

Karen then spoke regarding rules of engagement, and confirmed that there is no such thing as “off the record”, and that there is a fine line between speaking on behalf of yourself and your municipality. Karen confirmed that you should never lie.

Karen then spoke regarding key messages, how media is reported including print, internet, wire, radio, TV, community papers, blogs and social media.

Karen spoke regarding types of interviews, and confirmed that you should not take a call from the media unless you are prepared. Karen confirmed that preparation is key to good interviews.

Karen confirmed that you should always be aware of where you are sitting/standing during interviews and check your background.

Karen then spoke regarding social media and bloggers noting it is a casual dialogue and discussion on a specific topic or opinion.

Karen noted that the demographics using Facebook are adults, and noted that everyone has the ability to make a mistake on social media.

Karen then spoke regarding YouTube and Twitter and noted why social media is important. Karen suggested that any Tweets sent by the municipality should be linked back to the website. Karen noted that social media tells you what people are saying, what your competitors are saying, provides you with new opportunities and allows an opportunity to mitigate negative publicity. Karen noted that engagement allows the municipality to monitor, analyze, discover and engage.

Karen spoke regarding multi-platforms and confirmed that everything on social media will be scrutinized, and cautioned to be careful about “Likes”.

Karen confirmed that the municipality must have a plan for social media. Karen noted that it takes time to keep social media fresh and to respond to questions. Karen noted the benefits and risks of social media and advised to think before you “Tweet”.

Karen spoke regarding the steps to handle a crisis, and the people involved in a crisis team including decision makers, operations, communications, government relations and legal counsel. Karen noted that the message should not change, but the method of delivering the message and how you will say it will depend on who you are telling.

Karen noted that a communication plan is important, further noting that communications is easier if you have a plan.

Karen noted that in a crisis situation, that the crisis team should keep all levels of government informed, and that there should be just one spokesperson, but that the spokesperson can defer to others for comment, ie. OPP, Fire.

Karen noted that in a crisis situation, that the things to consider in the message include, What do we have to say, What to say and What is our story. Karen advised that you should never speculate on what you don’t know as there will be records or recordings of what you said.

Karen then spoke regarding the tools that can be used to communicate with various audiences, including statements, emails, letters, meetings, emails, phone calls and website updates. Karen confirmed that Blogs are a good tool, being more casual.

Karen noted that she is very hesitant to send confidential information by email as it is not secure, further noting that knowing your audience is key.

Karen suggested keeping an audio copy of any interviews you may have.

Councillor McGee questioned how we can engage those that are not engaged, Karen spoke in response noting that social media is a great tool for this, further noting that tweeting to link people to the website is a good tool. Karen suggested putting messages everywhere, including website, Twitter, Facebook.

Councillor Martin noted that municipalities are restricted from disclosing information that is protected by law, referencing personnel matters and litigation. Councillor Martin questioned how can matters such as this be disclosed without getting into trouble, Karen spoke in response noting that municipalities should be as transparent as possible about why the information cannot be disclosed and be careful about what can and cannot be said. Karen confirmed that Council should never violate the provisions of the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act or any other act. Karen suggested that Council determine in the beginning what can and cannot be said and suggested that Council advise that they are restricted from disclosing details because of litigation/personnel matters.

Councillor Gamble spoke noting that Council are often subject to repetitive questioning about non-response from Council to social media questions. Karen spoke in response noting that depending on who the person is, that rather than engaging the person on social media, that Council should ask the person to call them at the office. Karen confirmed that nothing good comes from a social media fight.

Mayor McKean thanked Karen for providing training this afternoon.

C. Adjournment

Moved by: Michael Martin

Seconded by: Joe Halos

THAT this Council does now adjourn at 3:33 p.m. to meet again at the call of the Chair,
Carried.

John McKean, Mayor

Corrina Giles, Town Clerk