especially that of newcomers. Perhaps this is a place to have materials about town government, civic involvement, VIC projects, neighbors network, etc.
 - 4 Revision of recruitment flyer for Town Meeting: Discussion revolved around such questions as whether the flyer should be ½ page or a whole page, should the vision statement – or a portion of it -- be printed on the back, should we include the “definitions” of “vision”, how to keep the message brief and focused. We agreed that it would be printed on a full sheet in color and the vision would be printed on the back; that we would keep two of the definitions, substituting for one a new definition proposed by Paul, and otherwise modified and shorted the text to everyone’s satisfaction. Tim offered to arrange for the flyer to be printed and, generously, to pay for it himself, since we felt it extravagant to ask the Town to undertake the printing of 300 copies.

4 Civic Engagement Initiative

4.1 We reviewed Paul Solomon's draft proposal regarding how to enhance citizens' engagement in Town Government. Discussion included these points:

- 8 We need to develop information materials to disseminate. These might include such things as the role of each "branch" of government, job descriptions of elected offices, organization chart of town government. These materials might be considered a "primer" on Town government.
- 8 Proposals for dissemination:
 - o Print the materials and mail them to residents
 - 9 Put the materials on the Town website.
 - 9 Disseminate at Meet Belmont (perhaps by the Town Clerk at her voter registration desk.)
 - 9 Provide distribution copies at library, for real estate agencies.
- 8 Proposed "target audience": Seniors at Belmont High School. Proposal that we offer to lead a one-hour seminar on Town Government, including how and why to vote; or integrate with an on-going civics course. Need to connect with Mike Harvey for possibilities.
- 8 Collaborate with League of Women Voters on developing and disseminating materials.
- 8 Organize social/informational events: "Meet Your Town Meeting Representatives" for each precinct.
- 8 Citizen Herald: Contribute a piece on Town Government for publication in the annual free edition that is distributed town-wide.
- 8 Citizen Herald: Consider writing a monthly article "Spotlight on Town Government" that treats a process or an office or a profile of an individual office-holder.
- 8 Adult Education: Offer a one or two session "course" on town government for newcomers – learn how our town government is organized, then meet and hear from several people who are or have had that role.
- 8 How to run for office? Hold a special evening for folks who are contemplating running for Town Meeting or for a town-wide position.
- 8

4.2 Moving forward: We agreed that at our next meeting we would spend some time developing a plan for moving forward on this project.

- 5 Assignment: For our next meeting, we agreed that we would all examine the new League of Women Voters website to see what materials they have already developed. Go to: <http://belmont.ma.lwvnet.org/index.html>
- 6 Overview/ Update of Meet Belmont: Jennifer said that pieces were falling into place. Jonathan will be taking over most of the

communications with exhibitors from Laurie; a "Save the Date" notice has already been sent to exhibitors; Sara is taking care of the post cards to newcomers; Jennifer has secured funding from Waverly Landscape/Belmont Car Wash again; Kirk will draft some articles for the paper. Later, we will need to focus on getting out flyers, but our "advance" flyers at Town Day have probably helped a lot.

7 Next meeting: June 11, 2009

8 Adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Page
Secretary Pro Tem