

Lead Agency: Public Affairs Office

Program Contact: Dave Austin

Program Offer Type: Existing Operating

Related Programs:

Program Characteristics:

Executive Summary

The Communications Office is the central voice, source and distribution point for information for taxpayers, the public and the news media communicating what Multnomah County does and how employees work in the community to provide services. The office – using targeted communications strategies – works directly with the Chair’s Office, the Board, elected officials, and County staff to promote transparency and demonstrate how effectively local government officials use taxpayer dollars to support all residents. Also, the office works with the Chief Operating Officer to handle internal advisory communication for the Chair when it comes to critical information, including – but not limited to – county business, labor practices and negotiations, budget strategies and relevant political issues around labor practices, negotiations and other sensitive topics. Top goals include: providing taxpayers, the public and the media with stories and information about critical county programs; responding to public records requests; responding with urgency and immediacy to the public and media inquiries about the county; strongly carrying and promoting the values of the Board of Commissioners, both internally and externally; advising the Chair, the Board, elected officials, and County staff on the best approaches with taxpayers, the public and the media; creating materials that increase the county’s visibility; committing to and working with the highest standard of transparency for the sake of the public; and developing new ways to reach out to county residents by inviting them to participate in local government.

Program Description

This office will aggressively and consistently inform the public of stories and events that provide a high level of understanding of what the county does with taxpayer dollars and how local government makes a difference in people’s lives. The office will employ a wide range of media – television, newspapers, radio and digital media, as well as direct communications to the public, including appearances and community meetings – to reach a diverse audience and proactively increase the visibility of Multnomah County and the services it provides to all residents. Staff will produce accurate, timely and accessible accounts of Board actions and developments of public interest through written articles, photographs and videos for the County’s website. We will continue to make the website dynamic and engaging in order to share the county’s mission and successes with the public in a meaningful way. As we continue to rapidly grow our social media base, we will use tools such as Twitter, Facebook and the creation of stylized websites to further promote the county’s web content as news is shared and reposted among users. The office will be the lead on ensuring that Multnomah County government is efficient, transparent and is open to dialogue with its residents.

Performance Measures

Measure Type	Primary Measure	Previous Year Actual (FY10-11)	Current Year Purchased (FY11-12)	Current Year Estimate (FY11-12)	Next Year Offer (FY12-13)
Output	Number of multi-media or video packages created for county website	0	0	25	75
Outcome	Number of stories appearing in the media about county services	0	0	100	250

Performance Measure - Description

- * How often the office connects the Chair, commissioners and departments with news media that produce stories about the county’s work.
- * How many multi-media projects/videos created for use on county web pages and for use by departments to spread information about services.
- * How quickly and thoroughly the office responds to public requests for information, as well as how successful the office is at helping all county departments make decisions about information going to the public.
- * How quickly the office disseminates public records requests, notifies the Board and staff and responds to ensure government transparency and access.
- * How strong the relationships are with news media and how those relationships produce coverage where county employees have a voice to promote the county’s mission.
- * How much useful information flows through the county website; websites of the Chair and commissioners; Facebook; and Twitter – and how that effectively communicates to the public and helps citizens participate and have their voices heard.
- * How often the office interacts with managers/key departments to choose stories that best inform the public about the county’s work, the individuals and the structures, and how taxpayer dollars are spent to benefit all residents.

Legal/Contractual Obligation

The Communications Office is the conduit for the public and the media to make public records requests under Oregon Public Records law. Whenever a request comes in, staff from the office analyze it and then forward to the County Attorney's Office. The offices collaborate and make a decision about the release of the record in question.

Revenue/Expense Detail

	Proposed General Fund	Proposed Other Funds	Proposed General Fund	Proposed Other Funds
Program Expenses	2012	2012	2013	2013
Personnel	\$634,260	\$0	\$627,863	\$0
Contracts	\$10,000	\$0	\$10,000	\$0
Materials & Supplies	\$16,297	\$0	\$10,747	\$0
Internal Services	\$73,080	\$0	\$85,195	\$0
Total GF/non-GF:	\$733,637	\$0	\$733,805	\$0
Program Total:	\$733,637		\$733,805	
Program FTE	6.50	0.00	6.00	0.00
Program Revenues				
Total Revenue:	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Explanation of Revenues

This is a General Fund program.

Significant Program Changes

Last year this program was: #10013, Communications Office
0.5 FTE and associated funding has been moved to the Chair's Office, PO# 10000.