



MONTGOMERY VILLAGE FOUNDATION, INC.

10120 APPLE RIDGE ROAD
MONTGOMERY VILLAGE, MARYLAND 20886-1000

(301) 948-0110 FAX (301) 990-7071 www.montgomeryvillage.com

January 31, 2018

MEMORANDUM

TO: Communications Committee

FROM: Mike Conroy, Assistant Executive Vice President

SUBJECT: Communications Committee Meeting

The next meeting of the Communications Committee will be held at **7 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 7, 2018** at the MVF Office, 10210 Apple Ridge Road. You can enter the building using the front entrance, we will be in the Training Room.

Attached is an agenda and meeting packet for your review. Please let me know your attendance plans as soon as possible by calling 240-243-2331 or e-mailing mconroy@mvf.org.

MC
Enclosure



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**MVF COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE
Wednesday, Feb. 7, 2018
7 p.m.
Montgomery Village Foundation
10120 Apple Ridge Road, Training Room**

AGENDA

- I. Residents Time
- II. Call to Order
- III. Approval of Minutes for Nov. 1, 2017 (Attachment 1)
- IV. Discuss Letters to the Editor Policy (Attachment 2)
- V. Gather feedback for future of Communications
- VI. Adjourn

MVF Communications Committee

November 1, 2017

A regular meeting of the Montgomery Village Foundation Communications Committee was held at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, November 1, 2017 at the Montgomery Village Foundation Administration Facility, Montgomery Village, Maryland.

Members Present

Melanie O'Brien, Chairman
Glenn Gargan, MVF Board Liaison
Edna Miller
Jeannie Pizzonia
Jennifer Scherhauser

Members Absent

John Llewellyn
Christine Scott
Brian Price

Others Present

Mike Conroy, MVF Assistant Executive Vice President
Cynthia Bangali, Recording Secretary

1. Residents' Time

The comments of residents are recorded separately.

2. Call Meeting to Order

Mr. Conroy, MVF Assistant Executive Vice President presided until Ms. O'Brien arrived. He called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m.

3. Approve Minutes of the August 9, 2017 Meeting

Ms. Scherhauser moved to accept the minutes of the August 9, 2017 meeting as amended. The motion was seconded and passed. Ms. Pizzonia abstained.

4. Discuss "What's Your Story?" Branding Campaign

Mr. Conroy thanked the committee for all of their work on the development of the "What's Your Story?" branding campaign. He shared that the first interview had been conducted with longtime residents, Dick & Teresa Wright. Mr. Conroy emphasized that the Wright's have

worked tirelessly on service in the community particularly with youth. The committee viewed the video. There was consensus that the video was well done and was representative of what the campaign was designed to do. The committee also discussed consideration of inclusion of the date that the interview is conducted as well as keeping the interview questions posted for a longer period of time on the screen.

Mr. Conroy shared with the committee that the interviewees were prepped in advance and that the entire video shoot was about an hour in length and that it was eventually condensed into 10 minutes as the final product. The committee discussed considerations for potential next interviewees. Mr. Conroy noted that the Foundation had received about six indications of interest from the community as a result of advertisement in the Village News. Ms. O'Brien suggested the Vice Principal at Goshen Elementary School. She shared that the Vice Principal there had been in the first graduating class of Goshen Elementary School. Ms. Pizzonia emphasized the importance of making sure that there is broad representation of residents from different occupations, ethnicities, ages and gender.

5. Review Communications Policies

a. Letter to the Editor Policy (Attachment 2a)

The committee reviewed and discussed the Letter to the Editor Policy. No changes were requested.

b. Online Privacy Policy (Attachment 2b)

The committee reviewed and discussed the Online Privacy Policy. No changes were requested.

c. VN Advertising Agreement (Attachment 2c)

The committee reviewed and discussed the VN Advertisement Agreement. It was noted that the agreement includes online advertisements as well and is currently working.

d. VN Collections Policy (Attachment 2d)

The committee reviewed and discussed the VN Collections Policy. No changes were requested.

e. VN Editorial Policy (Attachment 2e)

The committee reviewed and discussed the VN Editorial Policy. No changes were requested.

f. Website Rules & Regulations/Terms of Use (Attachment 2f)

The committee reviewed and discussed the Website Rules and Regulations/Terms of Use. No changes were requested.

6. Social Media Stats (Attachment 3)

Mr. Conroy reviewed the social media statistics for the Montgomery Village Foundation website. He noted that the increase of users had been slow and steady over the year. Mr. Conroy pointed out that the increase of usage in June was attributed to residents looking for summer activities. Ms. Miller inquired about the status of outreach to residents to increase email addresses. Mr. Conroy responded that they are still in discussion internally about marketing and working together with the MVF Recreation Department. Ms. Scherhauser asked about how long people are on the website. Mr. Conroy noted that they can access this data point to explore it further.

Ms. O'Brien encouraged exploring the use of hashtags as another way to engage with residents and increase social media usage. Mr. Conroy noted that they are in discussion with the MVF Recreation Department about this. Ms. Pizzonia emphasized the importance of making sure that the different segments of the senior population, particularly those who are newly retiring and tend to be more tech savvy, are being engaged as well.

7. Adjournment of Meeting

Ms. Pizzonia moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:58 p.m. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:58 p.m. The reports, authorizations, and other documents presented at the meeting have been initialed for identification and attached hereto or filed in the offices of the Montgomery Village Foundation

Approved: _____
MVF Communications Committee Chairperson

_____/s/_____
Cynthia Bangali
Recording Secretary



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January 31, 2018

MEMORANDUM

TO: Communications Committee

FROM: Mike Conroy, Assistant Executive Vice President

SUBJECT: Letters to the Editor Policy

As a matter of due diligence, each year the Communications Committee reviews the Communications policies, which outline and guide online activity, print media, editorial submission and advertisements and collections. At the November 1, 2017 meeting, these policies were reviewed with no noted changes or previous concern or discussion to initiate change.

Since the meeting, staff has received requests to look at the Letters to the Editor Policy and/or this section of the *Village News* based on the belief that one resident was monopolizing the section to call into question actions taken by a particular homes corporation.

2017 Letters to the Editor statistics

Letters to the Editor: 41	LTE regarding HOA issues: 21
VN issues containing LTE: 21/24	WHC: 18 (13 by one resident)
LTE authored by one resident: 15	Other: 3
LTE authored by other residents: 26	LTE regarding MVF/misc issues: 20

**5 additional letters were received and were not printed/did not adhere to the current Letters to the Editor Policy.*

Given the use of this section in the *Village News* by residents, several options present themselves for discussion:

1. No change in policy and keep Letters to the Editor section in the *Village News*.
2. Make changes to the Letters to the Editor Policy further clarifying the type of content that will be published (per attachment or variation thereof).
3. Recommend removing the Letters to the Editor section from the *Village News* to the MVF Board of Directors.

Action Needed: Discuss options for policy change, section removal or retention as is. Make recommended motion for change or removal (if any) to MVF Board of Directors.

MC
Attachment

MONTGOMERY VILLAGE FOUNDATION, INC.
MONTGOMERY VILLAGE NEWS
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR POLICY

1. The *Montgomery Village News* Letters to the Editor section is a community forum for Montgomery Village residents and/or property owners. In addition, at the Editor's discretion, the *Montgomery Village News* may print letters of appropriate interest to residents from others, including representatives of local schools, governments and businesses. Campaign letters are prohibited, except for Montgomery Village Foundation and Village homes corporation elections. The views expressed in the Letters to the Editor section are those of the authors of the letters and not necessarily those of the Montgomery Village Foundation (MVF) or its Board of Directors.
2. The *Montgomery Village News* will make every effort to publish all letters received during the weeks prior to publication [that meet the criteria of this policy](#).
3. ~~Typed~~ All letters ([typed, handwritten or and e-mailed](#)) must be received no later than 5 p.m. on the Monday prior to publication and distribution, ~~while handwritten letters must be received no later than noon on the Friday, one week prior to publication.~~ When a holiday occurs on a deadline Monday, Letters to the Editor must be received no later than noon on the subsequent Tuesday prior to the Friday publication and distribution.
4. Letters must bear the writer's name, address and telephone number for verification purposes. [E-mailed letters should contain the subject line "Letter to the Editor."](#) The sole use of pen names, initials or the complete omission of a signature will eliminate a letter from consideration from publication. A request from the author to withhold the name or mark the letter anonymous will eliminate the letter from consideration.
5. All letters are subject to condensation or deferral to the next issue by the editor for space considerations, if absolutely necessary. Editor is to so indicate any condensations.
6. All letters may not exceed 300 words. Longer letters will be eliminated from consideration for publication in the *Village News*. As time permits, the writers may be notified and given the opportunity to shorten the letter for future publication. Letters exceeding 300 words which meet all other criteria of this policy may be published on the MVF website.
7. The *Village News* respects the privacy of individuals and residents; letters should not contain references to specific persons, except when endorsing candidates for MVF or Village homes corporation elections or referencing a previously published article with a byline.
8. Letters submitted by an author regarding the same topic must present new information or opinions; repetitive submissions and/or form letters submissions will only be printed once.
- 8.9. Letters should be in reference to or contain information about topics relatable to all Montgomery Village residents. Letters addressed to or specifically about homes corporation or condominium association business and affairs will not be printed and may be directed to those association boards of directors when appropriate.
- 9.10. The Letters to the Editor section is not a forum for extensive debates; MVF encourages residents to use other avenues such as facebook and twitter for timely discussion.

~~10. All e-mail is subject to this policy. The e-mail subject line must read "Letter to the Editor."~~

- ~~• All e-mail letters must include the writer's full name, address and telephone number for verification.~~
- ~~• As with letters delivered to the MVF Office in person or by the U.S. Postal Service, the *Montgomery Village News* will make every effort to publish all letters received prior to the publication deadline.~~

11. MVF retains the right to respond to letters to the editor addressing specific issues involving it in the form of editor's notes or other methods at its discretion, ~~and extends the same opportunities to homeowner or condominium association boards regarding letters specifically aimed at those boards.~~

12. The Director of Communications, in his/her sole discretion, reserves the right to withhold from publication of inflammatory, slanderous, libelous, or lewd material, or material which may be an invasion of privacy, material deemed in bad taste and inconsistent with *Montgomery Village News* editorial policy, or other language which opens MVF to potential legal liability, and limit the number of letters on a given subject when the number is so large it presents a problem.

December 6, 1983.

Approved as revised by MVF Board of Directors - June 25, 1992

Approved as revised by MVF Board of Directors - October 23, 1997

Approved as revised by MVF Board of Directors - September 23, 1999

Approved as revised by MVF Board of Directors - May 26, 2005

Approved as revised by MVF Board of Directors - December 8, 2010

Approved as revised by MVF Board of Directors - December 14, 2012