



North Liberty Communications Advisory Commission

Meeting Agenda

Monday, Jan. 7, 2019

6:00 p.m. Regular Session

City Council Chambers, 1 Quail Creek Circle

1. Call to order.
2. Roll call.
3. Public comment for items not on the agenda.
4. Approval of minutes.
5. Staff report.
6. Candidate Statement Policy.
7. Old business.
8. New business.
9. Adjourn.



North Liberty Communications Advisory Commission

Meeting Minutes

Monday, Jan. 7, 2019

6:00 p.m. Regular Session

City Council Chambers, 1 Quail Creek Circle

1. Call to order.

The meeting was called to order at 6 p.m.

2. Roll call.

Commissioners Fields, Bevins and Hoffman were present. Commissioners Moore and Wells were absent. Also present were Nick Bergus and Joel Miller.

3. Public comment for items not on the agenda.

There was none.

4. Approval of minutes.

Hoffman moved, and Bevins seconded, to approve the minutes. The motion passed with all in favor.

5. Staff report.

Bergus covered the staff's activities from the previous month, including Beat the Bitter, the Public Opinion Panel, Blues & BBQ and other work.

6. Public Opinion Panel.

The Commission discussed the questions and results from the first POP survey.

7. Old business.

There was none.

8. New business.

There was none.

9. Adjourn.

Bevins moved, Hoffman seconded, to adjourn the meeting at 6:12 p.m. It was approved with all in favor.

Communications Department Report

Submitted to the North Liberty City Council

Feb 28, 2019, for the month of February 2019

Beat the Bitter

The festival lived up to its namesake this year. Late January's polar vortex provided a picture-perfect backdrop—and challenges—for Beat the Bitter week, January 27 through February 2. An estimated 5,500 residents and visitors took part in the event's fourth year.

House-sized character kites above Centennial Park kicked off the week for the brand new Wintry Warm UP. Hundreds enjoyed horse-drawn carriage rides, hot chocolate and more while watching kites rise and fall with the winds.

Fire & Ice Friday received rave reviews, with attendees rating the event an average of 4.5 stars. Fire breathers, a silent disco, ice skating and fireworks only graze the surface of the free family fun had in Penn Meadows Park's snowy playground.

The extreme cold halted setup of heated tent planned for the Igloo Jam, but it turns out that South Slope's Community Center doubles as a pretty awesome indoor igloo, and hundreds danced their cabin fever away. With 87 percent of attendees reporting that they will plan to attend again, we think it's safe to say that this new addition to the Beat the Bitter lineup is here to stay.

All the snow took the Winter Games up a notch. 5K-ish Obstacle Run participants climbed over and maneuvered through mounds of snow to earn their medals, and the jury is still out if it was more fun to play in the kickball tournament or watch the players wade through knee-high snow! The Parks Department worked tirelessly to clear snow in the parks for our events, including the ice rink for public skating and Broomball.

There was no better way to celebrate hitting 30 degrees on Feb. 2 than a night out with 400 friends. The Snuggie Crawl lived up to its reputation of being "the night" in North Liberty. Comments like "We've been on all three Snuggie Crawls, and they just keep getting better," and "This was my first year, and I loved everything about it!" cement why our crawl won Best Event Within a Festival from the International Festivals and Events Association in 2018.

While it seemed the entire Upper Midwest let the weather dictate what happened the last week of January, North Liberty called on folks to channel their inner Norseman. Some 30 events took place during, literally, the bleakest week most of us have ever experienced, drawing thousands off their couches for indoor and outdoor events organized by the Beat the Bitter committee and local organizations.

Blues & BBQ

After wrapping Beat the Bitter and taking a deep breath, we began work in earnest on the 13th year of Blues & BBQ. We spent time working on sponsorship and have a few pieces to finalize. Our first full committee meetings won't be until March, but we had conversations with community volunteers and vendors to start getting pieces in place. Food vendor applications open March 1 (and close on March 28) at northlibertyblues.org/food and we'd welcome hearing from new comers interested in feeding our crowd. This year, we're working in partnership with the Englert Theatre team on our stage lineup, with announcements planned for May 1. Details, volunteer opportunities and more will be at northlibertyblues.org.

Infrastructure Projects

We hosted our annual project open house on Tuesday, Feb. 19, from 5 to 6:30 p.m. at South Slope, showcasing our own major projects as well as work by the Iowa DOT and the Iowa City Community School District. Turnout— about 150 folks — was good, and residents had a chance to get their questions answered, even if they weren't thrilled with the answers.

Snow Emergencies

We issued what felt like 1,000,000 million snow emergencies. Compliance has been good, but we'll continue to work to find ways to get the message out, increase compliance and help with the speed and efficiency of snow removal.

Special Election

We offered the opportunity to record video statements from every candidate in March 12's special election, recorded a candidate forum hosted by the League of Women Voters and did additional voter education work.

Centennial Pavilion and Amphitheatre

We're working with the Parks Department and a group of University of Iowa engineering students for an initial design, including concept plan, floor plan and cost estimate, for a showcase pavilion and outdoor performance venue in Centennial Park. The goal is to design a climate-controlled pavilion that will host community events and private rentals, including weddings and conferences, for up to 400 people year-round, offer a food-service area, restrooms and serve as a backstage and greenroom for the outdoor stage. The covered stage, in addition to serving as outdoor patio for the pavilion, will be able to play host to variety of performances in the park, including community plays, festivals and nationally touring musicians, and be able to support a variety of supplemental sound, lighting and other production needs.

Other items

Staff had interviews with KCJJ, KGAN, KCRG, WMT, the North Liberty Leader, the Gazette and the Iowa City Press-Citizen about Beat the Bitter and other city updates.

We produced and submitted City Council meetings to the Iowa City government channel.

Staff represented the city in meetings with Think Iowa City, Iowa City Area Development Group, and a University of Iowa event planning class, and participating in an off-site team building exercise.

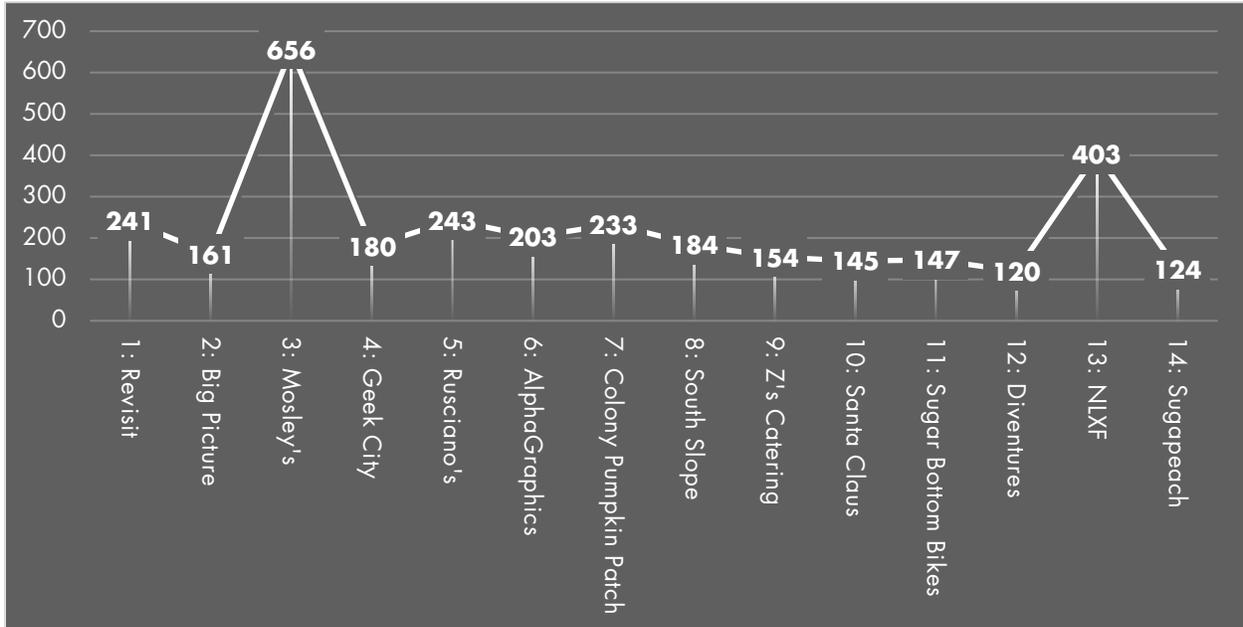
We worked with the library to explore ways to refine and increase the reach of its Stork Storytime Talks podcast.

We completed annual performance reviews. In brief: we have a great team.

We sent news releases about projects, our Severson Challenge win, snow emergencies, more snow emergencies, holiday hours, swimming lessons and more.

52317 Podcast

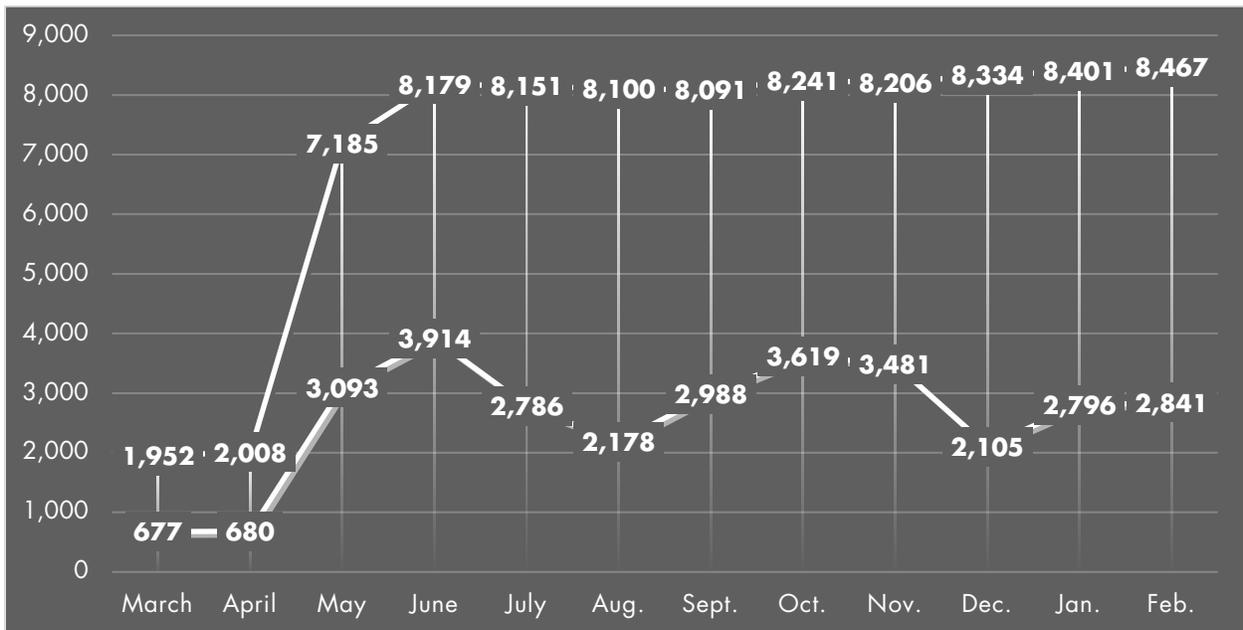
Release schedule is every three weeks; episodes can be found at northlibertyiowa.org/52317.



Downloads is the number times the podcast file was downloaded to a player, including a podcast client, webpage-embedded player or other device since its publication. Numbers are as reported by service provider LibSyn as of the date of this report.

North Liberty Bulletin Email Newsletters

Release schedule is first Thursday of the month; subscribe at northlibertyiowa.org/subscribe.



Recipients is the number of email addresses to which an issue of the Bulletin was sent and is represented by the top line. **Opens** is the number of unique recipients who opened the Bulletin and is represented by the bottom line; the standard open rate for government is 25.4%. Numbers are as reported by service provider Mailchimp.

Social Media

Month	Facebook new likes	Facebook reach	Twitter new follows	Twitter impressions	Instagram new follows	Nextdoor members
Feb 2019	138	47,462	26	42,500	34 (1503)	3,443
Jan 2019	139	51,797	35	59,800	56 (1469)	3,391
Dec 2018	65	40,942	31	36,700	47 (1413)	3,344
Nov 2018	105	24,841	25	131,000	30 (1366)	3,308
Oct 2018	108	29,171	42	48,200	44 (1336)	3,294
Sept 2018	51	22,594	34	42,200	38 (1292)	
Aug 2018	74	37,607	16	47,900	64 (1254)	
July 2018	66	37,754	38	38,900	41 (1190)	
June 2018	187	45,976	37	52,800	28 (1149)	
May 2018	93	34,878	43	35,800	15 (1121)	
April 2018	378	45,215	51	33,300	17 (1106)	
March 2018	134	33,026	35	29,000	19 (1089)	
Feb 2018	71	20,416	48	48,400	6 (1070)	

Facebook new likes is the net number of new users liking the city's Facebook page; it does not include new *followers*. **Facebook reach** is the number of unique users who saw any of the city's Facebook content, reported on a 28-day period. **Twitter new follows** is the net number of new users following the city on Twitter. **Twitter impressions** is the total number of times a tweet from the city was shown to a user. **Instagram new follows** is the net number of new users liking the city's Instagram account. **Nextdoor members** is the number of verified North Liberty residents who are users and able to receive our agency messages.

Website Statistics (Current month and preceding 12)

Month	Sessions	Users	Pageviews	Pages/Session	Avg. Session
Feb 2019	19,034	13,083	45,011	2.36	1:36
Jan 2019	25,585	16,481	58,191	2.27	1:26
Dec 2018	18,985	13,284	44,524	2.35	1:26
Nov 2018	14,768	10,616	34,895	2.36	1:30
Oct 2018	17,086	11,993	39,449	2.31	1:31
Sept 2018	18,665	12,756	40,576	2.17	1:24
Aug 2018	20,367	14,238	47,348	2.31	1:37
July 2018	25,344	17,206	57,350	2.26	1:33
June 2018	28,979	18,652	69,385	2.39	1:41
May 2018	27,326	18,336	53,837	1.97	1:30
April 2018	25,779	17,159	49,636	1.93	1:34
March 2018	13,074	8,620	37,250	2.03	1:34
Feb 2018	15,930	11,181	33,857	2.13	1:34

Sessions is the number of time-bound user interactions with the website. **Users** is the number of unique devices loading the site in that month. **Pageviews** is the total number of pages loaded or reloaded. **Pages/Session** is the number of pages loaded per session. **Avg. Session** is the average length, in minutes and seconds, of user interactions. All stats are monthly.

Completed Videos

Title	Requested By	Date Completed	Duration
Social: Igloo Jam	Communications	Feb. 7	0:01
Social: Fire & Ice	Communications	Feb. 7	0:01
Social: Affiliated Events	Communications	Feb. 7	0:01
Parks and Recreation Commission	City Administration	Feb. 7	0:20

Social: Winer Games	Communications	Feb. 10	0:01
Deb Carneol: World Marathon	Communications	Feb. 10	0:01
Social: Winter in Penn Meadows Park	Communications	Feb. 12	0:01
Social: Pickleball at the Community Center	Communications	Feb. 12	0:01
City Council	City Administration	Feb. 12	0:32
Social: Raptology	Communications	Feb. 21	0:01
Social: NLFD Grant	Communications	Feb. 21	0:01
Eye on North Liberty: Administration	Communications	Feb. 25	0:02
Candidate Statement: Bila	Communications	Feb. 26	0:04
Candidate Statement: Bathke	Communications	Feb. 26	0:04
Candidate Statement: Harrington	Communications	Feb. 26	0:03
Candidate Statement: Smith	Communications	Feb. 26	0:04
Candidate Statement: Zacek	Communications	Feb. 26	0:02
Social: Project Open House	Communications	Feb. 26	0:02
Social: Youth Impact Initiative	Communications	Feb. 26	0:02
City Council	City Administration	Feb. 26	0:46
Candidate Forum	League of Women Voters	Feb. 28	1:30
Total completed productions: 21		Duration of new video: 2.9 hours	

Memo

To Communications Advisory Commission
From Communication Director Nick Bergus
Date March 1, 2019
Re Candidate Statement Policy

In most city elections, as part of our voter education efforts, we've offered all candidates an opportunity to record short video statements to be shared with voters on the channel and online. This has been guided in the past by common sense, not by written policy, without incident.

However, staff believe it would be beneficial to have a written policy, not just to make sure the ground rules are clear, but for additional consistency and repeatability from election to election, which are infrequent enough that staff spend time recreating the procedure.

Before we draft a policy for your consideration, we're looking for direction from the Commission.

Below is the invitation sent to all candidates in the upcoming special election to serve as a starting point.

As in years past, to help educate local voters, we are planning to record candidate statements for playback online and TV. I'm writing to invite you to participate.

We will record 4-minute video statements on Thursday, Feb. 21, between 4 and 7 p.m. in the City Council Chambers, 1 Quail Creek Circle. Each candidate is invited to sign up for a 20-minute time slot, available first-come, first-served, at this link: [online signup form]

These statements will be shown on NLTV (Mediacom channel 5, South Slope channel 268), embedded on the city's website and available on the city's YouTube and Vimeo accounts. We will share the link to the webpage on which the videos are embedded on Twitter and Facebook prior to the start of early voting and occasionally through March 12.

When you arrive at your recording time slot, we'll give you time to get arranged and comfortable, then we will have you stand and address the camera directly. When you're ready, we'll start a 4-minute timer and begin recording. You'll be warned, silently with a sign, when you have 30 seconds remaining and then 10 second remaining, and an alarm will sound when your 4 minutes has elapsed and we will stop recording. You'll have a second opportunity to deliver you statement if you desire, and we'll ask you to choose which take you'd like us to use before you leave. We won't do any editing, but will include your name on screen during your statement.

When we embed the video on our website, we'll also include your contact information as provided to the Johnson County Auditor.

Our goal was to be clear about time limits and our procedure and setting up a way for us to be consistent and impartial, as well as to use staff time efferently, while allowing the candidates some room for error in the case of a flub.

This note is not clear, however, with how we've handled cases where candidates have been unable to record during the time set out for it. Past practice has been to schedule a makeup time prior to the publication of any of the videos, which we employed during the most recent cycle.

We'd like flexibility how the timeline for recording and publishing, since it can vary, and where exactly we publish the statements, as well as statement length limit.

Are there additional areas the Commission believes we should address in a policy?

This guidance from the city's attorney about campaigns and public resources might be helpful to the discussion:

Section 68A.505 of the Iowa Code prohibits the use of public moneys for political purposes and the Iowa Ethics & Campaign Disclosure Board created administrative rules to implement the state law In Chapter 5 their portion of the Iowa Administrative Code. The Board reads the statute as prohibiting any public resources, not just money, from use to "expressly advocate" for or against the passage of a ballot issue or the election of a person to a public office. The Board defines public resources as "the moneys, time, property, facilities, equipment, and supplies of . . . a city"

Certain activities are specifically prohibited by the administrative code:

- *Using public resources to solicit or accept campaign contributions.*
- *Using public resources to solicit votes, engage in campaign work, or poll voters on their preferences for candidates or ballot issues.*
- *Using a publicly owned motor vehicle to transport political materials, placing campaign signs on a publicly owned motor vehicle, or traveling to campaign-related events in a publicly owned motor vehicle.*
- *Using public resources to produce and distribute communications that expressly advocate for or against candidates or that expressly advocate for or against ballot issues.*
- *Placing campaign materials on public property including the placement of campaign signs in the public right-of-way.*