COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR, HARBORD VILLAGE RESIDENTS’ ASSOCIATION

JOB DESCRIPTION

The Communications Director is named in Article 6 of the Constitution as one of the six officers of the Association, elected by the membership at the Annual General Meeting for a one-year term.

The Communications Director shall, as directed by the Board, develop and implement the systems by which the HVRA Board communicates with its members and with the broader community, including the oversight, management, and production of the semi-annual Newsletter, as well as the oversight and management of the public website and the Board’s own intranet site with the assistance of a Webmaster.

With a growing membership and more means of communication, the Communications Director’s role is increasingly one of coordination and planning. The responsibilities also need to include support of communications within the Board, including an intranet site and documents and templates for Board members’ reference and use. A separate position of Webmaster will allow the Director to focus on this enlarged mandate.

QUALIFICATIONS

The position will require familiarity with a range of communications systems and methods, including CMS (WordPress), mass online mailing (MailChimp), page design (Word css), print newsletter (InDesign), and social media platforms (e.g. Twitter). The ability to search and filter Excel files is essential. The position will also require interest in usability and reception issues in order to adapt to changing member expectations. The Communications Director will need the flexibility to work collaboratively with the Webmaster and leaders of Board projects, and must exercise good judgement in selecting and supervising other volunteers.

REPORTING

The Director will report regularly to the Board, sometimes together with the Webmaster. The Director must seek the approval of the Vice-Chair in presenting public statements, and will occasionally seek the advice of the Board on the presentation of specific topics. The Director will require Board approval for new initiatives and authorization for expenditures over $100.

RESPONSIBILITIES

General: The Director will promote and participate in community member engagement development and activities. In addition, the Director will participate in new Board member orientation, ongoing training and mentoring as needed.

The Director will support the Webmaster and any assistants if necessary with the Website (refer item 1 below) while expecting the Webmaster to exercise independent judgement in routine operations. To ensure reliability, continuity, and consistency, the
Director may delegate some of the other tasks, but will mentor and supervise those undertaking them. Several of the descriptions note opportunities for development and regularization; the final item calls for research and planning in consultation with other Board members. The following more fully describe the areas of responsibility.

1) **Website**: This is the instrument of record for the organization, disseminating news as well as storing official documentation. It requires page updates or file additions at least several times a month, more frequently at times of main HVRA events. See the separate Webmaster Job Description for the specific responsibilities of this newly designated role.

The current complex site is being redesigned to improve usability for site visitors and make administrative tasks more efficient. An assistant Webmaster should be recruited to learn the new content-management system, with training and orientation provided as needed.

If requested by the Board, leaders of HVRA projects could be assigned contributor accounts to update specific public pages. Board members could be given password-protected access to a Board-only section for internal communications (see item 7 below). Some training and orientation would be necessary for users of these new functions.

**NOTE**: The Harbord Village History site resides on the same server as the main HVRA site, but uses HTML coding and FTP transfer rather than a content management system. The current site is nearly complete, requiring only occasional updates and additions. Only the current (pro tem) Webmaster has administrative access.

2) **E-Blast News Messages**: These frequent group emails (c. 50 a year) have become the main way of disseminating news about HVRA events and other neighbourhood activities. Messages go out to nearly 600 community members and are each opened by over 300 users. They are signed by the HVRA Chair but can be prepared by others. Requests for publicity are filtered by the Chair and sent to the e-blast author, who also seeks out relevant information to publicize and makes decisions about presentation. The proviso about approval from the Vice Chair should apply to any sensitive messages or public announcements.

The free MailChimp web software provides an easy interface for creating attractive messages. More than one person should be recruited and trained to use it to allow for absences and overload of the main author. The option of integrating or replacing MailChimp with the sending capacities of the new WordPress website should also be investigated.

3) **Social Media**: A Facebook presence for HVRA has been decided against because it would duplicate the above two communication functions. Our Twitter feed is used occasionally to distribute quick messages about HVRA events and news stories.
One Board member now has access, but more could take author roles to ensure prompt news coverage of a range of items. The Vice Chair should be asked to approve any tweet; however depending on the nature of the item in question, this approval may be delegated on an exception basis to another member(s) of the Board. Over time, other social media channels may be used as appropriate to support the progressive communications efforts of the HVRA Board.

4) **Flyers:** Members of the Communications committee will provide advice and assistance for leaders of HVRA activities in preparing print flyers and other publicity materials. The Communications Committee is not responsible for production or distribution of these materials.

5) **Twice-Yearly Print Newsletter:** This multi-page newsletter is distributed to all Harbord Village residences in print form and also displayed online. It contains lively interest stories about Harbord Village, and showcases HVRA leadership. The newsletter is published twice a year to coincide with the HVRA Spring and Fall Annual general meetings. Division of responsibility is well-established. An executive editor enlists writers, editors, designers, and proofreaders to produce polished copy. Typically, the various roles are recruited from the community through email blasts (“call for volunteers”) as well as a core of board members with specialized knowledge to write articles on specific topics such as development, “letter from the chair” and other areas of interest.

The roles and the production process (work-back schedule) are outlined in the Print Newsletter Addendum.

6) **ISP Interface:** At present, HVRA rents server space from one internet service provider, registers its domain name with another, and retains a technical specialist connected with a third. The Communications Director should take joint responsibility with the Webmaster and another designated executive member of the Board for harmonizing these functions, including working with technical specialists at the ISP and ensuring secure storage of site ownership and access records.

7) **Intranet:** Email accounts for the Harbord Village domain (@harbordvillage.com) are available free of charge from the current ISP (ASmallOrange), and several are in use (chair, webmaster, gardeners), sometimes with more than one recipient. More use could be made of this provision to encourage members’ communication to HVRA leaders in specific roles. It would also be possible to create a listserv for email communications within the Board or for groups working on specific projects. The HVRA now has no provision for online document-sharing. The Communications Director in consultation with the Webmaster should investigate and compare the options for shared webspace provided by the ISP and by the new WordPress website.