To: Input Team
From: Bob Pangman
Subject: Choosing a Website Name
Date: 11/11/20

Thanks for being willing to participate in the activities to help facilitate the development of a website for our club. As Chair of the Communications and Publicity Team I volunteered to take the lead in helping Roger Brook get the website idea off the ground. I sent you website background information and an action plan last week that went to all Board members for action at an upcoming Zoom Board meeting on Nov.19. You will note in that plan of action that the first step is to address the need for naming our domain/URL so that Roger can move forward with further development of the website.

In the past few days as Martha Schwab is wrapping up the updating of our membership directory, we realized that the Club will be well served by including information about our new website, including the actual URL name as a reference for members in the coming year. As a result, we are choosing to delay the printing of the directory until we can include the website URL in the document. Our goal is to have the Input Team make a recommendation for a name in time to have Board action on it November 19. This memo is intended to get that process started. Given Roger's insights and experience, it seems like a doable task.

I have discussed ideas with Roger and we have put information together that will require your consideration in the decision-making process. Timing is of essence. We can consider holding a short Zoom Input Team meeting before the 19th or maybe we can come to some solution just using emails. Our task at this time is to choose a URL name and recommend it to the Board for action on November 19.

A. <u>Google Information for Selecting a Name</u>

Choosing a domain name can be one of the most important steps in establishing your brand or business. Your domain name is often one of the first things someone sees, and it can affect their impression of your website and your brand. A carefully chosen domain name may increase user interest and drive web traffic, while a carelessly chosen one might do the opposite.

While it isn't an exact science and there are few absolute rules, here are some guiding principles for picking a name that reflects and helps your brand.

B. <u>The Making of a Good Domain Name</u>

<u>Length:</u> When it comes to a domain name, less is more. Shorter names are easier to remember and to type, which means users are more likely to find you. It's also easier to stand out when there's less to read. It's a good idea not to exceed 2-3 words.

<u>Simplicity:</u> You want people to remember your domain name and type it accurately. Complicated or uncommon words or names may be hard to remember and spell correctly.

<u>Keywords:</u> <u>Relevant words help users find you in a search and recognize what you do at a glance.</u> Keywords can include what you do or offer (like "coffee" or "cleaning"), or even your location. Including your location (like "miami") in your domain name might also help you target local interested/curious people, customers and users.

Good, Not Perfect: Many people get caught up trying to choose the perfect name, when that time could be spent building a great brand around a perfectly good domain name. Don't let choosing a perfect domain hold you back from starting your business or project. *An average domain name is better than no domain name.*

Things To Avoid: Some elements could negatively impact how people perceive your domain name, such as:

- Numbers or dashes in your name. These characters are hard to type and might lower the perceived credibility of your website and business.
- Funny spellings or words that can be spelled different ways (like "way" or "too"). These might make it hard for people to find your site.
- Misspellings. These can make your site seem suspicious and make people worry it's a phishing or malware site.
- Brand names and trademarks used by other companies. These should never be used in your domain name; trying to do so can lead to legal action and suspension of your domain.

C. **Roger Brook's Information for Our Consideration**

Choosing a Website Address

A website address (also known as the domain name or the URL – Universal Resource Locator) is unique to each website. Site addresses are managed by a common international body and are essentially rented on an annual basis for $15+/- per year.

US site addresses are generally composed of <u>two parts</u>: the <u>base name</u> and the <u>extension</u>. Typical extensions:

- .com – initially intended for commercial operations, such as stores; no oversight on how it can be used
- .org – initially intended for non-commercial operations; no oversight on how it can be used
- .net – initially intended for network related organizations; no oversight on how it can be used
- .edu – reserved for educational institutions
- .gov - reserved for government entities
- .mil – reserved for military operations

Recently the available extensions have been substantially expanded to include:
- .club
- .info
- .online

among many others (some of which are expensive).

The base name is the unique part of the site address for each website. Generally, the base name needs to be <u>easy to remember</u>, <u>easy to type</u>, and <u>meaningful </u>to the website purpose and users. Examples include mcdonalds.com and ihop.com. The base name should begin with a letter, can include numbers and some special characters (such as _ or – but not . or & or ?). It is generally recommended that the base name be limited to <u>15 characters</u>.

I (Roger) looked at some website address options;

- anr.club – taken but has no active website
- anrclub.org, anrclub.info – available
- farmers.club redirects to /livestockwealth.com/farmers-club/
- laanrc.org or laanr.club– available, but I think the double-a might be a problem
- lanrc.org – redirects to losangelesnr.org (insecure)
- lanr.club, lanr.info - available
- lansingarnc.org, lansinganrc.info – available
- lansinganr.org, lansinganr.club, lansinganr.info – available
- lansinganrclub.org, lansinganrclub.info - available

Considering the Above Information
Given the above information from Google and Roger, our next step is to choose a base name. You may have some additional suggestions for a base name. Here are a few pros and cons of some that would represent our club:

1. **laanrc**
    Pro's **–** short, others?
    Con's – rather non-descript, double aa's could be a problem as Roger points out; others?
2. **lansingareaaagriculturenaturalresourcesclub**
    Pro's – describes us well: others?
    Con's – excessively long, doesn't meet the reasonable length criteria of 15 characters, others?
3. **anrclub**
    Pro's - short, easy to type, identifies that we are a club; others?
    Con's – nothing about location which might help people identify us in our main service area; others?
4. **lansinganrclub**
    Pro's – 14 characters falls within guidelines, identifies location and that we are a club, easy to type; others?
    Con's – anr isn't very descriptive but would be clarified by the listing of the organization's complete name in the typical brief description which follows any URL in a search.

Next Steps
a) Think over the names above to see if any strike your fancy and consider if you have a better suggestion to share with the rest of us.
b) If you have no better suggestions for a base name, **which of the above would you choose as your first choice?**
c) Please "reply all" to this email with your thoughts on the matter. Using "reply all" will keep everyone in the loop for ideas and thoughts. If we can't come to some agreement using this method of email exchange, we could Zoom a meeting.
d) Please get at least your initial reply sent by this coming Friday, Nov.13?   That should give us ample time to fine tune a decision before the 19th should it take additional time.
e) Call Bob Pangman if you have any questions: 349-4173 or 242-7888.