

**City of Darien**  
**Minutes of the Administrative/Finance Committee**  
**January 6, 2020**

---

The Meeting was called to order by Chairwoman/Aldерwoman Sullivan at 6:00 pm. Committee members Aldermen Schauer and Gustafson were present. Mayor Marchese, Treasurer Coren, and City Administrator Vana were also present. Metro Strategies employees Jen Vana and Kaitlin Cernak attended the meeting.

**STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS PLAN REVIEW**

Staff advised that at the November 18, 2019, City Council meeting, the Council agreed to accept a proposal from Metro Strategies to conduct a communication analysis and develop a resident engagement plan. Jennie Vana from Metro strategies presented final plans that identified the framework needed to guide the City in implementing an effective and robust communications plan. Further, the plan outlines the recommended goals, objectives and specific strategies that will lead to effective, accurate, professional and consistent communications and storytelling. The Committee unanimously recommended approval of a motion to accept the Strategic Communications Plan prepared by Metro Strategies.

**COMMUNICATIONS SUPPORT PROPOSAL**

Staff advised that the City Council approved a proposal from **Metro Strategies, Inc** to conduct a communications analysis and develop a resident engagement plan. Given the high priority of this topic expressed in the goal-setting meeting and the Council survey, staff requested a proposal from Metro to provide services identified in the plan. In summary, the proposal provides that Metro Strategies would provide full-service communications support under a monthly retainer of \$4,000 to help the City achieve its communications goals and implement the strategies identified in its Strategic Communications Plan. The proposal also provides estimated costs if the City wanted to continue distributing four printed quarterly newsletters to Darien residents. The optional annual costs for the four newsletters range from \$19,404 to \$26,648 and include \$8,000 to \$10,700 for Metro designing/writing/creating the newsletter and the balance for printing/ mailing services/postage. As a comparison, Staff also researched current recruitments from several communities that are advertising for full time Communications and Community Engagement Directors. It was estimated that the starting salary and benefits for these positions would be \$115,000 per year, which are considerably higher than Metro's proposal. The Committee unanimously recommended approval of a proposal from **Metro Strategies, Inc.** to provide communications and public engagement services, along with policy, issue advocacy, planning and project implementation services.

**BROOKHAVEN INCENTIVE AGREEMENT**

Staff advised that at the December 16, 2019 Council meeting, the Council approved a motion for staff to negotiate a formal economic development agreement with Jemco & Associates, LTD. John Manos, President of Jemco & Associates, LTD. is moving forward with plans to construct a new building at the vacant lot on the NW Corner of Plainfield and Cass Avenue. Upon review of building plan options, the City Council expressed interest in having the developer include certain discretionary building upgrades to compliment the clock tower/retail center developed across the street. These upgrades are over and above what is required by city codes. Current cost estimates to include upgrades to the building total \$300,000 of which the developer would split with the City. If the final upgrade costs were below \$300,000 then the City would split those equally with the developer making our maximum contribution \$150,000. The developer will still develop the property if the City Council does not approve the grant agreement, however, it will not include the discretionary upgrades. The Committee unanimously recommended approval of **AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF A CONSTRUCTION GRANT AGREEMENT (NORTHWEST CORNER OF PLAINFIELD AND CASS) NOT TO EXCEED \$150,000**

**CLARKE MOSQUITO RENEWAL**

Staff advised that Clarke Mosquito has been the contractor to control mosquito populations for the City of Darien for many years. There currently are no other alternatives for mosquito abatement and Clarke has prepared a three-year proposal. The three-year proposal is a 2% increase from the previous three-year contract. This proposal is part of their EarthRight Program, a more environmentally friendly operation that reduces the City’s carbon footprint as well as utilizes an EPA recognized larvicide called Natular. The Committee unanimously recommended approval of a three-year contract with Clarke Mosquito at \$41,700 per year.

**MINUTES – NOVEMBER 4, 2019**

The Committee unanimously approved the minutes.

**Adjournment** - The meeting adjourned at 6:53 pm.

Approved:

Mary Sullivan, Chairwoman \_\_\_\_\_

Eric Gustafson, Member \_\_\_\_\_

Ted Schauer, Member \_\_\_\_\_