

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT PROPOSAL

Riverside Park Community Association

Summary

To improve information management, internal communications and record keeping, I recommend migrate existing email addresses off CPANEL to Google Suite for Non-Profits, and taking advantage of addition G Suite features to improve information manage practices.

Timeline

- Creation of a G-Suite account and authentication with Google and Domain: January to February 2021
- Migration of existing emails to G Suite Committee email accounts and deployment of individual accounts for board members and committee members: March 2021
- Records of Business Value moved to relevant Google Drives: April 2021
- Pilot Project of G Suite and Google Groups with one committee: May 2021
- If successful, deployment of Groups to all board members and committee members: August 2021

Google Suite Features

Google Suite for Non-Profits is a free or low-cost option offered by Google that provides the following services:

- Unlimited users with 30 GB cloud storage each on Google Drive, and Shared Drives to designate documents relevant to each individual committee
- Professional email addresses that retain the @riversidepark.ca domain name
- Gmail, Calendar, Drive, Docs, Google Meet, Google Chat, and Admin Panel

Google Groups Features

Google Groups can be set up for project teams, committees or the Board. Using a Group, all members of the group can communicate and collaborate. By inviting a group to an event or sharing a document with a group, it sends a single email to everyone in the group alerting them. It also has an internal messaging feature for quick discussions. Votes and decisions of business value should always go through email though.

Information Management

At this time, records of business value are either saved by individuals on their own computers or if they are publicly available, they reside on the website. This poses a significant risk to the organization and can cause the following issues:

- Inefficiency (time spent looking for information, recreating information that was already created, lost documentation of business value)
- Low trust (questions about the completeness and accuracy of information used to make decisions)
- Legal and regulatory risk (holding onto information too long or not long enough)

Recommendation: documentation that has business value, currently saved on private drives, or stored for retrieval in emails should be migrated to the appropriate Shared Drive on Google Drive and labelled with the date of creation. Minutes and Agendas, while also available on the website, should be saved by the Secretary on a drive for that purpose.

Internal Communications

Right now, it appears the majority of internal communications between the board and between committees are done either in person (or during live virtual meetings), or done over email. This increases the risk of important decisions being lost or mischaracterized. This also poses a risk if someone new joins a committee or the board, because they are unable to access the organization or committee's historical information.

Recommendation:

I recommend that for the interim, individual committees and the board as a whole focus on identifying documents with business value and cleaning up individual inboxes. In May, I recommend we launch a pilot project with one committee to integrate their G Suite with a Google Group, so that committee members can move their more informal exchanges to that forum. Formal decisions would continue to be made by email or at meetings and documented appropriately. In August 2021, should the pilot have proved to be successful, it would be deployed to all committees, and the board as a whole. It could also be deployed to specific project-based topics (for example the garden) that involve a cross-section of volunteers who don't necessarily have @riversidepark.ca email addresses.

Email Communications

Currently we have over 20 email addresses, which forward to each other as well as externally. It is not good practice for email addresses dealing with association business to forward to personal email addresses. We are also at about 50% capacity for some boxes, and will reach capacity within the next year if the incoming email trend continues for those boxes.

Recommendation:

All non-executive board members and active committee members receive named accounts (ie. Sarah.Brickell@riversidepark.ca). When a person leaves the association, the emails can either be migrated to another address (the main committee email for example) or deleted entirely. Executive members would receive an email for their position (president, vice president, treasurer, secretary). In the event someone new takes on the position, they would inherit the email history for the position. Info@ is checked by one or two designated

people whose sole job it is to either respond immediately, draft a response for approval by the board or forward to the appropriate committee for response. Committee addresses can be added by those committee members as a secondary mailbox through their Google account or phone email client, and then everyone will see if the message has been read, responded to, or still requires follow up. This could also be a component of the integration with Google Groups.

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