



SCALE
Scott County Association For Leadership And Efficiency

Government Without Borders: Working Together to Strengthen Each Other
www.scaleinfo.org

Last Friday's SCALE meeting was "all media, all the time" — and it was one of the most animated and informative meetings of the year! **Lisa Baumann** (editor of the Shakopee Patch) and **Shannon Fiecke** (reporter with the *Shakopee Valley News*) tackled the topic of media/public sector relations, and Shakopee **Mayor Brad Tabke** continued the conversation with an overview of social media in the government sector.

"News doesn't have to come from a simple media release anymore," Baumann stated. Fiecke agreed, telling the members that "... [while] we can only write so many things, we really depend on our relationships with you and having good, accurate information for well-researched stories." And people want to read about people, Baumann stated: "How has some action affected someone?"

And the more people that are affected by something, the more it's likely to be newsworthy."

Fiecke also noted that the public sector could do a more proactive job at "... tooting your own horn," she said. "Tell me why something is important. Include good art in your releases, give me a good story — a concrete example — that illustrates why what you're pitching is interesting." The journalists also advised the attendees that they generally look for quotes that "...get to the flavor of the issue in a way that's easy to understand," Baumann said.

Fielding questions that ranged from correcting misinformation ("We won't run something that we know to be inaccurate or libelous... so correcting bad information is definitely worth a phone call," Fiecke stated) to why some news outlets endorse candidates and others do not ("That's the decision of the editor or editorial board"), the two journalists kept up a lively and often jocular banter with the capacity crowd.

Following the panel presentation, Shakopee **Mayor Brad Tabke** provided a 30-minute overview of the growing role and expanding use of social media in the public sector. He began by summarizing the various means of social media as well as their guiding principle: *Meet people where they are*. "This is where government is headed," he stated. "It's simple, it makes communicating to thousands easy, and it allows us a channel to different demographics." He did caution, however, that professional rules should always apply: "I would never write anything I wouldn't want my daughters to read, and I never post negativity — social media magnifies negativity. And I view my role as a provider of information, not of personal opinion, and I never characterize anything as the 'official' view of the City."

SCALE Chair **LuAnne Lemke** (Louisville Township) rounded out the meeting by thanking the presenters and noting that "... we could probably continue this meeting for another couple hours!"

Don't forget to attend the next SCALE meeting on **Friday, September 14, at 7:30 a.m. at the SCALE Regional Training Facility** outside of Jordan!

The mission of SCALE is to forge new and innovative ways in which government entities can collaborate to provide superior services while making the most of limited resources.

PS — Don't forget! The Grand Opening celebration of the **new Eagle Creek Transit Station** will be held on **Tuesday, August 28, from 4 — 6 p.m.** at the station (at the southwest corner of the County Rd. 16/County Rd. 21 intersection in Shakopee).