

CLACKAMAS COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Study Session Worksheet

Presentation Date: April 17, 2012 **Start Time:** 9:15 am **Approx Length:** 30 min.

Presentation Title: Commissioner Outreach Options

Department: Public and Government Affairs

Presenters: Gary Schmidt

WHAT ACTION ARE YOU REQUESTING FROM THE BOARD?

Review various 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 increase citizen participation and access to Commissioners.

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

- Business Meetings
- Commissioner Community Roundtable
- Complete Communities Congress
- Quarterly Community Planning Organizations (CPO) Leaders Meetings
- Hamlets and Village meetings
- Individual CPO meetings
- County project/issue specific open houses and town halls

Option 1: Revise Business Meeting Format

Current Format:

Board business meetings are held each Thursday at 10 am in the County's Public Services Building. Citizens are invited to provide up to three minutes of 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:

Evening meetings have been suggested by citizens on a number of occasions to allow folks who work during the daytime the opportunity to attend the meetings.

The Board could hold business meetings in the evening on a periodic basis, also in the Public Services Building. The Board could hold business meetings in the daytime or evening outside of the County offices in different communities within the County on a periodic basis.

An option is to conduct two business meetings at month at 10 am (current time) and two business meetings a month at 6 pm. All meetings would be held in the Public Services Building.

Keeping two meetings a month in the morning allows citizens who have a different work schedule to continue to attend these sessions. The morning meetings also 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.

Multnomah and Washington County Business Meetings

The Washington and Multnomah County Commissioners do not hold business meetings anywhere other than in County buildings.

Four of Washington County's Commissioners are part-time (the Chair is full-time) and that limits their availability. They do, however, hold "board retreats" which are publicly noticed. These retreats are held off-site and are not generally well attended.

Multnomah County does hold evening meetings during the budget preparation process. These meetings are held at the County building and off-site, typically in one urban location and one rural location.

Option 2: Revise Commissioner Community Roundtable

Current Format:

From November 2011 to April 2012 a total of 52 citizens have attended the monthly Commissioner Community Roundtable meetings for an average of 8.6 per meeting. Some of the citizens attended these meetings on a regular basis yet most meetings had new participants who do not regularly attend any other County outreach opportunity.

At least one staff member attends these events to set up the room and provide staff support to the Board. County Administration and Public and Government Affairs staff have provided this support.

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 on a quarterly basis. 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.

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

Option 3: Revise Complete Communities Congress

Current 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 Congress recommendations, with tangible results, ranging from citizen empowerment through the award-winning Hamlet and Village program and other means to the newly created Office of Sustainability. 2011 was the last Community Congress.

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

Potential Format:

The County can build on this well-recognized brand by holding quarterly or semi-annual forums/workshops on a specific topic of strategic importance to the Board. This allows the Board to communicate with citizens and engage in a two way conversation about the particular topic or issue. These forums could be held for two hours on a weeknight at the County or in the community.

Public and Government Affairs staff would coordinate, organize, promote and run these meetings. Due to budget constraints, these events would be smaller in scope than the prior Congresses.

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 could 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 Public and Government Affairs (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 held outside of the Public Services Building would be approximately \$823 per meeting due to travel and field production costs. 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:

- 1) Accept some or all of the outlined outreach options to gauge effectiveness
- 2) Make no change to current outreach methods

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the Board accept some of the outlined outreach opportunities for a specific period of time to gauge effectiveness.

ATTACHMENTS:

N/A

SUBMITTED BY:

Division Director/Head Approval _____
Department Director/Head Approval Gary Schmidt
County Administrator Approval _____

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