

CAC MINUTES

FOR THE MEETING OF October 17, 2013

CAC MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Mel Rettig, Jeff Erb, Jeff Willis, Peter Mueller, Phil Lidov, Barry Hudson, Don Schlup

CAC Members Absent: Bethany Gravell, Bruce Hutchins, Jim Ives

Denver Water Staff: Melissa Elliott, Heather Stauffer

OPENING REMARKS, PUBLIC COMMENTS, AGENDA AND MINUTES

The minutes and agenda were approved without comment.

There were no comments from the public.

DENVER WATER UPDATE- (Katie Knoll)

Katie referenced the update written and sent out to the Citizens Advisory Council (CAC) by Melissa Elliott and asked if there were any questions regarding it. There was one question regarding the scope of the costs in losses to Denver Water due to the flooding damage. Julie Anderson noted that while there had been substantial damage to Denver Water's system due to the flood, the cost of the damages may be largely covered by FEMA in the form of direct grants.

Branding Effort/ CAC Involvement- (Dominic DeFrancesco)

Dominic DeFrancesco introduced himself to the CAC. Dominic is the new manager of marketing for Denver Water's Public Affairs division. Dominic explained that Denver Water is currently looking at developing a new brand platform and asked for the CAC's input throughout the process. Defining Denver Water's brand is a key priority of Denver Water's strategic plan and will ensure that Denver Water is able to take better control of their image and messaging. Other benefits of building the Denver Water brand include: improves organizational performance, clarifies value and utility roles, improves communications, increases credibility, reduces negative branding and helps recruit talent. Organizations that do a good job of branding are purposeful and generate significantly stronger public support.

Dominic explained that the Brand platforms Denver Water is focusing on are:

Exclusionary: We will focus on these things when we communicate, not everything

Authentic: Communicating who we really are, not "marketing-speak"

Visionary: Goals addressing the current situation of the marketplace. It says "we may not be 100% now, but we will be".

Precise and Informative: Provides instructions for future speakers, designers, writers, etc.

Dominic explained that brand platforms are not:

Ad copy or taglines: We will leave the ad writing to the creative types- this is strategy.

Unique: Others can say the same things, but we are making a choice to own this space.

Mission Statements: Mission statements define what we do, but the platform is about how we want to be thought of.

The first step in this process is to gather stakeholder input. After that Dominic and his team will pull data from internal focus groups. Then they plan on testing internal and external focus groups. After they are done with the focus groups they will set timelines for creative development, execution and measurement metrics.

As part of gathering stakeholder input Dominic asked the CAC to take Denver Water's branding survey asking about Denver Water's most important attributes from the CAC's perspective.

Customer Assistance Program Update- (Michelle Garfield)

Michelle Garfield gave a brief overview into the work that is currently being done to develop a customer assistance program. The program would provide temporary assistance to customers who cannot pay their water bills. Currently they are looking into having Catholic Charities be the third party in charge of processing and administering the applications and aid to customers. The application process will be rigorous, ensuring that the applicants who are receiving aid actually need it. We may cap the amount of aid that one customer can receive. We plan to start slow, referring people who call in to Catholic Charities directly. Michelle and her team will have a conversation with the Board of Water Commissioners about the project and if all goes well they could be poised and ready to implement the beginning stages of the project as early as next month.

Customer Service Survey results- (Julie Anderson)

How we got here- Denver Water's strategic plan includes a goal to create satisfied and supportive customers. In order to accomplish this, Denver Water needs to gather current research and knowledge about our customers and their water needs and habits, among other things. In order to do this, Customer Care put together a survey of customers and stakeholders with the help of Customer Care Measurement and Consulting (CCMC). Their objective is to help us translate these survey items into action steps we can use to improve our performance.

Who we surveyed- Denver Water surveyed the following groups:

Customer segments: water users; distributors; suppliers

Experience segments: street maintenance or repair; contact center

Brand attributes: street maintenance or repair; contact center, water users; distributors; suppliers

The case for “satisfied and supportive” customers- After initial surveying of customers, results came back that overall satisfaction with Denver Water was “very satisfied” among all groups surveyed. Very satisfied customers are 5.6 times more likely to advocate for Denver Water than somewhat satisfied or less satisfied customers. This is very encouraging news, but it also leaves a lot for us to work towards.

Survey results by segment:

Water users: 63% were “very satisfied” with Denver Water

Distributors: Had the lowest level of satisfaction; 45% were “very satisfied” which means our relationships with this group have the most opportunity for improvement.

Suppliers: 74% were very satisfied.

Contact Center: 64% were “very satisfied”

Street maintenance or repair: 52% were very satisfied

Next Steps: - Denver Water has a lot of areas that it can improve upon. If we really start focusing on some of the issues we are seeing coming out of the customer survey we can see overall satisfaction climb to a higher rate than it already is. This is a journey, doing this type of work takes 10 years or more and there are dips and increases in customer satisfaction along the way. Next steps include utilizing survey data to make improvements that drive overall satisfaction. We will also be working on building our brand promise by defining our brand platform and defining our branded customer experiences.

CAC Business

The CAC voted on interviewing candidates to replace Mel Reddig in the western slope representative position once his term expires at the end of the year. They settled on 6 candidates who shall be interviewed in 20 minute time slots at the next meeting in November. The CAC will also elect a new Chair and Vice Chair during that meeting.

Meeting Adjourned