
NORTH HAVEN CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

Web Site Operations Manual

Policies, Procedures & Guidelines

AD-HOC WEB OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

JUNE, 2005

Revised: January, 2006

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North Haven Congregational Church

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Foreward

This document seeks to provide initial oversight and guidance for the use of the North Haven Congregational Church web site.

The Committee focused its attention on several important issues. Among those issues were the privacy of personal information and the safety of individuals, the kinds of items that could be published, and what should not be published. The Committee also addressed several procedural issues, including establishing a permanent Web Oversight Committee to provide operational management while maintaining strategic control over the site by the Council.

Many more issues will certainly arise as we move forward with the development of the web site but we believe this document provides a robust framework from which to plan and build the future of our web site.

The Ad-Hoc Web Oversight Committee
June 17, 2005

Committee Members:

Karen Beauvais
Susan Compton
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Web Site Operations Manual
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North Haven Congregational Church
Web Site Operations Manual
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INTRODUCTION

The Purpose Of This Document

This document has been created to:

1. Provide operational guidance to those who will be responsible for managing the web site of the North Haven Congregational Church.
2. Ensure consistency of decision making over time with respect to what gets published and what does not get published on the web site.
3. Present a procedural map to facilitate publication of relevant materials from members of our community.

Revision

This document shall be periodically reviewed and revised by the Web Oversight Committee and accepted by the Church Council.

NHCC Web Site Initiative

The primary purpose of creating and maintaining the North Haven Congregational Church web site is to enhance the relationships among our current members and friends, further the values and mission we hold in common as a Congregation, promote those values into the larger community, and seek to attract others to associate more with our Congregation.

Guiding Principles

Privacy

Protecting the privacy of individuals and the personal information held in NHCC's care is critically important. Every reasonable effort shall be made to ensure the security of information about individuals for which the church is a steward.

Safety

The NHCC web site shall operate under the rules set forth in the current revision of the *Safe Church Policy* originally approved by the Congregation in 2001.

Usefulness

The Web Oversight Committee shall periodically survey users and monitor the site's content to ensure the usefulness, relevance, and timeliness of published information to the NHCC constituency.

Legally Compliant

The NHCC web site shall comply with all applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations.

GOVERNANCE

The operations of the NHCC web site shall be governed by a permanent, three member Web Oversight Committee appointed by the Council. The tenure of each member shall be three (3) years with one (1) member appointed each year.

Responsibilities

The Web Oversight Committee, guided by this *Web Site Operations Manual* and the will and desires of the Council, will oversee the day-to-day management of the web site, monitor operational results, resolve ongoing issues as they arise, and plan and advocate for the future of the NHCC web site.

The Committee shall develop and promulgate, with the approval of the Council, processes and procedures, and establish criteria and standards required to effectively execute its purpose.

The Committee shall perform an annual review of this document and make revisions as necessitated by changing situations and/or needs of the NHCC constituency.

Approvals

This document provides operational guidance to the Web Oversight Committee and those responsible for actually loading data onto the web site. However, some situations may require higher level approvals.

The Web Team

Execution of the hands-on technical tasks associated with day-to-day operations and management of the site shall reside in a Web Team¹ consisting of one or more persons appointed by and responsible to the Web Oversight Committee.

Productivity Improvement Planning

The Web Oversight Committee shall make reasonable effort to continually improve the efficiency of site management processes, including:

- Automation of high activity and security related processes through the use of technology.
- Streamlining the flow of accurate and timely information.

The Web Oversight Committee shall remain continuously vigilant to changes in the internet environment, including: threat risks, technologies, common practices, and other trends that may require changes in this document and the NHCC web site, itself.

PUBLICATION RULES

With respect to privacy and safety, the approach taken in establishing these Publication Rules is one of foreclosing ‘worst case scenarios’ rather than focusing on ‘likely situations.’

¹ This model provides an opportunity for some of our youth to be involved, contribute significantly to the mission of the church, and learn more about an essential underlying technology.

Personal Information

In general, personal information about individuals will not be published on the NHCC web site without first obtaining a written release from the affected persons.

- An individual's last name, address, telephone number or e-mail address shall not be published on the NHCC web site.

Any individual may change these rules for themselves by written request and consent to such usage. Notification of this fact and the form and administration of such requests shall be administered by the Web Oversight Committee.

Exceptions

- In general, the NHCC web site may re-publish widely distributed printed publications already authorized by the church. However, some church publications such as *The Window* or *The Weekly Bulletin* may already contain the full names of individuals as well as other personal information. While these documents may have been approved for printed publication and postal mailing to a limited group, such approval may not necessarily extend to their online versions. The Web Oversight Committee shall monitor the situation and ensure that the conversion of previously printed information does not compromise the implied privacy and safety of any individual.
- For newly created materials that would normally contain a person's name, only the first name and last initial may be published without requiring a written release.
- Individuals who have been elected or appointed by the Congregation or its assigns to govern church operations and activities shall be required, upon election or appointment, to execute a statement releasing or denying release of specific personal contact information² that is determined by the Council to be useful to the Congregation and others who may want or need to contact such elected or appointed individuals. The form and content of such a release for the purposes of publication on the web site shall be administered by the Web Oversight Board.

Photographs

Pictures can instantly tell a story about who we are and what we do. While NHCC would like to publish photographs reflecting the life of our church, we must be selective and cautious.

- Publishing a photograph of an identifiable person is prohibited without the prior written release from that person or the person's guardian. Such written release shall be valid only after advising the subject or subject's guardian of the anticipated potential risks associated with web-based publication of personal items.
- No identifying information may accompany a properly published photograph.

² Such as telephone numbers.

Children³

- Personal Information: Neither the first nor the last name of children and youth under the age of 18 will be published on the NHCC web site. No other personal information shall be published, including, but not limited to, the child's school and class, or any other information that may conceivably put the child in harm's way.
- Photographs: Photographs of identifiable children may be published only after evaluating the potential associated risks, with the specific advice and consent from the Ministers and the specific written permission of the child's legal guardian.

Links

Hypertext links presented on the NHCC web site shall be evaluated for appropriateness and contribution to the overall purpose of the site. Further, the Web Oversight Committee shall design and implement processes to monitor the overall value of linked documents and to verify the continued functionality of all links on the NHCC web site.

Copyright

Every reasonable effort shall be made to ensure that documents and other material published on the NHCC web site are in compliance with the provisions of the United States Copyright Act of 1976.

Public Domain

- A copyright protects a particular presentation of information and not the underlying data for that presentation.
- Copyright protection extends for 70 years after the death of the author.
- Derived works based on previously copyrighted material but now in the Public Domain, may be protected.

Fair Use

The Act allows copyrighted material to be used for educational purposes, or for criticism, news reporting, or research under the concept of 'Fair Use.' However, if such use is demonstrated to potentially have a negative affect on the owner's ability to derive expected economic benefits from the copyrighted material, 'fair use' does not apply.

Operational Rules

- Material that is not specifically owned by NHCC may not be published on the site without prior written release from the copyright owner.
- Documents and other materials created by NHCC members, friends or associates shall contain specific notation as to the copyright owner is.
- Any material posted on the NHCC web site is considered published and is automatically copyrighted by the author or the organization employing the author if the work was created under an explicit or implied 'work for hire' situation.

³ For the purposes of this document, Non-Adults have purposely not been segmented into the various age categories. The Committee recommends this blanket policy covering all minor children be evaluated by more knowledgeable persons who may better understand the different threat levels with respect to age as well as the effects on our older youth who are approaching the age of maturity.

Accessibility

The internet has quickly become a preferred method of acquiring information in modern society. It has also become a lifeline for some. As such, NHCC is committed to enabling its web site for use by people with disabilities.

Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI)

The W3C's⁴ commitment to lead the Web to its full potential includes promoting a high degree of useability for people with disabilities.

The Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI), <http://www.w3.org/WAI/>, in coordination with organizations around the world, is pursuing accessibility of the Web through five primary areas of work: technology, guidelines, tools, education and outreach, and research and development.

Accessibility Policy

To help support the WAI, the NHCC web site shall proactively embrace the W3C guidelines for Web accessibility.

Within the capabilities and resources available, the Web Oversight Committee shall attempt to meet at least Level A Conformance to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 1.0, as well as conforming to the HTML 4.01 standard.

Prohibited Material

- Material fostering commercial activities or promoting a political agenda is specifically prohibited from being published on the NHCC web site.

PUBLICATION PROCEDURES

To ensure the operational control over the NHCC web site content by the Council, publication on the NHCC web site is based on a sponsorship model. This model significantly addresses many of the security concerns and provides a manageable level of accountability by reducing the number of people who can initiate publication.

Authority To Recommend Publication

Publication on the NHCC web site requires sponsorship by an authorized sponsor.

Authorized Sponsors

Authorized sponsors include the following groups of individuals:

- NHCC ministerial staff,
- Officers of the Council,
- Council members in their role as representatives of the various Boards, Committees and other operational units of the NHCC,
- Members of the Web Oversight Board and the Web Team, and
- any other person specifically granted sponsorship status by the Council.

⁴ The World Wide Web Consortium

All operational approval authority resides with these sponsors through the authority granted by the Council.

Publication Logistics

The content of each NHCC web site page is based on either a document file or a database file.

Documents

In general, documents are relatively stable and displaying them is relatively predictable. Examples include: by-laws, minutes of meetings, or previously published documents, such as *The Window* or the *Weekly Bulletin*.

Existing documents may easily be converted to appropriate formats and uploaded automatically to the NHCC web site.

The recommended model for publishing documents is a two-step process:

1. Allow uploads by authorized sponsors who are responsible for the content's accuracy and compliance with the guidelines in this manual.
2. Subsequently, release the uploads for publication by the web management team after verifying for technical compliance and constructing appropriate navigation links to the newly published documents.

Databases

For information that is dynamic or changes occasionally in a predictable manner the use of an underlying database to hold the data that will be used to generate a requested web page 'on the fly.' The NHCC web site currently employs the PHP scripting language in combination with a MySQL database to accomplish these tasks. The Calendar of Events and the members of individual Boards and Committees are, for example, implemented with this technology.

The operational model for maintaining the NHCC web databases is depicted in Figure 1.

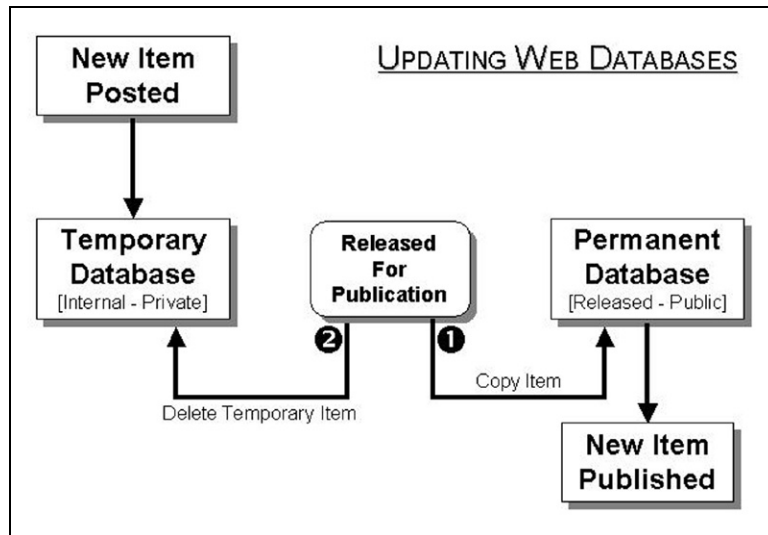


Figure 1. Updating the databases which drive dynamic web pages

The integrity of the NHCC permanent database is securely maintained by a two-step process. First, authorized sponsors are allowed to upload data to a temporary database. Authorized sponsors will not have access to the permanent database for security

reasons. Subsequently, the Web Team will evaluate, and either release the data to the permanent database, perform minimum edits for obvious and typographical errors, or send back the item to the original authorized sponsor if there is confusion. The Web Team will not be authorized to interpret or make decisions about what the intent of the authorized sponsor was.

APRIL 26, 2005
PROPOSAL TO THE COUNCIL

ACTION ITEM

CREATE AN AD-HOC COMMITTEE CALLED

“The Ad-Hoc Web Presence Oversight Committee”

[Short Name: “Web Oversight Committee”]

Background

The internet¹ has become a ubiquitous medium of worldwide information exchange. The accelerated development of uncountable, but critical underlying technologies has supported unabated growth of the internet without censoring or otherwise controlling the publishing process. This new medium has enabled almost anyone to publish anything!

What This Means To Our Congregation: Our website speaks for us 24-hours a day, 7 days a week, year in, and year out. Now that the site is operational, we have the responsibility to ensure that the material we publish through this medium accurately reflects the will and mission of the our Congregation as a whole.

Potential Dangers Without Oversight: Among other things, information presented on the website may not be accurate, may not be appropriate from an organizational point of view, or may not be appropriate or desired from the perspective of one or more individual members.²

A functional Web Oversight Committee will help reduce these dangers as we move forward.

Operational Factors

Suggested Charter

- Scope Of Work: Develop policies, guidelines and procedures for the publication of material on the Congregation’s web site.

Suggested Logistics

- Delivery Schedule: The committee will complete its work, publish its results, and seek approval from the Council within sixty (60) calendar days.
- Self-Extinguishing: Upon approval of its work by the Council this committee will be decommissioned.³

Suggested Staffing

- Committee Size: Three members should be able to complete the work within the time period suggested.
- Member Profile: Committee members do not have to be technically proficient in the relevant technologies.

¹ Purposefully written in lower case because the “Internet” has become part of the standard societal infrastructure much like the highway system or the railroad system.

² One related issue that should be addressed is how we insure the privacy of member information such as telephone numbers, email addresses, and other personal information. We don’t seem to have a Privacy Policy that specifies how we protect the integrity of members’ personal information held in our care.

³ The Council may want to charter a permanent Web Oversight Committee to implement and improve the policies, guidelines and procedures initially approved.

TRANSMITTAL LETTER TO THE COUNCIL

June 17, 2005

Patience Benassi, Moderator
The Church Council
North Haven Congregational Church
28 Church Street
North Haven, CT 06473

RE: Web Site Operations Manual

This document seeks to provide initial oversight and guidance for the use of the North Haven Congregational Church web site.

The Committee focused its attention on several important issues. Among those issues were the privacy of personal information and the safety of individuals, the kinds of items that could be published, and what should not be published. The Committee also addressed several procedural issues, including establishing a permanent Web Oversight Committee to provide operational management while maintaining strategic control over the site by the Council.

Many more issues will certainly arise as we move forward with the development of the web site but we believe this document provides a robust framework from which to plan and build the future of our web site.

Respectfully Submitted,
The Ad-Hoc Web Oversight Committee

Committee Members:

*Karen Beauvais
Susan Compton
Philip T. DiPeri
Betsy Gumbart
Betsey Reid*

AUTHORIZATION PREFERENCES

FOR PUBLISHING PERSONAL INFORMATION ON THE CHURCH WEB SITE

Date _____

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

I, _____ am the [person] / [legal guardian of the person] named in this Authorization.

I authorize or deny [as checked] the following personal information to be published on the North Haven Congregational Church web site:

Allow	Deny	Personal Information	Comments/Instructions
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	First Name	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Last Name	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Home Street Address	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Home City	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Home Phone	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Business Phone	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Business Address	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	E-Mail Address	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Image [non-identifying]	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Image [with identity]	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		

General Comments or Instructions:

Signature

Date

Recommended Action Items

1. A Permanent Web Oversight Committee

Establish and charter a permanent Web Oversight Committee with the authority and responsibilities outlined in this document.

2. List of Authorized Sponsors

Direct the Clerk to establish and maintain a list of Authorized Sponsors, as defined in this document, to communicate the responsibilities of the such designation to the affected persons, and share this list with the Web Oversight Committee.

3. Staffing

Direct the Chair of the Nominating Committee to make an initial call for volunteers to staff the Web Oversight Committee. Volunteers need not be technically proficient.

4. Initial Focus Of The Committee

Strongly urge the Web Oversight Committee to immediately focus its attention on these initiatives:

A. Site Audit

Audit the information already published on the NHCC web site for compliance with the rules and spirit outlined in this document. Resolve non-compliant situations.

B. The 'Web Team'

Establish a working Web Team, as defined in this document.

C. Release Form

Construct a model Release Form to allow individuals to specifically select the types of private information they will allow or foreclose from being published on the web site. Develop an economical and reliable process to insure Release Forms are executed by all affected persons. Request Council approval for both the form and the process.

D. Previously Published Materials

Develop a process to resolve any issues surrounding publication of previously published and distributed materials which contain private information in the original printed edition.

E. Photographs

Develop a process to resolve the use of photographs on the web site.

