

New England CPE  
Board of Directors  
Jan. 17, 2019

Bedford, NH

10:00 am

## MINUTES

1. Call to Order
  - a. New Secretary – Matt Bacon – Thank you very much to Larry for his dedicated work for many years
  - b. Welcome new member Matt Lefebvre
  - c. Welcome new member Chris Pascucci
2. Roll Call

NECPE Board of Directors P=Present/Ph=Phone/A=Absent

Arden, Deana (P)	Jackman, John (P)	Martin, Doug (P)	Valentine, Ralph (P)
Bacon, Matt (P)	Jean, Bill (P)	Pascucci, Chris (P)	Ward, Andy (P)
Forte, Scott (Ph)	Johnson, Star (P)	Perry, Greg (Ph)	
Hirsch, Larry (P)	Lefebvre, Matt (P)	Stallkamp, Christian (Ph)	

### 1. Secretary's Report – M. Bacon

- a. **MOTION** to accept the minutes of the November 2018 meeting was **SECONDED** and **APPROVED**.

### 2. President's Report – D. Martin

Doug learned a lot about NECPE last year. Learning even more. SEO stuff learning. Keep an eye this year on new Catylist platform. Based on examples it looks a lot like Costar. Hasn't been launched yet, something to weigh in on. Supposedly rewriting some code in there which will help all links and it will bump up NECPE on search queries. We will be relying on guys like John and Matt B. who know this stuff.

Ralph: so probably roll out is around middle of this year, but Catylist has a number of more-customized customers, probably 48-50. They will roll out to customers who have not changed the system as drastically first. We have a highly-customized version of the system. More likely be 2020. This came out of a meeting they had with Nancy.

Are we thinking about putting a task force together? Matt B. and Scott put this list together, guidelines that Nancy confirmed that we could help increase their SEO. Education on our part and small things on Nancy's part. If we have this set of guidelines give us the ability to do this. Send the report to Nancy and ask her to rewrite it.

The addresses' text make a difference in terms of optimizing relevance in search results.

Matt B.: How the link is coded can affect the SEO...all the way down to what text is used. The Catylist system to overhaul that for each listing, or to implement as CoStar codes theirs standard is substantial.

Question- Does it count if people are putting things on LinkedIn, are they bumping listings positively? – Yes

Back linking from other websites to live websites does help with SEO. Big thing to be aware of is, if a member of the public is searching for an address- if the database doesn't have it segmented in their front-end database/sitemap it can affect search relevance. Loopnet has done a good job matching relevance... Catylist doesn't do that very well currently.

The software for the platform was written 25 years ago. Loopnet has direct hotline into Google, lots of which has to do with money. Right now our system works well for the brokerage community, we want to bump up SEO effectiveness for members of the public to find our members' listings.

Things we can do: Get links we have out there fixed?? Lot of links broken. When send out broadcasts email, send it out through Catylist and send it out with live link. Small changes that we can make were thoroughly outlined in Scott's SEO best practices sheet.

The tags are in there, he gave cut and paste code strings with instructions. Someone suggested that if we don't have a system that can do it automatically or recognize what needs to be added, the least we should do is post the best practices sheet on NECPE as a document and direct members to it. \*\*\*What can we do as an organization? Catylist is trying to pay way up the chain.

Scott: confirmed with google in paying for click, doesn't help rankings, only for one-time view paid for.

Matt B.: With Catylist's new system, if we do effective things today, a lot of relevance we have today and create going forward will carry over. Create more natural back linking, use the plan regarding LinkedIn face book using video, Google likes that, creates a permanent item with lots of relevance in SEO terms.

Scott: Correct. He would rather see us as organization hire a firm part time to implement these steps and do this for everyone's listings vs. pay per click. Pay per click is a band-aid. Maybe as an aggregate, if we do reports for Bedford, Portsmouth, etc - make things specific and interesting. We want traffic, period. Reports, information things (content marketing) are better targets, and if you're using SEM, do the paid solutions to boost that socially, as long as get traffic to content that will be good for us. We need to focus our work on hyperlinks, so they have more key words that will boost our traffic. Catylist won't let us change hyperlinks individually on listings with the header, but that should be solved next iteration.

Some things we can do now: Market report with links to relevant listings, blog post with report published on site. BEST WAY: hire a blogger, though often those prices are high. Some reportedly charge \$500 month do a post on all of our social media, 3 for 1,000. Coming up with content and having someone push it out is really the most effective now and in the future.

Currently, there are 3 providers competing for contract with NAR, and that may help. If Catylist wins contract, it improves their national reach. 5 yrs down line, what if don't want to support little stuff anymore and become like a Loopnet. However, then we should have benefits of the massive infrastructure like Loopnet provides now.

Consensus action item: Need to schedule call with Nancy, Ralph, Scott, John, Matt B., and Lisa....

In Maine, they have their new system FLEX turned on, and a lot of what we're trying to do is built into that. Primary value to Maine that is still vested in NECPE is on two fronts - listings and comps database. As time goes on that listings are loading, will be a cross over to FLEX being more valuable, and they don't have to pay extra as it's included in their dues.

Scott: one of things we will have that others won't, though SEO not great yet, when we do, we'll have an advantage because the other MLS's don't scale in google at all in search results. We will have added benefit to Maine on the front. But will it be enough for those members to continue to pay.

We need to know who's going to ask Nancy? We'll get Scott on the line, but he really needs the tech dept project manager to talk to. UNH Marketing Interns are a possibility – but who is going to supervise it?

Matt L: As an organization, if we want to survive and grow we need to grow, both on staff and providing services. We need to have people to maintain and grow it.

Reality in Maine situation: taking advantage and get it for free are small time brokers....for them no incentive to join NECPE, deal locally. CPE appeals more to those who operate on a regional basis rather than small local market. Greg made comment on 9/27: he thought KWs and Coldwell Bankers were pushed to leave CPE cause of \$500 per year.

Doug M: We've been talking about this too long without a specific plan. Establishing a task force - going to ask Scott, Matt B., John, Ralph, Lisa, and Christian to find time to meet and put a plan together in next two weeks. Talk to Catylist and come back with recommendations, and by next meeting in two months have quotes, etc and hire PR firm. We also need to put a plan in place, a roadmap before we involve Catylist. If board trusts that group to come up with recommendation to bring back to board, we'll make a decision in march. APPROVED

1) Creating SEO task force as noted above to meet in next two weeks, come up with plan, next meeting come back with two recommendations and come up with initial

steps. If the decision is a blogger, TF will attempt to have a group of quotes together, and collectively get talents organized. MOTION...APPROVED

2) Greater Boston RE Board Commercial Board: We should reach out to these people 400 brokers or so.

Scott and Matt B. went down to NEREJ representing at event. Out of that got a few maybe down there. Is there a group that might want to do that more consistently. Anyone want to step up? TF will bring recommendations to this meeting.

What about monthly ad in NECPE? Helps branding, visibility, etc. Maybe a review ad, etc would give some meat for that. NEREJ will do that for us, someone has to call them. We need meat, which is the most time consuming part – perhaps a year in review? See if we can source at least an ad once a month.

Matt B.: if we put together value added content using NECPE data, he would see if John Picard could give us a free article or really discounted rate. Biggest challenge is that it has to be consistent once started. Larry H. will call Patty and see, Matt B. spoke to John Picard the president of NEREJ. Larry will come back with advertising info, Matt will connect him.

It was brought up that perhaps we need to meet every month, until we figure this out.

Matt Lefebvre: will call UNH intern rep.

NECPE Board will have a call next month in light of all that's going on.

### 3. **Treasurer's Report** – B. Jean

- a. The December financials are TABLED till next meeting.

### 4. **Office Administration Report** – A. Ropes

- Since the last meeting in November there have been 11 inquires for NECPE: 6 NH, 2 ME, 3 MA.
- As always I continue to monitor request for deletions/withdrawals. I have had a couple of violations where the company name was in the comments section, they were promptly removed.

### 5. **New Business**

John: Flex is live in Maine. Early reports are that people like it. Flex is good according to Scott Forte also, speaking of the system in general. Board asks Scott to test drive the commercial system and report back to us.

Adjournment 10:54 am

6. **Adjournment**

A **MOTION** to adjourn the meeting was **SECONDED** and **APPROVED**. Meeting adjourned at 10:54 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Matt Bacon  
Secretary