**Planning Approach – Citizen Journalism**

There’s so many ways to tell a story – but where do you start? How can you dive into the storytelling process as a citizen journalist? Below you’ll find a planning approach to guide community members into the role of citizen journalists.

***Learning the ropes:***

1. What does it mean to become a journalist?
   1. Develop/plan a beginner’s workshop that addresses the goals and ethical guide to becoming a journalist.
      1. Identify and address the proper protocol to gathering information and collecting and verifying sources.
   2. Review and reference the following:
      1. [Society of Professional Journalists’ Code of Ethics](https://www.spj.org/ethicscode.asp)
      2. [NPR Ethics Handbook](http://ethics.npr.org/)
      3. [The Ethics of Civic Journalism: Independence as the Guide](https://www.poynter.org/news/ethics-civic-journalism-independence-guide)
      4. [Every American needs 'the critical thinking skills of a journalist.”](https://www.poynter.org/news/every-american-needs-critical-thinking-skills-journalist-university-says)

***Get involved (Mentorship):***

1. Provide peer support training (similar to career shadow day) to get a first-hand approach to publishing a story.
   1. This would include:
      1. Developing a story idea.
         1. What makes this a story? Who is our audience? What can readers gain from this piece? Identify a problem or issue present that needs to be addressed.
      2. Begin gathering information.
         1. Where do you find the information? What are you looking for? Who or what is your verified source(s)?
      3. Review and edit.
         1. What (if anything) is missing from your story? Are you transparent? What should your reader know? Is it complete to the best of your efforts? Is there a follow-up needed?
2. Gt involved with morning/afternoon news editorial meetings.
   1. Listen and pitch your own ideas

***Discover, rinse, repeat:***

1. Begin the discovery phase of identifying a potential story idea?
   1. Answer the following questions:
      1. Why is this important for my readers?
         1. What kind of story is it? Human interest? Investigative?
      2. What issues are presented?
      3. What should my story answer or what questions should be presented?
2. Begin gathering information and sources.
   1. Citizen journalists should work with mentors to identify the correct course of action to research a story.
3. Review and edit
   1. Develop a story structure and begin writing/producing a piece to be ready for publication. Using journalism mentors, review and edit the publication piece.