



MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 18, 2023

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers
Dave Perrault, City Administrator

FROM: Luke Cardona, Senior Communications Coordinator

SUBJECT: City Newsletter Standard Operating Procedures

Budgeted Amount:
N/A

Actual Amount:
N/A

Funding Source:
N/A

Council Should Consider

Council should discuss then answer the questions below in order for the Senior Communications Coordinator to draft a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for the City newsletter.

Background

When the full-time communications coordinator started in April 2023, there were no Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) in place for the creation of the Arden Hills Notes, the City’s newsletter. With the addition of three new Council members (one being appointed Council liaison to the Communications Committee) and a new, full-time Communications staff member, the creation of the City newsletter may have changed slightly from previous staff and Council and/or should improve based upon what was previously done. Creating an SOP to formalize the City newsletter process will bring both staff and Council in alignment on creation of the newsletter.

Discussion

Questions to be answered by City Council:

1. What should City Council’s overall involvement be in the newsletter?

2. **What types of topics should be included often in the newsletter?** (Upcoming events, parks and recreation events, Council benchmarks, new businesses, etc.)
3. **Who should be requested to submit newsletter topics?** (Department directors, all staff, residents, Council?)
4. The goal is for the newsletter to be sent to the printer the last week of each month. **Does Council support a deadline of the first Friday of each month to submit topic suggestions?** (i.e. Friday, October 6 would be the deadline to submit topics for the November newsletter)
5. Regarding City Councilmember suggested topics, **who has the final say on whether a topic gets included?** (Council liaison, City Admin, etc.)
6. **How should Council provide feedback regarding the newsletter?** (Council Liaison, City Admin, etc.)
7. After reviewing Attachment A, you will find that most of our neighboring cities have little involvement from their City Council members when creating their newsletters. Still, some do and even have articles written by Council members. The City of Maplewood has Council members take turns writing one article per edition. The Mayor writes one in January, and then each month after a different Councilmember writes one, and the cycle repeats itself. Arden Hills City Council used to do something similar to this until around 2018, when that was transitioned away from. **Does the Council have a desire to write articles for the newsletter?** And if written, **what would be allowed or not allowed in a Council-written article?**
8. Just before the newsletter is sent to the printer, it goes through multiple proofreading reviews. **Who should be part of the final review/proofreading process?**
9. **Who has the absolute final say before the newsletter is sent to the printer?**

Budget Impact

N/A

Attachments

Attachment A – Document with information from 19 neighboring cities with self-reported information about their own newsletter processes.