CITY OF MOAB RESOLUTION NO. 39-2018
A RESOLUTION ENDORSING THE CITY OF MOAB’S COMMUNICATION PLAN AND POLICIES

WHEREAS, Moab’s municipal government desires to engage the public in effective and efficient methods of communication; and

WHEREAS, the City of Moab 2017-2018 Administrative Work Plan contains the following: “6.11 Create a Communications Plan. The Plan will address internal and external engagement and standards for communication”; and

WHEREAS, the City’s Communications and Engagement Manager has drafted a five-year communications plan and communications policies;

THEREFORE, be it resolved that with the approval of this Resolution, the Moab City Council endorses the City of Moab Communications Plan 2018-2023 and the City of Moab Communications Policies.

SIGNED:  

Emily S. Niehaus, Mayor

ATTEST:  

Danielle Guerrero, Deputy Recorder
CITY OF MOAB
COMMUNICATIONS
and
Resident ENGAGEMENT PLAN
2018-2023

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Moab, Utah
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The City of Moab embraces the importance of resident involvement and engagement as well as the knowledge and resources our residents contribute to our community. Clear understanding of community concerns, perceptions and points of view is crucial to helping the City make critical decisions that affect the everyday lives of our residents.

The City must be responsive to the needs of our residents and identify, create and budget resources to effectively engage community members so that they are encouraged to become active participants in the overall decision-making process whenever possible.

Public engagement and communication are integral to the overall health and well-being of the Moab community. The City of Moab’s communications and engagement plan is a fluid document that identifies and aligns the City’s ongoing public information activities with the goals, objectives, and key messages of government, as determined by Moab’s elected officials, the City Manager and staff. The plan will serve as a guide for communication and engagement policy for all City staff and elected officials.

Source: International Association for Public Participation

Effective communication benefits our residents and helps the City meet goals in many ways:

- Encourages knowledgeable participation. Residents can better express their needs and work in cooperation with the City when they know the facts about City plans and actions. Consistent, clear communication from the City can help launch a civil, community-wide conversation and encourage community involvement.

- Helps boost community satisfaction. Better understanding about City services, projects and plans leads to better understanding of how City revenues are used and helps improve residents’ confidence in government.

- Encourages growth, attracts good employees, and improves government service.

Ongoing communication with our residents is a sound, important investment in Moab’s future and should be considered among the City’s primary functions. City of Moab staff and elected officials should take the lead in talking with our residents and telling the City’s story – accurately, comprehensively, and with honesty and candor.
City of Moab Communications and Engagement Mission:

- To communicate information to Moab’s residents quickly, clearly, openly and proactively.

- To inspire Moab’s residents to become more civically involved and engaged with City government and to be our leaders in the future.

- To tell the story of the City of Moab.

Principles for Community Engagement

- **Transparent and Timely** – Guarantees government transparency for all audiences and communicates information as soon as we have it.

- **Accessible** – Ensures information is easy to find and understand – at City Hall as well as through online and other resources.

- **Responsive** – Places residents’ needs first and adapts quickly to change.

- **Accountable** – Creates clear guidelines that help residents understand their role in civic participation, the level of resident engagement and provides follow-up regarding outcomes.

- **Early Involvement** – Communicates with residents as early as possible regarding projects, plans, etc. so residents have the opportunity to get the facts directly from the City source and to actively participate in the public process.

- **Diverse and Inclusive** – Develops outreach strategies to involve residents from all the diverse walks of life that make Moab the community it is and provide all residents with the opportunity to participate, resulting in a balanced perspective of overall community needs and goals.

- **Reciprocal Respect** – Engages with residents in ways that are fair, respectful and help foster understanding among wide-ranging values, ideas and interests.

- **Evaluate and Improve** – Evaluates and monitors the various civic engagement activities to ensure effectiveness.

External Communications – Community and Media Strategies and Actions

1. **Inform, educate and engage City residents** about City services, projects, responsibilities and results. These efforts must always be timely, transparent and straightforward.

   - The Communications and Engagement Manager often serves as the first point of contact for city residents who have questions, issues or concerns, and acts as public information officer for the City.

   - Proactively use social media, website and news releases to push out information about city work projects, meetings, events and other news. At least three posts per week on Facebook and Twitter, and more when needed. Also, utilize the Moab City YouTube channel and post educational, engaging and informative video content regarding City government, history and activities.

   - Develop a printed quarterly or biannual community newsletter to update all residents/businesses about important City issues.
2. Improve resident outreach and engagement efforts and build bridges that foster trust, understanding, civil participation and respect.

- Schedule Town Hall-style meetings to invite resident input about specific issues, plans and projects. These meetings must include participation by Moab City Council members, the Mayor and appropriate City staff.

- Plan “City Walk” events in neighborhoods, downtown, etc., to bring residents and City officials together on the ground to discuss projects that will impact those areas. These meetings must include participation by Moab City Council members, the Mayor and appropriate City staff.

- Produce formal “State of the City” annual report/video and make available to the public.

- Conduct focus groups and hold roundtable discussions with key residents and business owners to find out what information residents want to know and what they feel is lacking regarding City communications efforts. Also periodically use online and/or by-mail surveys to seek input from residents.

3. Create programs to foster future leaders

- Develop and create an 8- to 10-week “Residents Academy” during which resident participants have the opportunity to learn from all the City departments about how they operate and how City government works.
• Develop and create an 8- to 10-week “Youth Government Academy” for ninth through 12th grade students aimed at helping local high school students learn about municipal programs, services and government operations and to inspire them to become the leaders of the future.

4. Provide timely, accurate information to the media regarding city projects, long-term planning, emergency incidents and other matters.

• Be responsive, timely and accurate regarding media inquiries.

• Proactively provide City information for media stories, and seek media coverage for special events, projects and programs.

• Communications and Engagement Manager is first point of contact for all media inquiries, and acts as the public information officer for the City.

• Coordinate with City Manager, department heads and other City officials to ensure dissemination of consistent, reliable and accurate information to media and quickly provide answers to questions posed by journalists for news stories about the City.

• Maintain a local and region-wide media contact list to enable fast dissemination of information as needed.

• Engage in direct communication by phone, in person, via email, etc. to provide clear and accurate information to media outlets, discuss stories and schedule media interviews as needed with city officials.

Internal Communications – City Staff and Departments

Strategies and Actions

1. Conduct regular internal communications audits to determine staff and departmental needs and goals for communications.

• Document what staff members are doing in the way of communications, both internally and with the public.

• Document what the current communications efforts are intended to achieve and determine how effective those efforts have been.

2. Help departments set goals and provide tools for communicating with the public.

• Brainstorm with City staff regarding communications needs and desires.

• Interview City Manager, Mayor and City Council members to determine their goals and wishes for communications from departments.

• Help departments set overall goals for communications objectives.

• Develop a monthly or bi-monthly (every two months) newsletter to update City staff about changes, progress, projects and activities in the City. Each newsletter will include a feature on a City staff member and that feature will also be posted to City social media.
3. Create annual calendar for upcoming City projects, plans, etc.
   - Meet with department heads and City Manager at least twice annually to map out list of projects projected to begin in the upcoming and current calendar year.
   - Develop working calendar to identify potential start dates for those projects. (This will be an ongoing and fluid list as project dates sometimes change.)
   - Create schedule for news releases, announcements and community engagement events for various projects that will include resident input.

4. Develop cohesive, standardized branding for City
   - Create templates for external city communications for use by all departments that send out information to the public. Provide training on how to use those templates as needed.
   - Citywide communications policy is included in this plan — see Appendix A.

Digital Communications

Redesign and Re-brand the City of Moab Website

The City’s website design will be revitalized as part of a new effort to re-brand the City of Moab. The re-branding of the website includes new navigation, fresh content and a modern design to improve usability for City residents, visitors and Moab City staff.

During the redesign, a policy and process will be developed regarding the use of outside website hosting platforms for a variety of City departments that have already created their own separate websites.

Closely monitor website analytics and update information as needed.

Film and Promote Brief Public Service Announcements

Create public service announcement for use on the City’s website and social media. City of Moab Public Service Announcements will be educational and will feature relevant topics that are helpful to residents.

Social Media Presence

- Post announcements, notices, activities and a wide variety of other information at least three to four times per week on Facebook and Twitter.

- Create informational content, including PSAs, for City of Moab’s YouTube channel and post at least bi-weekly.
Social Media Policy

The City Communications and Engagement Manager will create a formal citywide social media policy to be followed by all departments. The Police Department and a few other departments have created their own Facebook pages. The Communications Manager will work with those departments to ensure all posts follow established City social media policy.

Conduct Online Community Engagement Campaigns

City Communications will develop proposals for regular online and social media campaigns designed to increase engagement with local residents through the website and social media sites. These could include:

- Periodically posting historic photos of the City to encourage local residents to share their memories.
- Periodically posting images or video of goings-on throughout the city or of city employees at work doing various projects.
- Posting “Fast Facts” on a weekly basis to provide residents with educational (and sometimes fun) information about various City facilities, projects, etc.

Benchmarks: Tracking for Success

- Develop process for tracking success of all elements of the City of Moab Communications Plan.
- Once a baseline for these activities is established, analyze and measure impacts of each element and track annual results and input for ongoing success.