# RSS Specifications for Creation of Rhode Island Government Information Exchange Feeds

The Web Data Sharing Committee has adopted the RSS 2.0 specification for state government feeds. Government entities participating in the Web Data Sharing initiative must follow the customized specifications outlined in this document. These specifications serve as the basis for the *Utilization of Rhode Island Government Information Exchange Feeds*. Municipal and other participating entities are strongly encouraged to follow these specifications to ensure quality data exchange between participants.

## Required channel elements

| Element | Description | Example |
|---|---|---|
| title | The name of the channel. Short and succinct titles are preferable. | Upcoming Meetings as Filed with the Office of the Secretary of State |
| link | The URL to the HTML website corresponding to the information represented in the channel. | http://www3.sec.state.ri.us/pubinfo/openmeetings/ |
| description | Phrase or sentence describing the channel. Include the official name of the content provider in the description. Include any official language about the feed that should be displayed along with the feed, with the comment "recommended language." For feeds that allow users to specify parameters, details of variables should be explained as well as any limit defined for the result set. | Public meeting notices filed with the Office of the Secretary of State. Recommended language: This information has been filed with the Public Information Division of the Office of Secretary of State in accordance with Rhode Island General Laws §42-46-1. |
| language | The language the channel is written in. This allows aggregators to group all Spanish language sites, for example, on a single page. Values are defined by the W3C, and are available on the RSS 2.0 specification website. | en-us; es |
| webMaster | Email address for person responsible for technical issues relating to channel. | webmaster@providenceri.com |

## Optional channel elements

Use of these elements is strongly encouraged as a basis for addressing utilization requirements.

| Element | Description | Example |
|---|---|---|
| lastBuildDate | The last time the content of the channel changed. | Sat, 07 Sep 2002 09:42:31 GMT |
| ttl | ttl stands for time to live. It's a number of minutes indicating how long a channel can be safely cached before refreshing from the source. When setting the ttl, consider how frequently the source database is updated. | <ttl>60</ttl> |

## Elements of &lt;item&gt;

A channel may contain any number of &lt;item&gt;s. Items represent a "story" – much like a story in a newspaper or magazine; it may be a synopsis of the story or the full story, and the link points to the full story itself. The RSS specification states that all elements of an item are optional, but at least one of title or description must be present. All item elements listed below are required when using RI Government Information Exchange.

### Required item elements:

| Element | Description | Example |
|---|---|---|
| title | The title of the item. This should be as short as possible, like a newspaper headline. | Mayor Cements Tile in India Point Park Project |
| link | The URL of the item to which the title refers. | http://www.providenceri.com/press/article.php?id=22 |
| description | The synopsis or full content of the item. Include the contact person when the contact person differs from the author (see below) and it is relevant to include this information. (eg, Meeting Notices). For media content embedding, use of the &lt;enclosure&gt; tag is required. | Cicilline to set tile among 500 others in 49-foot mural on Friday, August 13 at 12 noon. |
| author | Email address of the author of the item. This should be the person accountable for the content of the item, not the webmaster. (Webmaster is listed in the channel elements.) | ksouthern@providenceri.com (Karen Southern) |
| pubDate | Indicates when the item was published. | Fri, 13 Aug 2004 08:56:29 GMT |
| source | The RSS channel that the item came from, derived from its &lt;title&gt;. It has one required attribute, URL, which links to the XMLization of the source. Use of this element enables proper attribution when feeds are aggregated. | &lt;source url="http://www.providenceri.com/press/"&gt;Press Releases from Mayor David N. Cicilline &lt;/source&gt; |

## Validation

It is strongly recommended that feeds are validated against the RSS 2.0 specification. Suggested validators include FEEDValidator (http://feedvalidator.org/) and RSS Validator (http://rss.scripting.com/)

## Resources & Related Documents

Rhode Island eGovernment Information Exchange (REX): http://www.ri.gov/rex/

RSS 2.0 Specification: http://blogs.law.harvard.edu/tech/rss/

*Utilization of Rhode Island Government Information Exchange Feeds*

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