

CLACKAMAS COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Study Session Worksheet

Presentation Date: January ³⁰ 29, 2013

Start Time: 2:30 pm

Following Planning Meeting
Approx Length: 30 min.

Presentation Title: Commissioner Outreach Plan

Department: Public and Government Affairs

Presenters: Gary Schmidt

WHAT ACTION ARE YOU REQUESTING FROM THE BOARD?

Review and confirm enhanced opportunities for Commissioner outreach and determine whether to accept these new options or make no change to current outreach methods.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Board of Commissioners consistently review outreach methods to determine the most effective ways to elicit public feedback and increase citizen participation and maintain open access to Commissioners.

Outside of individual Commissioner meetings, the following are major ongoing outreach opportunities available to the Board:

- Evening Business Meetings.
- Commissioner Community Roundtable.
- Periodic Town Halls.
- Complete Communities Congress.
- Quarterly Community Planning Organizations (CPO) Leaders meetings.
- Hamlets and Village meetings.
- Committee for Citizen Involvement (CCI).
- Individual CPO meetings.
- County project/issue specific open forums.

Option 1: Business Meeting Format

Current Format:

Board business meetings are held each Thursday at 10 am in the Public Services Building except for the third Thursday of each month, when business meetings are held at 6 pm. Citizens are invited to offer input during citizen communication, discussion items or hearings.

Staff who currently attend business meetings include the County Administrator, County Counsel, Board Clerk, staff who present on specific issues before the Board, and up to three Cable staff (includes contractors) who film the live broadcast and record the meeting for future presentation.

Potential Format:

An option is to conduct more evening business meetings or hold business meetings outside the County offices in different locations.

Holding more evening business meetings allow citizens who have different work schedules to continue to attend these sessions. Keeping some morning business meetings accommodates citizens who do not or cannot drive at night, especially in winter months when darkness occurs at an early time and weather conditions can be challenging.

Business meetings held outside the Public Services Building, Board Hearing Room cannot be broadcast live on the County Government Channel or on the web but may be recorded for later broadcast. By not broadcasting the business meetings live, citizens who are unable to attend in person would not be able to watch the meeting in real time. Public meeting laws do not require the video or audio recording of business meetings.

Option 2: Commissioner Community Roundtable

Current Format:

The Commissioner Community Roundtables began in November 2011 and average about 8 citizens per meeting. The lowest attendance was two people and the highest attendance around 40 people. Some of the citizens attended these meetings on a regular basis yet most meetings welcome new participants who do not regularly attend any other County outreach opportunity.

Not all Commissioners regularly attend these roundtables.

At least one County Administration staff member attends these events to set up the room and provide staff support to the Board.

Potential Format:

A potential revision to the current monthly Commissioner Community Roundtable meeting is for the Board to travel to various venues in the community. Keeping the first Wednesday of the month from 5:30-7 pm would give ample time for citizens to meet and have a Q&A with the Commissioners.

Having an open-ended format rather than a single topic would encourage more citizens to attend. This format also gives citizens the opportunity to ask questions about issues or topics they are interested in hearing about from the Commissioners, rather than a set agenda.

Venues suitable for this kind of outreach would need to have ample space to hold a number of citizens, consequently limiting venues to public places such as libraries, fire stations, granges and other large spaces.

These roundtables are not audio or video recorded.

At least one staff member from County Administration should attend these events to support the Board.

Option 3: Town Halls replace Complete Communities Congress

Congress Format:

Since 1999, Complete Communities Congresses have been held approximately every two years to engage and encourage broadly-based citizen input on strategic directions for Clackamas County. Following each Congress, citizen and staff work groups have implemented recommendations, with tangible results, ranging from citizen empowerment through the award-winning Hamlet and Village program and other means to the creation of the Office of Sustainability. The last Community Congress was held in 2011.

Public and Government Affairs staff, with support from a consultant, conducted these Congresses.

Town Hall Format:

The County can build on this well-recognized brand by holding quarterly Town Halls on specific topics of strategic importance to the Board or by offering open-ended forums on topics of community importance. This allows the Board to communicate with citizens and engage in a two-way conversation about the particular topic or issue. The first Town Hall was held in September 2012 in Welches and was attended by 45 citizens. Town Halls could be held for two hours on a weeknight throughout the County. Town Halls will be recorded by the Cable division for later playback but would not be broadcast live on the cable channel or on the web.

Town Halls could be conducted quarterly or more often. Holding Town Halls too frequently can diminish their importance which could result in lower attendance. Town Halls should be seen as a component of business meetings and commissioner roundtables instead of a stand-alone outreach opportunity.

Public and Government Affairs staff would coordinate, organize, promote and run the Town Hall meetings.

Option 4: Other face-to-face outreach ideas

❖ **County Fair**

- Have one or two Commissioners staff the county booth for two or three hours each day during the run of the fair. ("Meet Your Commissioners" or "Ask Your Commissioner").
- Have a Commissioner Q & A or particular topic that BCC can discuss as a group.

❖ **County Picnic for the Public**

- Have a picnic at one of the county parks and invite the public (serve hotdogs and soft drinks).
- Have a picnic on the grassy area between the PSB and DSB buildings (where the Employee Appreciation Day picnic is held).

❖ **Farmers Markets**

- BCC attend various Farmers Markets throughout the County. Have a table where one or all the Commissioners could answer questions during the day.

❖ **Business Breakfasts/Roundtable**

- Host a quarterly breakfast/roundtable and invite 10 or so businesses to attend. Include small businesses and agribusinesses from diverse locations. Commissioners can answer questions or have a brief presentation by a particular department that interacts with businesses. For instance, planning/zoning, business licenses/permits, business and economic development or code enforcement and others.
- Have BCC host coffee talks around the county for businesses, perhaps going to a different business each month or quarter.
- Partner with chambers of commerce to have "Business in the County" type events. This currently occurs with the BCC and the North Clackamas Chamber and the Sandy Chamber.

❖ **Summer Festivals**

- BCC attend various summer festivals to meet and greet folks.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Staff time to attend and participate in evening or off-site meetings could potentially incur overtime costs for represented employees. However, represented employees can also take compensatory or flexible time, with supervisor approval, which would not incur any extra financial costs. Workloads would need to be adjusted to reflect this reallocation of work assignments. There is no extra cost for non-represented employees, who are not paid an hourly rate.

The Cable division of PGA currently manages the live business meeting broadcast and subsequent recordings of each business meeting. The cost to produce and disseminate video of each weekly business meeting held in the Public Services building is \$362. These costs are in the PGA budget. Video recording of business meetings or Town Halls held outside of the Public Services Building would be approximately \$823 per meeting due to travel and field production costs. These programs would not be broadcast live and would take about two days to edit and produce. These costs would be covered by PGA.

LEGAL/POLICY REQUIREMENTS:

Per public meeting laws the following apply:

- All meetings where a Board quorum is present require public notice of the meeting.
- Those meetings must be accessible to the public.
- Official minutes are required of Board business meetings.
- Audio/video recordings of Board business meetings are not required, but are encouraged for maximum public communication.

PUBLIC/GOVERNMENTAL PARTICIPATION:

Public and Government Affairs continues to promote any and all Commissioner outreach opportunities and will work with the Board and staff to strategize and implement future opportunities.

OPTIONS:

Review the various options offered and determine to accept some or all of the outlined outreach options.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the Board:

- Hold two business meetings a month in the evening in the board hearing room (on site).
- Continue the monthly Commissioner Community Roundtable at the county offices and encourage at least three commissioners to attend each month.
- Hold six major events with the BCC annually in the community (one every other month, to include Town Halls, State of the County, County Fair, business roundtables and Chamber events). This mixes up the events to offer variety and uniqueness in order to elicit maximum attendance.

Commissioner Outreach Plan

January 29, 2013

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ATTACHMENTS:

N/A

SUBMITTED BY:

Division Director/Head Approval _____

Department Director/Head Approval ___s/Gary Schmidt___

County Administrator Approval _____

For information on this issue or copies of attachments, please contact Gary Schmidt @ 503-742-5908