

Lake looks to revamp county website

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Lake County officials want to redesign and update the county's website and have begun to accept quotes from firms interested in submitting a project outline and approximate cost.

County Administrator Jason Boyd said a request to receive quotes was posted last week on the commission-ers home page under the public notices section on the county's website: www.lakecountyohio.org.

"We're working with the IT department and expect quotes back by Sept. 6 for consideration to reface and repurpose the county's website," Boyd said Thursday during a county commissioners meeting.

The county would like firms to be able to create a gateway or portal that would provide visitors a good first impression, according to the public notice.

Other features would include

Documents online

Read the requests for quotes regarding updating the Lake County website at www.News-Herald.com



mobile and tablet applications, interactive calendars, an online bill pay page, and modern aesthetics and graphic design.

Officials also would like a uniform appearance across all departments, but want to maintain an ability for the visitor to clearly know what office or department he or she sees.

For example, it should be easy to tell if the person visits the county Sheriff's Office page or the Stormwater Management Department page.

Places to find news, current events, meeting dates and public notices also should be available to view on the website, according to the request for quotes.

To make the website more user-friendly, features such as document searches, hot buttons on the main page for frequently accessed sites, and a "How do I?" section should be included, Boyd said.

"A lot of people don't know what office does what," he said. "So we're going to say (for example), 'Where do I pay my taxes?' A lot of people think it's the recorder's."

Property taxpayers pay their taxes to the county treasurer's office.

The hope is to make it easier for residents and others who are interested in county government operations to have a better way to discover the information they need, Boyd said.

"The ultimate goal is to get that more user-friendly to the citizens and local businesses and have the most up-to-date information as possible," he said.

Boyd said the current website has been useful as a place to post critical and timely information, such as the

latest efforts regarding the response and cleanup after the July 20 storm event that dumped up to 6 inches of rain in six hours.

Another goal is to include the availability of pull-down menus, user-friendly maintenance tasks and a "contact us" form.

A redesign and improvement of the county's website is something commissioners envisioned as a job for Boyd to oversee when he was hired as the administrator last year, Commissioner Daniel P. Troy said.

"To say our website has left something to be desired is an understatement," Troy said. "You hear that from a lot of people."

He also said someone will need to be in charge to oversee the website. "Someone is going to be needed to manage this," Troy said.

"We realize that's where a lot of people get their information, so we need to have somebody on top of that."